

Pilates Ring Essentials: Teaching Tips

A Free Teacher Resource from Living Lotus Online Studio

1. Introduction

Welcome!

This resource was designed for **Pilates teachers and movement educators** who love exploring mindful resistance, small props, and the intelligence of movement.

Inside, you'll find practical guidance, sample exercises, and teaching strategies you can use right away to deepen your own classes and understanding of Pilates ring work.

The exercises featured here are inspired by **Power in Presence**, a 6-class Pilates ring series available exclusively to members of **Living Lotus Online Studio**. This guide is your first step into that world — an opportunity to experience the precision, curiosity, and mindful strength that shape this unique approach.

2. Teaching Philosophy & Approach

The Pilates ring isn't just a prop — it's a tool for mindful awareness and intelligent movement.

Each class in *Power in Presence* blends **precise, purposeful movement with mindful pacing** to help you:

- Build steadiness and ease through balanced strength
- Refine alignment and coordination with intelligent, responsive feedback
- Move with clarity, curiosity, and attention rather than force

My approach to Pilates ring work focuses on **mindful, responsive movement** rather than simply chasing fatigue. The ring provides subtle feedback and gentle resistance, helping refine alignment, posture, and coordination while awakening stabilizer muscles often overlooked in traditional practice.

This work integrates both **trauma-informed and mindfulness-based principles**, encouraging presence, breath awareness, and autonomy in every exercise. It's about tuning in — not pushing through — and guiding students toward connection, control, and embodied strength.

3. Sample Exercises

Each of these six exercises highlights one movement from the full *Power in Presence* series. Use them for class inspiration, teacher demonstration, or your own exploration.

Class 1: Pilates Lean Back with Ring Squeeze (Hands)

Setup / Alignment:

- Sit tall, knees bent, feet grounded, ring between hands at chest height.
- Engage the deep core as you gently lean back, maintaining length through the spine.

Teaching Tips / Cueing:

- The ring provides feedback — think of “meeting” the ring rather than squeezing it.
- Encourage movement from the centre, keeping shoulders relaxed.

Variations:

- **Beginner:** Reduce the lean back range.
 - **Advanced:** Add a subtle rotation with each lean.
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Class 2: The Hundred with Ring Between Ankles

Setup / Alignment:

- Lie on your back, ring between ankles, legs lifted.
- Engage the inner thighs as you extend legs and lift head and shoulders.

Teaching Tips / Cueing:

- Inhale for 5 pulses, exhale for 5 — maintain steady breath and pelvic stability.
- The ring keeps the inner thighs active, supporting core alignment.

Variations:

- **Beginner:** Bend knees slightly or keep head down.
 - **Advanced:** Extend legs lower to the mat.
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Class 3: Chest Expansion with Ring Behind Back**Setup / Alignment:**

- Kneeling or standing, hold the ring behind your back between hands, elbows soft.

Teaching Tips / Cueing:

- Use micro-squeezes — the goal is awareness, not force.
- Encourage opening through the chest while maintaining neutral ribs.

Variations:

- **Beginner:** Keep the ring higher on the back.
 - **Advanced:** Add a lift to toes or subtle torso rotation.
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Class 4: Standing Side Leg Lift with Ring at Hip**Setup / Alignment:**

- Stand tall, place the ring between one hip and the same-side hand.
- Press gently into the ring while lifting the opposite leg out to the side.

Teaching Tips / Cueing:

- The ring offers feedback through the torso — press without collapsing the waist.
- Keep spine long, pelvis level, and breath steady.

Variations:

- **Beginner:** Lower the lift height.
 - **Advanced:** Add pulses or extend the hold.
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Class 5: Double Leg Circle with Ring Between Ankles**Setup / Alignment:**

- Lie supine, ring between ankles, arms by sides.
- Extend legs to 45°, circling them slowly with control.

Teaching Tips / Cueing:

- Keep movement fluid and precise — focus on maintaining pelvic stillness.
- The ring helps guide symmetrical activation through inner thighs and core.

Variations:

- **Beginner:** Perform circles with one leg at a time.
 - **Advanced:** Increase the circle range or slow down tempo.
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Class 6: Prone Arm & Leg Lift with Ring Behind Back**Setup / Alignment:**

- Lie belly down, holding the ring between hands behind your back.
- Engage glutes, lift legs, chest, and arms slightly, lengthening through the spine.

Teaching Tips / Cueing:

- The ring draws awareness into the upper back and shoulders — think “lift and lengthen.”
- Avoid compression; the movement should feel expansive through the chest and spine.

Variations:

- **Beginner:** Lift arms or legs separately.
 - **Advanced:** Lift higher and hold for several breaths, maintaining smooth breath.
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5. Teaching Notes & Tips

- **Modify with care:** For students with shoulder or low back limitations, reduce range or add support under the pelvis or chest.
 - **Use the ring as feedback, not force:** Encourage students to explore sensation rather than “make something happen”.
 - **Cue with clarity:** Small, intentional cues help deepen awareness — less is often more.
 - **Progress mindfully:** Precision builds power; over-effort disrupts flow.
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Teacher Offer & Next Steps

Want to experience the full series?

The complete **Pilates Ring Series: Power in Presence** is available exclusively to members of **Living Lotus Online Studio**. If you're a **teacher or movement professional**, we'd love to welcome you to our community.

Email info@livinglotusonline.com to receive a **teacher discount** on our monthly membership subscription.

Explore the full series, find inspiration for your own classes, and connect with a supportive community of mindful movers and educators.