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## Welcome

There are several essential principles of Pilates:

Awareness

Precision and alignment

Breathing

Stabilising

Co-ordination and balance

Flowing movement

Endurance, and most importantly regular practice.

How can we bring the principles into our everyday life so that regular practice is a possibility?

The first principle Awareness can be used throughout our day to bring attention to how we use our bodies and is discussed in the article below. I've also added a simple relaxation technique which you can use - try it and see how it feels!

There will be no newsletter in November as I am attending a course. Back in December with more ideas for healthy happy bodies.

Susanne

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## Awareness - a key principle of Pilates

Most of the bodily pain and discomfort that we experience is brought about by excess muscular tension. With a mindful awareness we can start to recognise the beginnings of tension and learn to release. For how can we release or let go of tension if we are not aware of it. Once we can recognise tension triggers we are then able to make choices about how we react to those triggers.

Start now. How are you sitting at this moment, what is your state of stimulation or calmness. What is your intention? Are you rushed and hurried. Do you notice a link between feeling rushed and tension in your body?

Notice how you approach jobs that you don't want to do. Maybe hovering, washing up, ironing, or mowing the lawn. Is it with an idea of getting through as quickly as possible so that you can then relax!

Next time you are doing the washing up or sweeping the floor **PAUSE** and notice your mind state. What is your internal dialogue? What is your intention, are you rushing through with excess tension or feeling as light and fluffy as a feather. Use awareness as a route to releasing and letting go of muscular tension.

Experiment with different attitudes to mundane tasks. For instance next time you are

cleaning think about some happy memories, really take yourself to good feelings. What made you laugh recently, replay it in your memory and laugh again, and again and again. Let good happy memories and feelings flood through your body and notice how much more relaxed your body feels, carry those feelings of joy to your everyday tasks. Be curious about your attitude and intentions.

How happy and joyful can you be taking out the garbage?

We are what we practice. Every second, of every minute of every day, we have the opportunity to practice awareness and to let go unskilful movement patterns. Imagery can be a pathway to re- discovering our natural movement patterns.

Try now, as you are sitting reading this, think of the space at the top of your head, don't do any thing, just think of the space at the top of your head.

*Now think of your shoulders widening away from each other.*

*Your thighs rolling away from centre and your knees lengthening away from your hips.*

*Again, think of the space at the top of your head.*

*Your shoulders widening away from each other.*

*Your thighs rolling away from centre and your knees lengthening away from your hips.*

*Imagine you have a small ball under each armpit.*

*Allow your elbows to be heavy*

*Let the corners of your mouth turn up into a soft smile and enjoy the good sensations that smiling brings.*

Use this simple imagery as you go about your day, for instance next time you are chopping vegetables allow your elbows to be heavy, think of the sides of your neck long and the space at the top of your head. Check your internal dialogue and if it does not support release and relaxation in your body change it to something that does.

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## **Pilates classes in Harpenden and St. Albans**

Classes are kept small, with six to twelve people to ensure a high level of individual attention. For this reason booking is required. Classes are £51.00 for six sessions. Wear warm clothing, preferably close fitting so that I can observe your posture and movement. Shoes are not worn but you will need socks.

If you have not done Pilates before I hold a "Back to Basics" class on Wednesday evenings at 7.35 pm for beginners and refreshers. This will teach you the principles of Pilates.