

Build Confidence and Purpose with Pilates

Season 2 · Episode 8 · Story Planner · Tania Huddart

A list of instructions is bland, and it's hard to remember. Weave the same instructions into a story and suddenly people can hold on to them. A body remembers a party far better than six instructions.

You don't need to be a novelist. You've been hearing stories since you were a child. A story has a setting, characters and a plot. Use this page to plan one around an exercise your clients always forget.

Exercise

Client or class

1. Start with the person

What does this client need, to bring their body back into balance?

What's stopping them?

What pictures come to mind when they do the movement? That's where the story is hiding.

2. Setting: where does it happen?

The place, the surroundings, the weather, the season, even the smells. The more detail, the better.

My setting

3. Characters: who is it about?

Real people, animals, or made-up creatures. What are they like? What do they want? What worries them?

My characters

4. Plot: what happens?

Introduction. The characters, the setting, and what sets things going.

Rising action. It gets harder.

Conflict. Two things pulling against each other.

Climax. The moment of real tension.

Theme. The point of it all: what you want their body to do.

An example: the party

Introduction: you arrive at a party. Someone puts weights on your shoulders and ties helium balloons to your wrists, so your arms float up.

Rising action: across a big table, someone wants to shake your hand. But there's a birthday cake in the middle.

Conflict: reach forward to shake that hand, and draw your belly away from the cake.

Climax: you have to do it all again on the other side. Or you spot someone in the class crushing the cake.

Theme: keep your shoulders relaxed, lift your belly as you lean forward, and please, for goodness sake, don't ruin the birthday cake.

The exercise? Saw.

Before you try it

A good story has one clear theme. It can draw on your own life. And it leaves a little room for wonder, and for the client to solve something.

"Make the audience put things together. Don't give them 4. Give them 2+2." Andrew Stanton, filmmaker

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