

Eye in the Sky:  
Shape Shifting

With Zoey Trap, MS



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Objectives	
Discover	Discover specific applications for using Shapes in Space for progression
Learn	How to 'see' Shapes in Space' and how they look in motion: Initiation/patterning /transitioning
Practice	With props and a partner to find solutions
Think about	How to correct during Parts A/B of the Session Format and how to carry solutions forward in Parts C/ D.

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Key Concepts & Critical Connections

- Pilates Stance
- Powerhouse
- Scoop
- Centerline
- Box
- Frame
- Length & Opposition

Critical Connections:

- Ribs to Scapula/ Scapula to Ribs
- Heel to Seat
- 3 Anchors



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### Benefits to Understanding Shapes

<b>1</b> Provide clues to how things should feel	<b>2</b> Give cues new inspiration	<b>3</b> Understanding and program progression
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### Shapes in Space

- This is like that
- Similar shape but may have different relationship to gravity and/or be on different apparatus
- Most exercises have more than one 'shape'

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### What to Look for in Shapes

- Initiation- how did they start the shape/pattern
- Space- where could there be more? Where is it lost
- Bumps and Hollows
- Symmetry / loss of symmetry
- Is there a weak link?
- Connectivity!

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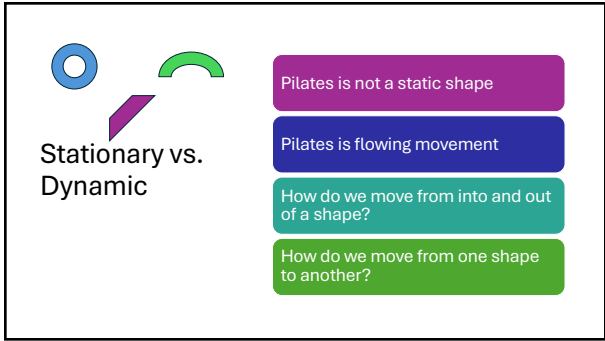
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**Stationary vs. Dynamic**

- Pilates is not a static shape
- Pilates is flowing movement
- How do we move from into and out of a shape?
- How do we move from one shape to another?

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**Movement guidelines**

- Movement emanates from the center out
- Movement is most efficient when coming from a stable platform
- Movement is guided and controlled by the nervous system but influenced by the body's musculo-skeletal structure
- Good movement is efficient
- Movement is a whole body activity
- Movement is an individual expression

*"All that is important is this one moment in movement. Make the moment important, vital, and worth living. Do not let it slip away unnoticed and unused."—Martha Graham*

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**Pilates Stance**



- Not an exercise perse but a position we carry into the work
  - Standing
  - Supine
  - Prone
  - Weight Bearing on Hands
- Individualized Working Position
- Imagine: A Greek Column
- Explore

Fundamental: ISO Abs

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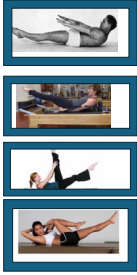
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### The Hundred

- Found over & over in the system
- Combines spinal and hip flexion
- Imagine: A Canoe
- How to:
  - Initiate
  - Do it right vs. wrong
  - Solutions
  - Exploration of Supine & Standing



Fundamental: Head Nod/Neck Curl

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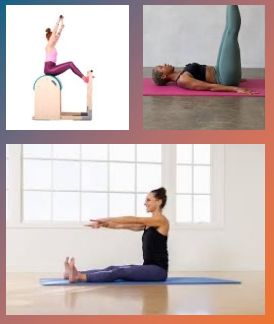
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### Sitting

- A position we are in all day!
- Upright/ Upside Down- find it all around the studio
- Explore

Fundamental: Seated Tracking

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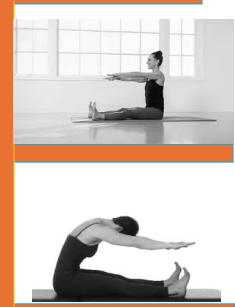
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### C-Curve

- Involves the entire spine top to bottom and bottom to top
- Axial elongation, Opposition, Head to Tail
- Common Errors/Ideas to Address
- Worked in many Pilates exercises
  - Focus on seated as in:
    - Short Box Round
    - Stomach Massage
    - Spine Stretch Forward



Fundamentals: Head Nod, Neck Curl, Leg Slide, Pelvic Clock

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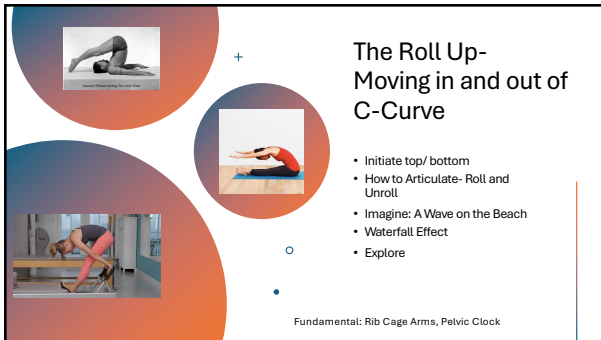
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### The Roll Up- Moving in and out of C-Curve

- Initiate top/ bottom
- How to Articulate- Roll and Unroll
- Imagine: A Wave on the Beach
- Waterfall Effect
- Explore

Fundamental: Rib Cage Arms, Pelvic Clock

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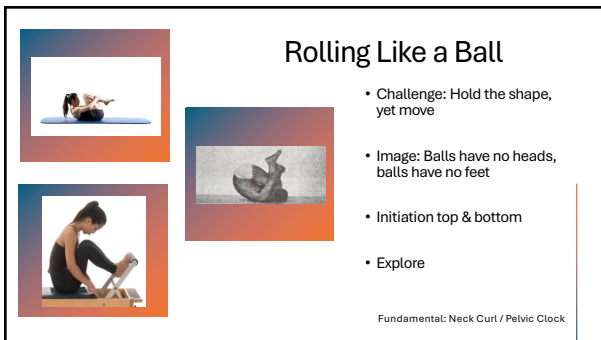
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### Rolling Like a Ball

- Challenge: Hold the shape, yet move
- Image: Balls have no heads, balls have no feet
- Initiation top & bottom
- Explore

Fundamental: Neck Curl / Pelvic Clock

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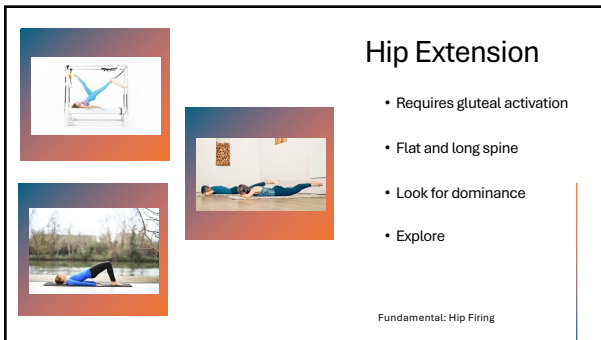
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### Hip Extension

- Requires gluteal activation
- Flat and long spine
- Look for dominance
- Explore

Fundamental: Hip Firing

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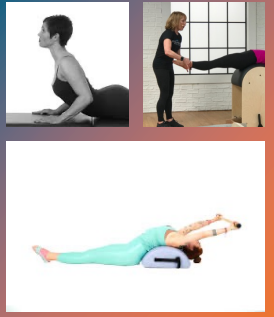
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### Spinal Extension

- Know what part of the spine are you extending?
- Recognize the Limiters
- Initiate properly
  - Depends on exercise, set up position, and direction
- Stabilize
- Explore

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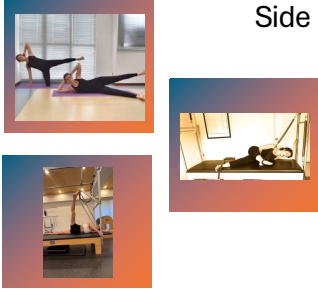
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### Side Lying Orientation

- Think Pilates Stance with a different gravitational position and challenge

Fundamental: Bent Twig

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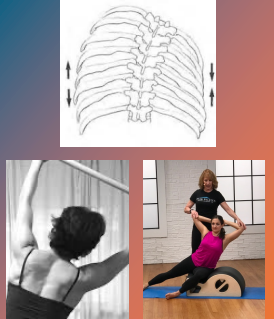
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### Lateral Flexion

- The Role of the QL
- Set Up Correctly
- Initiation
- Long, Even and Smooth
- Like a Rainbow
- Explore

Fundamental: Bent Twig

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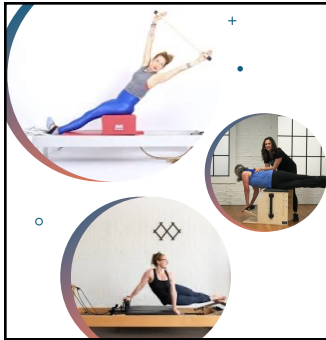
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### Rotation

- Spine has limited rotation, requires the ribs to move
- Initiation
- Patterning and position
  - Push & Pull

Fundamental: Knee Sway tick tock

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### Connecting the Arms

- Move the arms from the back
  - Let the scapula glide and guide
- Functional Movement
  - Reaching forward- protraction
  - Reaching backward- retraction
- Connect the arms to the whole body
  - Lats are the bridge between upper and lower
- Explore



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### Connecting to the Legs

- Initiate: Move the legs from the hip
- Explore



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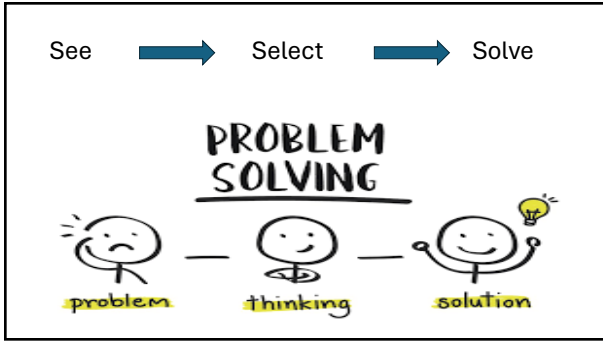
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**See: What to Look for...**

- Powerhouse Activation
- Initiation of movement pattern
- Overall alignment/ misalignment
  - C-Curve 'shape' and use
  - Where are they collapsing/ where is space and length lost?
- Substitution pattern/ Dominance
- Application of Pilates Principles
- Movement Quality

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**Select: Focus on the Priority**

Ask yourself:

- What am I seeing that is recurring shape after shape, exercise after exercise or movement pattern after movement pattern?
- How would that change the practice if improved?
- How would that impact the student's life if improved?

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**Solutions for Positive Change**

- What is needed to improve the priority?
- Body Awareness comes first!
  - Teaching moment
  - If they can't find the feel they can't change the movement
- Cues
- Props- support/ guide
- Touch



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**Focus  
Focus  
Focus**

**As the Instructor you:**

- Bring the focus
  - Shine the light on what is needed
- Keep the focus
  - Be disciplined and stick to the priority theme
  - Help to brighten the light / understanding
- Create understanding of what and how to do it correctly and how this improves Pilates movement and function!

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**Final Q & A**



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Thank you!

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Fall- 2026 – Mastery!



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