

I am writing this as co-founder and director of The Body Control Pilates Group - and as someone who Peta Bee interviewed when writing this article.

I was both surprised and dismayed to see The Times publish what I consider to be such a poorly researched and inaccurate piece. It was also surprising that the article did not include any input from the Pilates community (even after interviewing me!) - perhaps because a proper explanation of what Pilates is and does would have essentially undermined the premise of the article.

Peta Bee showed a complete lack of understanding of the Pilates Method. Under no circumstances could we ever be accurately described as a workout "entirely dedicated to strengthening the deeply embedded muscles of the core." To imply that Pilates is no more than a workout that concentrates on core stability is the equivalent of saying that painting is an art that concentrates solely on colour or music solely on the beat – it's what you do with it that makes the difference!

The Pilates Method has many principles, not just one "flawed" one! It focuses on teaching good movement and on offering a well-balanced mind and body workout with appropriate use of the centre (or core) to help control movements. Pilates, in fact, offers precisely what is recommended in Point 1 of "So what should we do instead?" that is: exercises that "require balance, strength and stability"!

The Pilates Method has been in existence for over 80 years. It has gained increasing popularity over the last ten years, but I would argue that this not due to any one piece of scientific research but, rather, because this wonderful method works! People have been voting with their feet. I know of one Body Control Pilates teacher who has 250 people on her waiting list!

Furthermore, latest developments within the industry seem to counter the suggestion that the medical world considers our exercises could be bad for your back. Quite the opposite. We have recently launched a new exercise programme aimed at people with non-specific low back pain. This Pilates-based programme (Back4Good®) will be delivered by Body Control Pilates teachers who have undertaken additional training in dealing with low back pain and with exercise referrals from medical practitioners and the NHS. The training and the exercises, which are Pilates-based, have been accredited against a new government-backed standard and are fully endorsed by leading medical experts in the field of back pain, including Back Care, the national charity for healthier backs. So clearly we must be doing something right!

Like any exercise method, Pilates must be taught by properly qualified teachers to deliver safe, effective results. Literally millions of people worldwide now gain benefit from going to classes – it's a shame that they were not given a voice in Peta Bee's article.

Lynne Robinson

I believe that the Telegraph is planning to run a piece featuring Pilates this weekend (Sunday, I believe) - written by a much more supportive journalist! We'll do our best to keep you informed on any articles that we know of that include Body Control Pilates coverage.

All the best,

*Leigh*