

the

"Chair

transforming your body

By Valerie Patrick

Thoughts of summer turn our attention to new beginnings. Winter is behind us and outdoor activities are on the horizon. That is until the nasty little "b" word pops into our head: bikini! If you live in Central New York you may have been in your warm little cocoon of a home for the past six months. Sipping cocoa and eating cookies in front of your fireplace seemed so cozy at the time. Summer is upon us and already that nasty "b" word hasn't crossed your mind until now. That New Year's resolution you made to lose 10 pounds is still there. Well, fret no more because there is hope. Enter the Pilates chair. What, you ask, can a chair possibly do to help you get back in swimwear shape? Read up on the best kept Pilates secret here in Syracuse.

The Pilates chair is a wonderful and versatile piece of equipment invented by Joseph Pilates. There are many variations of the chair such as the Electric Chair, the Wunda chair and the Malibu chair that have evolved over time. Each model has a foot pedal that works on resistance springs. Some of the chairs have a foot pedal that splits to increase the number of exercises that can be done. The chair has the ability to stretch, strengthen and tone every muscle.

It's hard to imagine that you could get an entire body workout on this unassuming little apparatus but people who have tried it are amazed by the results. The chair's claim to fame is the core workout that students experience. Think again if you are picturing sitting on the chair for your entire workout. The workout is done seated on or in front of the chair, lying prone or supine, or standing next to or on top of the chair. The resistance springs on the foot pedal can be adjusted to increase or decrease the level of intensity. Flowing through the workout guarantees that you'll get your heart rate up and increase the amount of calories burned. You will be burning calories and sculpting your body all at the same time.

Are you a multi-tasker? Then the chair or any type of Pilates is for you. There are many exercises on the chair that will improve core strength and leave you looking long and lean. The great thing about any type of Pilates exercise is that you are multi-tasking with each move. For example, the "pike" is a challenging move that works the core and upper body. Facing the chair and placing both hands on the back of the chair, stepping down on the pedal with both feet you lift the pedal and the hips as your body moves up into a pike position. This particular move may not look like much but wait until you try it.

It's recommended that you work with a certified instructor can enhance your workout and ensure that you are doing the exercises properly and safely. Whether you are looking to stretch, improve your core strength, posture and balance the chair can be a wonderful piece of equipment to get incredible results.

