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## **Nine** things to look for when researching teacher training programs:

If you want to become a Pilates instructor, you know how overwhelming it can be when you start looking at all of the different instructor training programs out there. Learning to instruct the Pilates method is a journey and it is important to find a training program that will best fit your needs and life. We encourage you to do your research and look at three or four different programs to find the best fit for you! Here are some tips to think about:

- 1.** Get to know the instructors who will be teaching the training program and the instructors at the studio where you will be training. You are going to spend a lot of your time at workshops, taking lessons, and observing. Make sure that you enjoy the instructors' teaching and are comfortable in the studio where you will be doing your training.
- 2.** Many programs have a mentoring portion of their program. This simply means a particular person will guide you throughout the process. Your mentor will be there to answer questions and check in periodically on your progress. Ask who your mentor will be, how you can contact this person, and what the mentoring portion of the program entails.
- 3.** Talk to other instructors who have completed the program. Firsthand experience is priceless and talking to instructors who have gone through the program will give you a good feel for what to expect.
- 4.** Know what the program prerequisites are. Some programs require that you be at a certain level in your own Pilates practice before starting the program, while others may require previous movement or teaching experience.
- 5.** Learn how many hours are required to complete the program. Depending on the type of program you are doing, you will be required to log in your hours and complete them in a timely fashion. Figure out how many hours you will need to dedicate to your training weekly and make sure this is reasonable and that you are able to schedule these hours. Many programs have a time limit. Ask how long you have to complete the program and what happens if you do not complete it in that time frame. If not completed within a certain time frame you may need to retake workshops or pay an extra fee to extend your time to finish the program.
- 6.** Ask about the program costs. Be very specific and make sure you know what is included in the program price and what is not included. Sometimes training manuals and books are included in the pricing, but often times they are not. Ask if any of the required lessons are included in the price and if not, whether there are discounts on sessions while in the program. Some programs will include the use of the studio for your practice teaching in the program price, while others may charge you to use their space and equipment. Are tests included in the program price or will you have to pay extra?

**7.** If you are interested in teaching at the studio you will train at, be sure to ask about apprentice teaching opportunities as well as future employment opportunities after you finish your training. Many studios offer apprentice teaching positions. This is a great way to gain experience, get your required hours in, and make a little money to offset your costs.

**8.** Many Pilates programs offer a Certificate of Completion instead of a Certificate of Certification. The Pilates Method Alliance (PMA) has encouraged training programs to do this in order to encourage instructors to take the Pilates Method Alliance international professional exam, and as a way to create an international standard of Pilates instruction. Different studios, gyms, and fitness centers have different requirements for their Pilates instructors. If you are planning on teaching in a particular setting it, make sure you know which education requirements are necessary.

**9.** Most Pilates programs require some sort of continuing education to keep their certificate of completion current, and PMA certified instructors must complete sixteen hours every two years. Ask about continuing education requirements and inquire about continuing education opportunities offered at the training studio.