

Q: I purchased a number of 2- and 3-pound toning balls over the past few years to use in group classes. Some of them have hardened. Why does this happen? They've all have been treated in the same manner. —*Cynthia Edmiston, Houston, TX*

A: Moira Merrithew, cofounder and executive director of education for STOTT PILATES®, responds: "Toning balls can harden for three reasons: One, they've been stored near heat, which causes air to leak. Two, the valve could be faulty, and air has leaked out. Or three, the props weren't used on a regular basis and the sand settled. I'd recommend manipulating them a bit from time to time to keep them loose, as you would with brown sugar. Try bringing some life back by using a bicycle pump with a sport needle to inflate them. The extra air should give the sand some room to move around inside the ball and soften it up. Just be careful not to overinflate."

eco equipment

The newest addition to Pilates apparatus is about as green as it gets. **ROOT MANUFACTURING**, a company established last September, introduces a new line of handmade, sustainably harvested bamboo, maple and oak Reformers, combo units, Trapeze Tables, wall systems, Barrels, Chairs and other accessories. All are finished with water-based acrylic lacquer and crafted with durable stainless steel poles to eliminate the need for the toxic plating process (used in chroming). The eco-friendly company reduces VOC emissions by using waterborne lacquers and powder-coated finishes. For more information, visit rootmfg.com.



woops!

In *Powerhouse* [Nov/Dec], we should have stated that Mary Bowen is available for 3-, 6- or 9-hour, 1- or 2-day intensives for teachers and advanced students at her CT or MA studios.