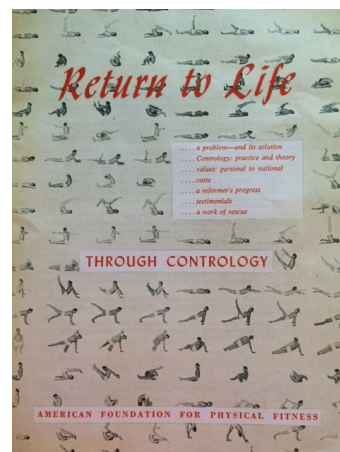


The Pilates Pamphlet: Return to Life Through Contrology- Joseph Pilates and Fredrick Rand Rogers

This pamphlet is a re-publication of an original promotional pamphlet by Joseph Pilates and Fredrick Rand Rogers. It was first published in 1957, 12 years after Joe Pilates published *Return to Life Through Contrology*. This time it is published by Cathy Strack and this version contains additional research, history, rare photos and Joe's client testimonials. This truly is a little piece of history and can be seen to set to rest much of the in-house bickering we see on various Pilates forums!



It opens with an incredibly impressive list of Joe's clients under their various job titles, artists, dancers, society, writers, health & medicine, music and so on. Then it moves to an introduction of Joe's co-writer, Fredrick Rogers.

Pilates and Rogers were life long friends who shared many beliefs about fitness. Together they formed the American Foundation for Physical Fitness. Cathy notes that when looking at the writings and practices of both of them, it is difficult to see the difference between them. They both believed strongly in education the public about mind and body fitness, about starting the work with children at an early age and they both felt frustrated and unrecognised. Roger's wife interestingly is quoted in saying about Joe's studio,

“Joe would set up a regime for each new client and then retire to his perch where he would watch each new and old client as he or she went through the regime....while Clara went from patient to patient...”

The pamphlet then clearly describes what Contrology is and what it isn't. It is so well-written with a much lighter tone than either of Joe's books perhaps demonstrating the influence of Rogers. It is obvious that this is a promotional pamphlet, selling to us the magic that is Contrology, describing it to be the *“one golden key to abiding joy”*. Contrology is stated to be a *“system ready-made for those who desire to drink longest as well as most deeply at the fountain of youth”*. It is spine tingling stuff!

So often I find Pilates reduced to how it strengthens this muscle, stretches this area, but in reading this pamphlet you completely realise the full scope, magnitude and intention of Pilates' work.

“Contrology movements are designed to exercise to its full extension every single bundle in the 800 voluntary muscle-motors each of us has been given to alter both ourselves and the world's face:...And stretch to the limit every tendon that we may better serve. Especially those binding vertebrae together; until the spine- the very Backbone of Life- becomes as straight as a plumb line and as resilient as a whip....”

The pamphlet clearly puts to rest many of the topics that are debated by instructors, often rather hotly! One of the questions is whether Joe would have evolved and changed his method if he was alive today,

“How all this is accomplished is a long story: a tale of a half-century of Pilates' analyses, experiments and inventions”

So the answer would be no! Another is whether he would use mini balls, bands, music etc, his answer would be,

“No medicine balls or other balls are used....nor are any movements made quickly or jerkily... no noise above muted background music under the commanding voice of the instructor....Contrology is not “medicine” or even “physical therapy”

The next section consists of lists by Joe Pilates of potential clients who would greatly benefit from his Method and why. Listed in his own words, these include artists, physically handicapped, executives, mentally gifted, teachers-of whatever, armed services, American education and finally national safety, glory, happiness.

We then read testimonials from Joe clients written personally to him and they are very similar to ones we ourselves might receive from our clients. For example, by J Schuterstr,

“...simply thrilled. What I could not accomplish through walking, swimming, your Reformer did in a jiffy. I came slim...healthy...strong as never before...”

These make fantastic reading, to hear what Joe’s clients thought of him and his Method.

This is a really fun pamphlet. You feel as though you are part of Joe Pilates world, living in this era and it is crammed with less known quotes about Joe and the Method. If you love to read about the history of Pilates and the man himself this is a must-have item for your library!

Available on eBay by contacting Cathy Strack