

GO WITH YOUR STRENGTHS

"The best advice anyone ever gave me came from my husband, who is an entrepreneur and has created and sold several businesses. As I was transitioning from my home studio into a larger studio, I was trying to decide what types of classes to offer—group or private, duos or trios, machines or mat. A lot of teachers kept telling me that group classes are where the money is, and that I should concentrate on those. I found, however, that in my small home studio my clients progressed faster with one-on-ones and I got more satisfaction from teaching them.

"My husband advised me to stick to my guns and offer only private classes in a private setting. Other studios were charging the same as I was for 'privates,' but stuffing six teachers and their clients in the same equipment room. He said that I could give my clients a better experience by keeping it one-on-one and I would have more client retention, with a clientele who could afford my services in the long term. Group-class clients, he said, would be the first to stop Pilates during difficult economic times, while private class clients would be more 'recession-proof.'

"It turned out that he was right. I have had very high client retention; most of my clients have taken anywhere from two to five private classes per week for the past five years. My income has been steady since I decided to concentrate on private (and duo) classes without any drop in attendance from the financial crisis. I even had to hire other teachers who help me to teach my now overflowing book. The feedback I get from new clients is that the truly private setting really helps them to concentrate and work deeper without distraction, a real luxury in today's crowded Pilates environment."



ERIN MOHR, founder of *Pilates Privé, Paris*

DO WHAT YOU LOVE

"On the day of my high-school graduation my father said to me, 'Carrie, the key to life is to find something you love to do and then find a way to make money doing it.' My father was a writer and lived by that same code. Soon after graduation, I became a professional dancer. It was my passion and now I was able to find a way to make money doing it! When that career came to an end due to injuries, I thought back to my father's words of wisdom. In that moment, the only thing I loved to do other than ballet was Pilates. Pilates allowed me to move my body without pain, plus I was also intrigued by the precision of the technique of the method. So I got certified and started teaching. I often think to myself that the reason I am successful at what I do is because I truly love doing it. Yes, the paycheck is nice but it isn't my motivation. When you teach from your heart, success will follow."



CARRIE CAMPBELL, owner of *Positively Pilates, Hoboken, NJ*

NEVER STOP LEARNING

"Regarding great words of wisdom, I got two nuggets. Both came from Troy McCarty of White Cloud Studios in Cleveland, and both came my first year of teaching full time. First, he told me to take any class, any workshop, any opportunity possible to learn from other teachers. He advised that even if I didn't share a style with them, I would always walk away with something of value.

"He also gave me what is probably the most important advice I've ever been given in my life. He looked me in the eye and said, 'You have great instincts. Don't be afraid to trust them.' In May, I will have been teaching for nine years—I've never once regretted trusting my instincts."



MARCIA POLAS, founder of *polaspilates, Denver*

Anne Marie O'Connor is the executive editor of *Pilates Style*.