



Lindsay and Moira Merrithew

President and CEO, Executive Director of Education, Merrithew, Toronto, Canada

By Patricia Amend



Moira, you were a dancer with major ballet companies, and, Lindsay, you studied at Juilliard, and were an actor. How have your entertainment backgrounds informed your business?

Our backgrounds were instrumental to our getting involved with Pilates, *and* they shaped our approach and style of education and video production. This, coupled with Lindsay's business degree, laid the foundation for establishing our business, building a brand, and growing what's now a global community.

Clearly, much has changed since you cofounded Merrithew more than 25 years ago. Please tell us about that.

We began as Stott Pilates with a singular purpose and focus on the Pilates method of exercise. Then, both our instructors and the facilities we worked with wanted to diversify to remain competitive and cater to a broader segment of the population—people seeking long-term health and lifestyle solutions to improve their quality of life. As a result, our evolution into mindful movement came about naturally and somewhat organically, as we've always taken a mindful approach to what we do.

Recently, Merrithew has moved into new programs—Total Barre, Core, Zen-ga, and Pilates for kids. What's the rationale behind this brand expansion?

Our fundamental mission has guided us over the years—to motivate people of all ages and fitness abilities to lead healthier lives. Our newest, branded mind/body programs are built on the Stott Pilates method, incorporating the latest in exercise science, as well as newer fitness practices. This helps clubs and fitness professionals expand into new areas, while ensuring that Merrithew continues to remain current and relevant to the evolving needs of our community.

How has Merrithew worked with clubs to drive their success with Pilates and other mind/body programs?

We've worked with numerous facilities of all sizes, and have enjoyed the best results when we've engaged them as partners, tackling everything from knowing their members and instructor base, to assessing their space, to planning programs—both education and equipment—to maximize their revenue. It's a matter of understanding the client's business to help them create the program that best suits their needs.

What are the most rewarding, and most challenging, aspects of working together as a married couple? Who's responsible for what?

What's most rewarding is that we've taken this journey together, and we have skills that truly complement one another's. It's been a team effort that now includes our children ... of whom we're immensely proud.

That said, there are always challenges in any business. We've managed to keep them at bay by having distinctly separate roles.

Lindsay, as president and CEO, drives the vision forward and provides the leadership necessary to ensure that the end product, be it equipment, education, or the production of our video content, meets the highest standards.

Moira, as executive director of education, oversees and works with our team to ensure that those who train with us are getting the best, most up-to-date education possible in mindful exercise, as well as effective guidance in the career paths they've chosen.

Finally, you've created a very successful company, and each of you, as well as Merrithew, has won numerous awards. If you were to identify one secret to your success, what would it be?

We agree that the secret has been the dedicated internal team we've built, and our incredible and inspiring external community. We all share Merrithew's mission. —

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