



## SLOW BURN

Integrate mindful movement into fitness programming

*Patrick Przyborowski*

**M**ind-body exercise is increasingly popular because of the results many clients enjoy upon learning to move with intention — mindfully, with their minds and bodies in sync. I quickly learned this after I found that Pilates strongly complemented my practices and methods from my ACE certification, and for the past 15 years now, I've worked to support my clients in performing safe yet very effective exercise. However, not everyone jumps on board right away with mind-body exercise, so I've also learned how to alter my communication techniques to encourage clients to drop any preconceived notions they may have that moving mindfully isn't going to give them 'a solid workout.' For instructors hoping to similarly inspire their clients, here's what I've found:

### ADAPT YOUR COMMUNICATION

As fitness professionals, we all know one of the first questions to ask clients is, "What are your goals?" But sometimes we don't always hear what goals the client values the most. I let clients do most of the talking and mainly respond with follow-up questions to clarify what outcomes they are prioritizing. Then, I tell them we're going to do a program that aligns with their goal, rather than trying to sell them on mindfulness, Pilates, or mind-body exercise in general.

### TRAIN SMARTER, NOT HARDER

I mix and match different fitness modalities such as intervals and bodyweight training with related equipment so that my clients feel they're getting what they need out of their



workout. For example, a group of male clients who come in early each morning enjoy feeling as though they've had a good sweat session. The intervals and weights appeal to their impulse to work hard, while the Reformer serves as a reminder to move mindfully on and off equipment. After a while the mindfulness off the equipment becomes second nature to them.

### TONE DOWN THE DATA

While some clients (men in particular) tend to appreciate data that supports their pursuit of a specific fitness goal, most clients prefer not to have a bunch of information thrown at them during a workout or initial assessment. Rather, providing clients the space to be heard and understood pays dividends. It deepens the appreciation they feel when they are provided a plan that actually

reflects their needs and wants and it opens them up to trying multiple modalities to meet their needs and it translates into retention for the studio and adherence for clients. I'm always charmed when clients are surprised to find out they've been doing Pilates and other mind-body modalities for weeks without realizing it.

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*Patrick Przyborowski currently runs his full-service Pilates and personal training studio, Practice Fitness, located in Dayton, Ohio. In addition to training his own clients, he also offers mindful movement training for other instructors. Patrick holds a B.S. in Communications and a variety of certifications including: STOTT PILATES®, CORE™, Halo® Training, TRX®, FMS Level 1 and ACE. [www.practice-center.com](http://www.practice-center.com)*