

Like Father...

...like kids! And when dad's a Pilates teacher, you grow up mad about the method! In honor of Father's Day, three men share how they're passing on their passion for Pilates.

by Anne Marie O'Connor



WHETHER THEY'RE PRESCHOOLERS WITH ZERO ATTENTION SPAN, OR OLDER KIDS WHO ARE PERPETUALLY GLUED TO THEIR PHONES, PILATES IS SOMETHING PARENTS CAN SHARE WITH THEIR KIDS, albeit in different ways, depending on their age and interests. Not only can it bring you closer together, but it's a great, safe workout for kids, one that has some great side benefits: It can make them less prone to injury; it helps make them more body aware; it can improve their spinal alignment and posture and make them less prone to injury. Here, how three fathers made it part of their families' lives.

"Having your children enjoy practicing your passion, well, that's just a bit of heaven on earth!"

—Robert Turner, owner of Breathe Pilates in Lexington, KY

FATHER OF: Twins Naomi Edison-Turner and Sienna Edison-Turner, 15 years old

HOW WE GOT STARTED: I first began doing Pilates with them when they were little tots around five years old. I was not a Pilates teacher when they were born, but I was practicing it; they were two years old when I did my first training. They would always watch me working out and try to do what I was doing, so I began sharing pieces of the work with them in a playful manner, i.e. "I'll roll up and hand you this ball and then you roll down with it, and then you roll back up and give it to me, and then I'll give it to your sister...let's call it the Roll Up!"

OUR SESSIONS NOW: They're more formal now, but I still keep it playful because they are my baby girls and I want them to hang out and have fun! I am a former Marine and can be pretty serious about my training, so it's funny to watch them when they are being as serious as I can be when they are training alone. But if I put on my sergeant face while working with them, they're like, "Wooo, look at the time, I think someone's calling me, gotta go!"

WHY THEY'RE FANS: They have really begun to appreciate Pilates now that they are involved in soccer and track. They see how it has been beneficial to other students I have worked with, and are inspired by their results.

WHY DAD LOVES SHARING HIS PASSION FOR PILATES: Because I know that the multifaceted benefits of the work can be so positively transformative. Pilates can help them in so many areas of their lives, as I've witnessed it help myself and many others.



“Pilates is the one thing we still have in common as she gets into her teenage years.”

—Brandon Gamble, advanced and continuing education coordinator for BASI Pilates and owner of Pilates Bodies in Motion in Tacoma, WA

FATHER OF: April, age 13

HOW WE GOT STARTED: When she was little, April would play in the studio and roll around like a wild monkey on days I was training. Eventually I started to show her how to use the Pilates equipment and do fun mat exercises, always keeping in mind that she was a child and had the attention span of a gnat.

OUR SESSIONS NOW: She is 13 now and still has the attention span of a gnat, but now it's more geared to social media, friends and dance. She seems to be glued to her phone and computer screen for long hours these days, which adversely affects her posture and can lead to recurrent back problems.

Her sessions have become more formal through her mother (Lianne Gamble, also a Pilates teacher). April is big into dance and attends one of the best dance studios around (Image Studio of Dance in Fircrest, WA). She was looking for strength gains for competitive dance; her current Pilates goals are

cross training, injury prevention and core strength. She fits sessions in when she can on the equipment and does mat work.

WHY SHE'S A FAN: April sees the value of Pilates as a training method for developing the technique that helps build resilience in ligaments and tendons in order to meet the strenuous demands of dance. I believe she'll develop a deep appreciation for the Pilates method, not only because both her parents are Pilates teachers (we don't force her to practice, though!), but because of her love of movement and athletic pursuits.

WHY DAD LOVES SHARING HIS PASSION FOR PILATES: As my beautiful daughter has ventured into the teenage years, doing Pilates together has kept a common ground for us to continually grow our relationship, and anything that can help maintain a healthy relationship with your child is a win-win. Plus encouraging kids to be active is always a good idea; in fact, doing Pilates is a wonderful way for kids to exercise as long as they're doing it safely and enjoying it. I advise parents to keep practicing it with your kids and don't worry if they have a Pilates meltdown from time to time. Be patient and enjoy the Pilates journey and connection with your children. It'll create memories that'll last a lifetime.



“If I have fun, then they can see that and they want to have fun with me.”

—Joseph Quinn, co-owner of Real People Pilates in Berkeley, CA, and co-founder of Pilates Metrics

FATHER OF: Bernadette, age 5; Mabel, age 3; and Hugo, almost 2

HOW WE GOT STARTED: I met their mother through Pilates and we owned a studio together long before the kids came along, so Pilates is just a part of our family's fabric! Smaller Pilates apparatus are always lying about the house and mom and dad just get down and move.

HOW WE GOT STARTED: Naturally the kids are curious and full of giggles so they bum-rush the mat and get involved. Right now, it's just fun. It's a time to be silly and interact physically.

OUR SESSIONS NOW: Pilates is being embedded as normal. It's just what we do. Just as we have musical instruments around, we have Pilates apparatus around. You just play. In time there will be refinement and more precise instruction; eventually, I'll explain, “The Crab is a precursor to Open Leg Rocker, just as I'll say when explaining

about music, “This is how a G-major modulates to an A-minor 7th.” I can't wait to nerd out with them like that...but this stage is immensely enjoyable (but exhausting), so I'm just enjoying it and not trying to push them.

WHY DAD LOVES SHARING HIS PASSION FOR PILATES: I can't predict what they'll become passionate about as they develop into adolescence and then adulthood. What I am certain about is that they'll learn from their parents to embrace that passion, whatever it is, and give it their all. Celebrate that which stirs you, kids, and make some damn noise! **PS**

PREVIOUS PAGE: ROBERT TURNER KEEPS SESSIONS WITH HIS 15-YEAR-OLD TWIN DAUGHTERS, NAOMI EDISON-TURNER (CENTER) AND SIENNA EDISON-TURNER, PLAYFUL AND FUN.

OPPOSITE PAGE: BRANDON GAMBLE AND HIS DAUGHTER, APRIL, 13, DO DOWN STRETCH ON THE REFORMER. HE SAYS THAT PILATES HELPS KEEP THEM CLOSE.

ABOVE: JOSEPH QUINN ENJOYS UNSTRUCTURED PLAY ON THE PILATES EQUIPMENT WITH HIS KIDS: (FROM LEFT) MABEL, 3; BERNADETTE, 5, AND HUGO, ALMOST 2.