



Jillian Hessel's

**Postural Analysis, B.E.A.M. Fundamentals & Matwork
Pilates Heritage Congress, Monchengladbach, Germany
Saturday, May 6, 2017
2:00 PM - 5:00 PM**

I. Gait, Posture & the Feet

A. Watch your client walk

- Are they comfortable in their walk? Is it slow or fast?
- Do they transfer weight easily from one foot to the other?
- Is their stance extra wide? Are the feet parallel?
- Does each foot move through heel strike, mid-stance and toe off?
- The foot as a "spring"
- Dual functions of the foot both for mobility & stability
- Do the arms swing easily in opposition to the legs?
- Does the pelvis rotate in opposition to the shoulder girdle?

B. Postural Practicum

Carola Trier always "began at the beginning" with a standing Postural Analysis for new clients BEFORE introducing the exercise program. Screening the client in vertical alignment helps the teacher to identify in advance any existing postural or muscle imbalances that may necessitate modifications of the Classic Exercises. It also gives the teacher time to evaluate the client's mind/body awareness, and to test their balance and coordination while standing. Most importantly, the Postural Analysis can help cement the teacher/client relationship more closely as the client becomes an active participant in the quest to identify problem areas and to improve upon them.

- Begin from the feet up. Check to see if one foot is more forward than the other. Is one foot more turned out? Is one foot more pronated or supinated than the other?

- Do both knees track evenly over the center of the feet? Does one leg bow, hyperextend or laterally rotate more than the other?

- Check the spine from the side view. Is the posture ideal, i.e. A.S.I.S. and pubis in one coronal plane? The shoulders should ride in a direct vertical line over the hips. Check the view from both sides. Is one side of the ribs more prominent than the other?

- Palpate the A.S.I.S. Is one higher, or more anterior than the other? Observe the indentation at the waistline and ribcage. Is one side more indented than the other?

- How do the arms and hands hang from the shoulders? Is one hand more anterior or posterior to the torso, or is one arm more adducted or abducted?

- Check the level of the shoulders and placement of the head. From the front view, the shoulders should be level, and the chin should align in a straight vertical line over the sternum, navel and pubis. From the side view, the ears should ride in a straight vertical line directly over the shoulders, and the chin line should be in the transverse plane, i.e. parallel to the floor.

- Have the client do a slow "meltdown" and observe from the back view. Observe flexibility of the vertebrae, and also if there is any rotation during the movement. Does the client return to ideal posture? Do this at least twice to confirm your observations.

II. B.E.A.M. Fundamentals: Breathe, Energize, Align and Move

The B.E.A.M. Fundamentals are my version of Kathy Grant's "Warm-Ups" combined with Ron Fletcher's use of Percussive Breath to add control, rhythm and dynamics to the exercises. Since they help to establish the mind/body/breath connection and reinforce the specificity of Pilates exercise, the B.E.A.M. Fundamentals work equally well for both de-conditioned and super fit clients and anyone in-between! In addition, the B.E.A.M. Fundamentals provide a solid foundation for safe modifications of the Classic Mat exercises.

- 1- Ribcage Breathing (Seated)
- 2- Double Knee Pull/Clock
- 3- Single leg Knee Pull/Knee Stirs
- 4- Spine Twist (if indicated)
- 5- Neutral Spine Position
- 6- Pelvic Tuck/Low Back Arch (12/6 o'clock)
- 7- Chin Tuck/Neck Arch
- 8- Tuck with Double Breath
- 9- Pelvic Press
- 10- Head Float & Rib Slide

11- Mini Breathing (hands or towel behind upper back/neck)

12- Heels Lowering

13- Puppet Arms (added in—not on new client handout)

14- Airplane Arms

15- Modified 100's (ankles x'ed)

16- Modified Double Leg Stretch

III. Classic Pilates Mat Work

Having taught Pilates for close to 36 years, I have evolved a unique approach to teaching group Mat Work classes. I hope you will find it useful!

The Classic dilemma for any Group Matwork Teacher is to keep a classroom full of mat students of varied shapes and sizes, fitness levels and ability. How do you teach a challenging class for EVERY-ONE?

Taught correctly and precisely, my B.E.A.M. Fundamentals will provide a genuine foundation for each and every exerciser to identify, and work, on their "personal edge." My B.E.A.M Fundamentals begin with Pilates Breath, and then we advance the breathing repertoire with Ron Fletcher's Percussive Breathing (TM). With the aid of Ron's Rhythmic Breathing technique, done at various speeds, we are able to activate the Core muscles of the body, slowly at first, and then more quickly. As we all know, the Core Muscles are of vital importance in supporting our skeleton in vertical alignment, against the ever present downward pull of gravity.

access the dynamics of moving and breathing together throughout the exercise program

We identify Neutral Spine and discover how to stabilize vs. mobilize the Spine.

In my mixed mat class there may be several versions of Classic exercises such as Hundred, Roll-Over or Teaser going on simultaneously throughout the room, with each participant doing the version that best suits his or her ability. The ONE thing in the room that always remains in unison is the specific breathing pattern for each exercise. are cued identically, no matter which version the student is performing. Cuing the breathing very precisely, and having each student follow it will help to maintain mental focus and concentration for everyone. Presenting the material in this way allows the teacher to continue to introduce new exercises to the students, and allows each student to work out and progress at their own level.

We will finish with some standing work. emphasizing the importance of the feet in Pilates Exercise. Since we work with no shoes, there is an important opportunity to work with the bare feet in relationship to the floor. Eventually, when we move onto the Pilates Apparatus, this awareness and articulation of the bare foot should be maintained, in order to receive the maximum benefits form the exercises, both on and off the equipment.

www.jillianhessel.com

for information about Jillian's instructional videos
and her book, *Pilates Basics*

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