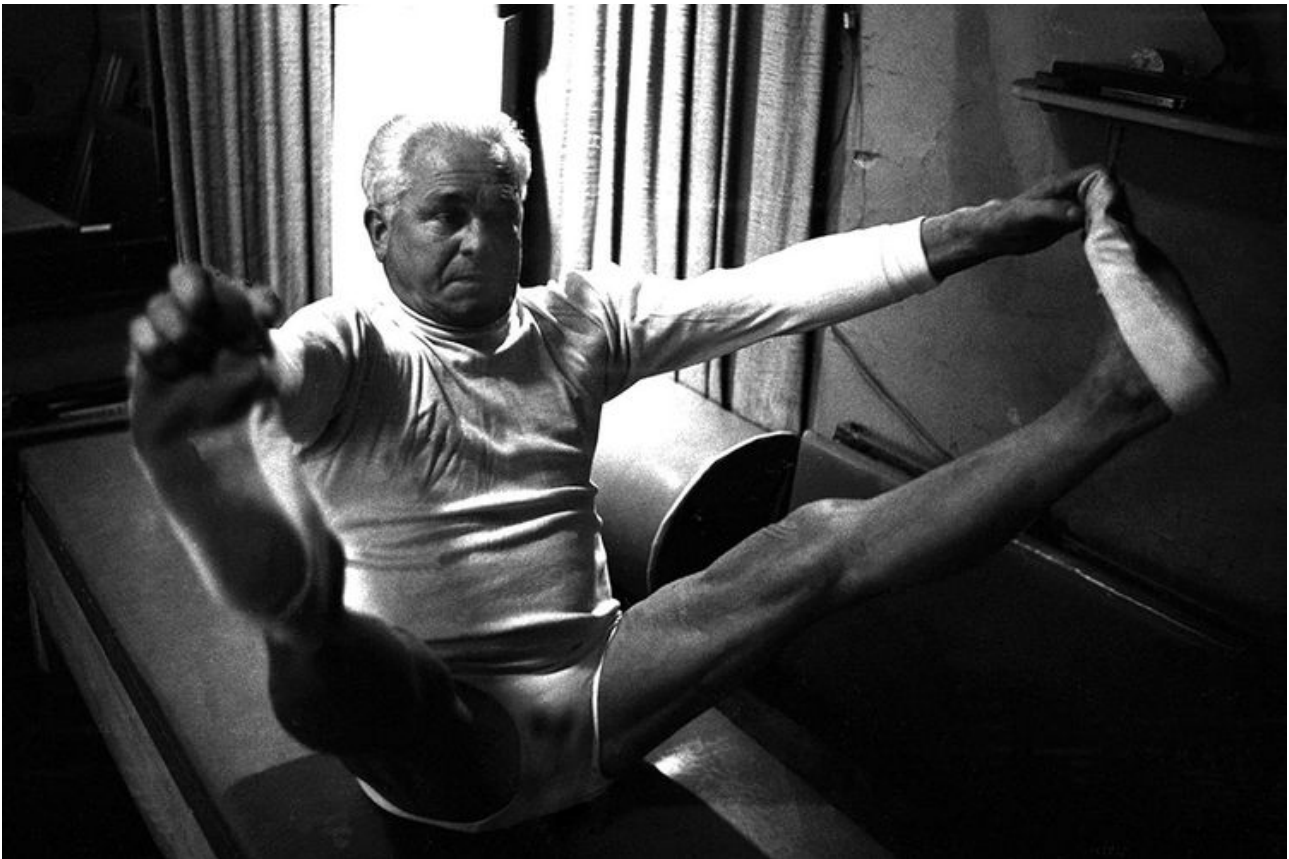




German-born Joseph Pilates was living in England and working as a circus performer and boxer when he was placed in forced internment in England at the outbreak of World War I. While in the internment camp, he began to develop the floor exercises that evolved into what we now know as Pilates mat work.

As time went by, Joseph Pilates began rehabilitating detainees who were suffering from diseases and injuries. It was invention born of necessity that inspired him to utilize items that were available to him, like bed springs and beer keg rings, to create resistance exercise equipment for his patients. These were the unlikely beginnings of the equipment we use today, like the reformer and the magic circle.

Interest in Fitness

Joseph Pilates developed his work from a strong personal experience in fitness. Unhealthy as a child, he studied many kinds of self-improvement systems. He drew from Eastern practices and Zen Buddhism. He was inspired by the ancient Greek ideal of man perfected in the development of body, mind, and spirit. On his way to developing the Pilates Method, Joseph Pilates studied anatomy and developed himself as a bodybuilder, wrestler, gymnast, boxer, skier, and diver.

Journey to NYC

After WWI, Joseph Pilates briefly returned to Germany, where his reputation as a physical trainer and healer preceded him. In Germany, he worked briefly for the Hamburg military police in self-defense and physical training. In 1925, he was asked

to train the German army. Instead, he packed his bags and took a boat to New York City.

On the boat to America, Joseph met Clara, a nurse, who would become his wife. He went on to establish his studio in New York, and Clara worked with him as he evolved the Pilates method of exercise, invented the Pilates exercise equipment, and trained students.

Teaching His Technique

Joseph Pilates taught in New York from 1926 to 1966. During that time, he trained a number of students who not only applied his work to their own lives but became teachers of the Pilates method themselves. This first generation of teachers who trained directly with Joseph Pilates is often referred to as the Pilates Elders.

Some committed themselves to pass along Joseph Pilates's work exactly as he taught it. This approach is called “classical style” Pilates. Other students went on to integrate what they learned with their own philosophies and research in anatomy and exercise sciences.

Pilates and Dancers

Joseph Pilates' New York studio put him in close proximity to a number of dance studios, which led to his discovery by the dance community. Many dancers and well-known persons of New York depended on the Pilates method of training for the strength and grace it developed in the practitioner, as well as for its rehabilitative effects. Dancers and elite athletes kept Joseph Pilates' work alive until exercise science caught up with the Pilates exercise principles in the 1980s, leading the surge of interest in Pilates that we have today.

Legacy

Joseph Pilates passed away in 1967. He maintained a fit physique throughout his life, and many photos show that he was in a remarkable physical condition in his older years. He is also said to have had a flamboyant personality. He smoked cigars, liked to party, and wore his exercise briefs wherever he wanted (even on the streets of New York). It is said that he was an intimidating, though deeply committed, instructor.

Clara Pilates continued to teach and run the studio for another 10 years after Joseph Pilates' death. Today, Joseph Pilates' legacy is carried on by the Pilates Elders, and by a large group of contemporary teachers.

Books

Joseph Pilates called his work Contrology. He defined Contrology as “the comprehensive integration of body, mind, and spirit.” He authored two books:

"Return to Life through Contrology" (1945) with William J. Miller. This short book has 93 pages, with most being illustrations for 34 mat exercises. But in it, he conveys the breadth and power of the Pilates method philosophy and technique for whole-body health.

"Your Health: A Corrective System of Exercising That Revolutionizes the Entire Field of Physical Education" (1934).

Reference:

Pilates Method



Eve Gentry ~ Photo ©1989 by Joanne Rijmes

Eve Gentry (August 21, 1909[1] – June 17, 1994;[2] née **Henrietta Greenhood**, and pseudonym **Eve Brooks**)[3] was a **modern dancer**, and later a Pilates master instructor. She was an original disciple of **Joseph Pilates**, and a master teacher of his technique to generations of instructors. She helped found the **Dance Notation Bureau** in New York City and later in 1991 she co-founded the Institute for the Pilates Method in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Her concern for preserving **choreography** led her to establish the **Dance Notation Bureau** in New York in 1940, with Ann Hutchinson Guest, Janey Price and Helen Priest Rogers. The Dance Notation Bureau promoted the ideas of Labanotation.[7] She was a charter faculty member of the **High School for the Performing Arts** (now Baltimore School for the Arts).

Persistent back and knee problems led her to investigate, and later teach, a system of physical conditioning devised by [Joseph Pilates](#).^[8] She taught "Contrology" at the [Pilates Studio](#) in New York from 1938 through 1968.^[5] Gentry also taught "Pilates" in the early 1960s at New York University's, [Tisch School of the Arts Theater Department](#).

In 1968, she moved to New Mexico, where she established a Pilates Studio on Camino de la Luz.^[9] In 1991, she co-founded the Institute for the Pilates Method in Santa Fe with [Joan Breibart](#) and Michele Larsson.^[10] Gentry is credited with founding the concept of *imprinting* in Pilates.^[11]^[8]

The first workshop was held in October 1991, taught by Gentry, using eight "Mini-Moves" inspired by the principles of [Feldenkrais](#) and [Bartenieff](#). These Mini-Moves became the foundation of the Fundamentals which are the signature of the PhysicalMind Institute, the successor to the Institute for the Pilates Method. There are now 28 Fundamentals and they have been copied by most of the subsequent Pilates Certification companies who followed the distribution system originated by Joan Breibart.^[citation needed]

She died at the age of 84 on June 17, 1994, at her home in [Santa Fe, New Mexico](#).^[2]

1909

Born Henrietta Greenhood on August 20, 1909 in San Bernardino, California.

1917

Began to study ballet, folk, and ballroom dance.

1928

Moved to San Francisco to begin studying modern dance.

1936

Moved to New York where she began a dance career with the **Hanya Holm Company**.

1938

Choreographed her most famous piece *Tenant of the Street*.

1942

Married her childhood friend, Bruce Gentry, and chose the professional name "Eve Gentry."

1944

Danced and choreographed for her own company, **Eve Gentry Dancers** and taught at the **High School for Performing Arts** and **The New Dance Group**. After persistent back and knee issues, she began to study with Joseph Pilates.

1955

Had a radical mastectomy - so much muscle was removed, she couldn't lift her arms. At the suggestion of some doctors, she and Joe filmed him teaching her advanced Pilates exercises to show to the hospital for an alliance. The hospital accused them

of lying. They filmed again with her shirtless so the hospital could see they were telling the truth.

1968

Moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico where she opened her own dance studio and Pilates center.

1991

Co-founded **The Institute for Pilates Method**.

1994

Died on June 17, 1994 at the age of 84

"The Institute for Pilates Method" most likely refers to the **PhysicalMind Institute**, which was founded in 1991 as the Institute for the Pilates Method. It was co-founded by **Eve Gentry**, **Michelle Larsson**, and **Joan Breibart** to standardize and educate the public on the Pilates Method. The institute's historical name and role in maintaining the integrity of the method led to its current name and continued work in Pilates education and certification.

- **Historical context:** The original "Institute for the Pilates Method" was established in 1991 with the goal of standardizing and educating the public about Joseph Pilates's work.
- **Current name:** The institute was founded by Eve Gentry, Michelle Larsson, and Joan Breibart and is now known as the PhysicalMind Institute.
- **Founding members:** Eve Gentry was a professional dancer who trained with Joseph Pilates for many years to address her own physical issues, as detailed in this Facebook post.
- **Mission:** The institute's purpose was to educate people about the Pilates method, which includes a series of rehabilitative exercises.
- **Legacy:** The institute's work and educational programs help prepare individuals for a career in the Pilates industry by teaching comprehensive knowledge and skills, such as those found on this website.





Joan Breibart started practicing Pilates during the 1960s.[11] She co-authored the Macmillan textbook *Introductory Marketing: A Programmed Approach* (1971).[9] In 1987, she moved from New York to Santa Fe, New Mexico following the 1987 stock market crash. [10][12]

In 1991, she co-founded the Institute for Pilates Method[13][14] in Santa Fe, New Mexico, now known as the PhysicalMind Institute,[15] with Eve Gentry and Michele Larsson.[16][17] Before becoming the president of the Institute for the Pilates Method, she worked with Seligman & Latz, a beauty salon chain.[18]

More recently, Breibart invented the Tye4 and Tye4x Pilates Wearable Reformer[19] and currently heads the PhysicalMind Institute.[20] She also holds patents for the Mini-Reformer, the Mve Chair, Parasetter, HeadFloater, SmartSEAT, and other fitness equipment.

Breibart has authored several books, including *Standing Pilates* (2004),[21] *The Body Biz* (2006), and *Suckered Into Wellness* (2017). She is also the co-author of the Macmillan textbook *Introductory Marketing: A Programmed Approach* (1971).[9]

- *Diet Directives* (2000) (with Meredith Luce)
- *Standing Pilates: Strengthen and Tone Your Body Wherever You Are* (2004). ISBN 978-0-471-56655-7.
- *The Body Biz: The Pilates Story* (2006)
- *Suckered Into Wellness: The Truth Will Set You & Your Body Free* (2017)
- *80Bites: The Real Portion Plan, The Real Science of Hormones* (2021)

