

# INTERVIEW WITH MARY BANGE

(Pilates Houston Association - December 2011)

by **Cody Robbins**



*In honor of the Pink Ribbon program, PHA presents an interview with Mary Bange, Pink Ribbon Program provider.*

Mary Bange is a PEAK certified Pilates Instructor with a specialty in working with Breast Cancer Survivors, and is a Master Trainer for the Pink Ribbon Program in the Houston area. I became a fan of Mary after subbing at the Pilates Studio of Friendswood and working with one of her Pink Ribbon Program success stories. After speaking with Mary, I've learned that more people going through treatment and surgery for breast cancer need to know about the Pink Ribbon Program, and that it exists in their communities.

Q: How did you get involved with the Pink Ribbon Program?

A: When I was getting certified to teach Pilates in 2006 I became aware of the Pink Ribbon Program. Founder Doreen Puglisi had just begun to certify others to teach the program, so I went to New York to Get trained by Doreen and started working with breast cancer survivors shortly after that.

Q: How did the Pink Ribbon Program come about?

A: Doreen had a studio in New Jersey and noticed that quite a few breast cancer survivors had come into her studio, and that following their treatment or surgery, they were prescribed no rehabilitation or exercise program. They were basically told to "go and do

it" or maybe given a sheet of paper with one exercise on it that they should do. Doreen developed a program to work with those clients and then she discovered that she had breast cancer herself. She had a mastectomy and implant reconstruction and then used her program to regain strength and range of motion. What I really like about this program is that it was developed by, and lived by a breast cancer survivor. Based on her own experience Doreen perfected her 4 phase program that is now the very successful Pink Ribbon Program.

Q: Where is the Pink Ribbon Program here in Houston?

A: The Pink Ribbon Program is available among certified instructors at their individual studios.

Q: So if I had the training, I could be a Pink Ribbon "Provider" in my Sugar Land studio?

A: Exactly!

Q: How do I get the training?

A: There needs to be a facility that wants to host the workshop. They would have to contact the Pink Ribbon Program and set a date to host the workshop.

Q: What is the goal of the Pink Ribbon Program?

A: To help breast cancer survivors regain strength and range of motion, and at the end of the 6-week program to graduate them to a mainstream exercise program.

Q: So after their 6-weeks with you in the Pink Ribbon Program, you could then refer them to other Pilates instructors or other exercise programs?

A: My goal...for example...Many women who come into the program cannot do a lateral raise any higher than their shoulder so I work to get them all the way to 180 degrees of movement but if I can't get them there, I can increase some of it. At the end of the program, I give them guidelines on how to modify as they need to going into any exercise program.

Q: How do breast cancer survivors and those going through treatment learn about the Pink Ribbon Program?

A: They are usually self motivated and find my website. I am currently teaching a class of breast cancer survivors at Memorial Herman, Memorial City...with a new class on Tuesdays. The great thing about it is that the class is provided at no charge to their patients. I also have a referral system with other cancer treatment facilities in town...but it's been me approaching them about it and selling them on what a good option the Pink Ribbon Program is for their patients.

Q: Do breast cancer survivors get a special rate through the Pink Ribbon Program?

A: I offer a 50% discount to my regular rate. At my certification workshops people want to look at this as a "premium ". What they have to remember is that the time this program is most valuable to the client is when they are actually receiving their bills, co-pays etc. If you charge your normal Pilates rate, you're probably going to price most of them out..

Q: What other areas do you specialize in?

A: Pilates for Golf, I'm TRX certified, and a Master Trainer with the Pink Ribbon Program.

More information about Mary:

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