

Phew! one term down, only two to go...

Got through it! Survived it! These were my thoughts as I finished term 1 of the Bodywise Pilates matwork teachers course just before Christmas. As I look back and reflect on my experiences on the course during last term, a number of things stand out:

Firstly, just how much I have developed physically as a result of the last term. At the start of the course, Leila Coppock, our tutor, said that we would significantly improve our body self awareness. She referred to it as 'self-awareness through movement.' She was right. I have become re-acquainted with muscles that I have not consciously used in a long time and I've discovered muscles I didn't even know I had! I also no longer use my global muscles to cheat my way through exercises such as the Roll-Up or the Push-Up as I used to do back in my Army days. Instead, I now consciously approach and aspire to complete every exercise based on application of the six Pilates Principles. I say aspire because I'm definitely still a work in progress!

Secondly, the academic input into the course in terms of the anatomy, physiology and functional movement as been invaluable as it has filled in gaps in my knowledge from previous massage therapy and Shiatsu training. Most significantly for me, the application of this knowledge through the Pilates Foundation's holistic approach to Pilates as a movement system for underpinning physical, emotional and mental well-being is what differentiates this course from other courses I investigated. There have been lots of 'lightbulb' moments as I have realised how the topics we have covered have dovetailed into and complemented the whole idea of movement and compassionate touch which is the basis of my work as a Shiatsu practitioner.

Finally, how I have fallen on my feet with my course tutor and fellow students. To use some leadership parlance, as a study group we've 'stormed, formed and normed,' but the mutual support and encouragement from everyone has been outstanding. The determination and drive of our course tutor, Leila, in setting us all up to succeed as been the bedrock of our progress. I genuinely doubt that I would have got through the term without that tutor support and the camaraderie of the group.

So, as term 2 looms large, I look forward to it with a mixture of feelings; excitement at the amount of new knowledge and practical work to be accommodated and assimilated, dread at the hours I will have to put in to get through the work and nervousness about my ability to meet the required course standards both academically and practically. But I take comfort from the fact that Leila, through her boundless enthusiasm and mentorship, will ensure that everyone in our group will perform to their potential and get through the term with flying colours. So ... bring it on! The group intends to make you proud, Leila.

For any aspiring Pilates Teachers out there, based on my experience to date: Is the course hard work? Absolutely. Is it worth it? Absolutely. Right choice

of course and organisation? Absolutely. This Pilates Foundation course 'does what it says on the tin', training us as future matwork teachers to deliver Pilates as a movement and exercise system that underpins and enhances well-being in a genuinely holistic way.