



# Dances of Universal Peace North America



*Surrendering to the Ecstasy at Wilderness Dance Camp, 2014*

Many Dance evenings begin with breathing practices in which the leader invites participants, as they exhale, to let go of anything they might be holding onto that calls their attention away from the present moment, away from the Dance. We are asked to release our hold on the worries and anxieties that we carried in with us, the thoughts of past and future, the problems that obsess us, and even the excitement and happy anticipation that can dominate

## **In This Issue**

[Gratitude for Donations](#)

[On Surrender](#)

[Dances on Surrender](#)

[Celebrating 30 Years in Seattle](#)

[Haiku on Surrender](#)

[Newly Certified Dance Leaders](#)

[Featured Song of the Month: Zikr of Surrender](#)

[Featured Video of the Month: The Delirium of Senses by Ruth St. Denis](#)

[Upcoming Dance Camps & Events Around the Region](#)

**Quick Links**

our minds and take us out of the experience of presence. And the Dance leader may reassure us with a smile, "It's OK to let go of these things, to leave them outside the door. They'll be waiting there for us when we're done - IF we want to pick them up again."

To surrender our concerns in this way, so that we can be fully present in the Dance circle, can sometimes be the greatest challenge of our practice. We may have to do it again and again throughout the evening. We often feel - perhaps subconsciously - that if we take our attention away from these things, even for an hour, they will quickly turn into crises. If we don't manage them continually, they will get "out of control." But in fact, the best thing we can do to heal or shift those areas of our lives that challenge us is to give up that illusion of control - to surrender. The Dances help us to do this. They pull our attention away from our worries and into our bodies, our voices, our hearts. We feel our friends' hands holding ours; we gaze deeply into each other's eyes; we sense a love that is much greater than any of our individual cares. As we allow this love to fill us, we remember that our true nature is unity and not separateness. We start to see our lives from a higher perspective. At the end of the session, we may not even remember to pick up those burdens that we left at the door. Or if we do glance at them, we may find that they look very different than they did before the Dance.

This month's newsletter explores the alchemy of surrender and the magical transformation that can occur in our lives when we begin to let go.

[Return to the Top](#)

*"Today, like every other day, we wake up empty and frightened. Don't open the door to the study and begin reading. Take down a musical instrument. Let the beauty we love be what we do. There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground."*

~\*~ Rumi (Coleman Barks translation) ~\*~

### ***Gratitude for Donations***

DUPNA would like to thank the following circles and

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*Surrendering to the moment at Seattle's 30th anniversary celebration*

**Featured Song  
of the Month:**

**Zikr of  
Surrender**

originator  
Shivadam Adam Burke  
who shares this

events for their dana from their events and gatherings to help further the work of DUPNA and outreach of the Dances. May you be blessed in return!

Baraka 2014 NW Inland Sufi Camp  
Santa Cruz, CA circle  
Milwaukee, WI circle  
Singing, Laughing, Dancing event in Pagosa Springs, CO  
Longmont, CO circle

~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*~\*

Although no longer requiring memberships, the organization still accepts voluntary memberships and donations of any kind, which enable us to continue providing services such as the extensive website and these monthly newsletters.

Please [click here](#) to make a donation to support and further enliven the work of DUPNA. Thank you!

[Return to the Top](#)



York UU Congregation, York, PA

~\*~ **On Surrender** ~\*~  
by Shivadam Adam Burke

Surrender is not an act of cowardice, but of courage and trust, and it is not passive. An act of will is required to

attunement:

*"Our aspiration and intention to always move forward on the path may sometimes meet with a sense that we have to take a step back, or indeed we may feel as if we are moving backwards.*

*When such feelings arise, we can remember ar-Rahim and surrender to the circumstance with compassion for ourselves; when we step back, we step back into the embrace of that divine Mercy which envelops all, without boundary, exception, or limitation. Further, we may rely on remembering that, as the One is everywhere, there can be no step in any direction that is not toward the One."*

*"The Lesson of the Falling Leaves"*

*The leaves believe  
Such letting go is love  
Such love is faith  
Such faith is god.  
I agree with the leaves.*

*~ Lucille Clifton ~*

**Featured Video**

move us from pushing ahead to pulling back. Responding to life's conditions requires a balance of movement and repose, regulated by the voice of the heart. Surrender may not only be in the direction toward a state of relative repose, but may be a surrender to the circumstance's call for us to act in a different way than we had expected, and we find that it has an expanding, rather than contracting result. In war, surrender may save many lives and be the more heroic option. Likewise, in the inner war between our own competing impulses, an agenda-driven course may lead us over a cliff of our own making, while surrendering to greater wisdom will lead us safely home. We recognize that pain in life is unavoidable, while suffering is optional.

We can harmonize or come into sympathy with a person or circumstance by becoming more supple when hardness is no longer called for or foreshadows only resistance and discord. One string of the tanpura or open-tuned guitar relinquishes its own, separate identity as it is brought into perfect tune with the string beside it, their individual voices dissolving and combining into one stronger, clearer and single voice. Similarly, ego-surrender can be seen as a movement toward greater capacity and effect as we tune and bend toward the Ideal or out of a feeling of love for another.

When an obstacle appears before us, we can see it either as a hindrance or as an aid. We willingly or grudgingly surrender to a detour as it re-routes us in a different direction. When later we discover that the purpose of the barrier served to protect us from going over a cliff, we feel grateful that it spared us considerably more trouble than it at first appeared to create. If, after diligent and right effort, we find that we can not remove an obstacle, nor can we go over, around, under or through it, then we surrender either to wait until the conditions change, or we embark upon another path toward our destination. In either case, we derive only benefit.

Lord Ganesh, as Vighneshwara, is the Lord of Obstacles, Who not only *removes* obstacles, but *places them* along our path in order to guide us to our hoped-for destination, the route to which we may not always see clearly. He is known as all-beneficent by those who accept the Guidance, wherever it may send them. We learn from this that the key to living the obstacle-free life is to see whatever arises as a blessing, as a gift from the Spirit of Guidance, rather than as a hindrance. When a needed change of course appears as an "obstacle," a change in

**of the Month:**

**"The Delirium  
of Senses"**

**from *Radha***

**original dance  
performance**

**by Ruth St. Denis,  
recorded at**

**Jacob's Pillow 1941**

~\*~

**Ruth St. Denis was a visionary, a pioneer of contemporary dance in America, who was instrumental in founding the important dance festival at Jacob's Pillow with her partner and collaborator Ted Shawn.**

**She was a sensation in her early years, performing "dance translations" such as *Radha* and *Incense* and bringing to the stage *Mother Mary*, *Kwan Yin*, *The Yogi* and other figures of divinity. She danced her vision of each from her own attunement to their inner realization.**

**Integral to her dance approach was embodiment - of life,**

perspective changes the way we feel about it.

Sacrifice and surrender develop strength and strengthen our relationships with others and with the Divine. To the extent that we can trust in and attune to the Divine Hand as we entrain with the rhythms of both forward movement and repose or redirection, each when called for, we walk the new path not only willingly, but joyfully. As Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan prays, and hopes we will pray: "Let Thy Will be my desire...."

[Return to the Top](#)

~\*~ ~\*~ ~\*~

A Few Dances with an  
Attunement to Surrender

I am Opening Up in Sweet Surrender

Pieces of Cloud

I Step into the Flow and then I Let Go

Rock-a-my Soul in the Bosom of Abraham

Zikr of Surrender

~\*~ ~\*~ ~\*~

truth and unity. She influenced Murshid Samuel L. Lewis, and was a source of inspiration in Murshid's creation of the Dances of Universal Peace and the Spiritual Walks. In his diaries, Murshid reports several profound encounters with her at pivotal times in his ministry, and says she taught him the faculty of "drawing music and dances right out of the cosmos, out of the heart-of-God."

~\*~

There are some great DUP videos out there, so if you have a good-quality Dance video you would like to share with the community, please send the links to [dupnamail@gmail.com](mailto:dupnamail@gmail.com) to be shared in upcoming newsletters.

~\*~

Upcoming Dance  
Camps & Events  
submitted to the  
DUPNA website  
from around our  
Region:



*Thirty years of surrendering to the flow in Seattle*

***Thirty Years of Weekly Dances  
Celebrated in Seattle***

***by Helen Gabel and Murad Phil Notermann***

On September 13, 1983, four fledgling dance leaders began holding a weekly dance meeting in Seattle. This spring the community which grew up around that commitment celebrated 30 years of continuous weekly dances.

The celebration was wonderful. A hundred people attended, including three of the founders. The day was filled with dances, reminiscing, a photo slide show, a hearty potluck, and more dancing. Leaders whose lives had eventually taken them in other directions returned to lead a dance, often one they themselves had originated. The day was filled with heart-felt testimonials to the power of this beloved practice.

For 30 years, dancers, leaders and musicians have come together weekly in devotion without ever missing a beat. In the early years the weekly meeting was small, held in a yoga studio. Through the 1990s the Circle grew, as did

**Ecstasy of Infinity: 6th  
Annual Retreat with the  
Fort Wayne Dance  
Collective  
with Munir Peter  
Reynolds  
July 25-27  
Fort Wayne, IN  
Contact:  
Jarin Hart  
260-424-6574**

~\*~

**Life's Splendor:  
Cultivating the Earth;  
Cultivating the Heart  
with Murshida Asha  
Greer, Sheikha Darvesha  
Victoria MacDonald,  
Sheikh Yaqin Lance  
Sandelben and friends at  
the  
July 29-August 3  
Southwest Sufi  
Community  
Silver City, NM  
Contact:  
Amos England  
505-933-3676**

~\*~

**Eat, Dance, and Pray  
Together: 14th Annual  
Sufi Dance Community  
Retreat Camp  
July 31-August 3  
MA  
Contact:  
Abraham Sussman  
617-876-5272**

~\*~

**Attunement as a  
Way of Being:  
A Sesshin Retreat Living**

the dance team, and we were dancing as often as three times a month. There were numerous special events and pilgrimages, from local to international in scope. In 2002 a concerted effort was made to expand the circle of community leadership well beyond just those who were called to lead dances (see the 2006 issue of "We Circle Around"). The last ten years have seen fewer special events, but increased community support for one another as so many of us age together, facing health crises and the death of some of our members.

Still, we continue to meet once a week without fail, supported by an active team of a dozen dance leaders and leadership from a number of community members. There is no charismatic or titled leader at the helm, no one is paid, there's no franchise organizing us from above. We have outlasted strong differences of opinion, ruptures in key relationships, and the pulls and community-fracturing forces of living in a fast-paced, time-starved, and consumer-driven culture. But, somehow, enough individuals were willing to put the good of the group before their personal desires to keep the Circle intact. Is this how divine grace works? Perhaps this is how SAM's prophecies about the emergence of a "sacred brother-sister-hood" will manifest--a kind of mysterious coherence that transcends the "distinctions and differences which divide."

[Click here](#) to view the Seattle Dance community website.

[Return to the Top](#)

*"This is how I would die into the love I have for you as pieces of cloud dissolving in sunlight."*

~\*~ Rumi (Coleman Barks translation) ~\*~

### ***Haiku on Surrender***

Simply surrender  
bringing forehead to the earth  
abandoning fear  
~ Karima Gayle Gilmore

*Two vignettes by Sky Majida Roshay*

Letting go into

**from the Heart of Love,  
Harmony,  
and Beauty  
with Tajali Theresa  
Tolan and Jen Friedman  
Aug. 22-24  
Madison, WI  
Contact:  
[Tajali Theresa Tolan](#)  
608-712-6732**

~\*~

**South Bay Sufi Camp  
2014:  
Dance the Light Awake  
with Narayan,  
Julie Jilani Esterly,  
Vanessa Hafiza Ragan  
and Friends  
August 22-24  
Santa Cruz, CA  
Contact:  
[Freesia Raine](#)  
831-469-0679**

~\*~

**Circling Around the  
Earth  
with  
Murshid Saadi Neil  
Douglas-Klotz, Murshid  
Tansen O'Donohoe and  
Murshida Sophia  
Gita Onnen  
Aug. 29-31  
Silver City, NM  
Contact:  
[Mariam Weidner](#)  
575-534-1441**

~\*~

**Fall Canyonlands Camp  
with Sky Majida, Bernie  
Heideman, and friends  
Sept. 17-22  
Moab, UT**

What is. A deep breath that brings  
release: Surrender.

The tightness dissolves  
Muscles relax, eyes soften,  
slipping into the flow.

Next month's theme is Illumination. Send your haiku to  
[dupnamail@gmail.com](mailto:dupnamail@gmail.com)

[Return to the Top](#)

### ***Newly Certified Dance Leaders***

We bow in gratitude to their service and devotion, and in  
joy at their stepping forward to do this work! This month  
we bless...

Hayat Donna Bain  
Diana Pinkham  
Jennie Nuriya Akers

[Return to the Top](#)

*"This is the time for you to deeply compute the  
impossibility that there is anything but Grace."*

~\*~ Hafiz (Daniel Ladinsky translation) ~\*~

May you surrender to the deepest callings of your soul  
and find yourself transformed in the Light of the One.

Sincerely,  
The board and staff  
Dances of Universal Peace North America

Contact:  
**Sky Majida**  
928-536-3307

~\*~

**The Eternal Ecstasy of  
Being with Anahata  
Iradah**

**Sept. 26-28  
Indianapolis, IN**

Contact:  
**Paula Saffire**  
317-257-0537

~\*~

**Return Again  
with Murshida Halima  
Sussman and Murshid  
Abraham Sussman**

**Sept. 26-28  
Durham, NC**

Contact:  
**Nur Rahmana**  
**Julie Purcell**  
919-475-5323

~\*~

**[Click here](#)**  
**to view a complete and  
detailed listing of  
Dance Camps and  
Events submitted to  
our website from  
around our region**

~\*~



# Dances of Universal Peace North America

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# On Surrender

Shivadam Burke

Our aspiration and intention to always move forward on the path may sometimes meet with a sense that we have to take a step back, or indeed we may feel as if we are moving backwards. When such feelings arise, we can remember ar-Rahim and surrender to the circumstance with compassion for ourselves; when we step back, we step back into the embrace of that Divine Mercy which envelops all, without boundary, exception, or limitation. Further, we may rely on remembering that, as the One is everywhere, there can be no step in any direction that is not toward the One.

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We recognize that pain in life is unavoidable, while suffering is optional. Our capacity to surrender makes the difference. We face the real loss of loved ones. Or, we encounter a personal failure in striving to live up to our own ideals, and the awake heart feels the pain of these circumstances. When no other action can address the pain, surrender brings a great sense of relief as we relinquish our struggle, lay our burdens down, and lie in the lap of Mother Divine, Who comforts us.

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The devotee is well advised to approach Ganesha, having already brought her plans for accomplishment into the same light of wisdom that Ganesha Himself would apply to the circumstance. This co-operation not only increases likelihood of success, it impels one to look forward with greater, wiser circumspection, and so the Wisdom of Ganesha is bestowed upon the devotee. His weapons include the ax and goad to prompt us to act, while the noose protects us from going over the edge and also bonds us as a cord to the Divine, representing the devotion that enables us to accept and incorporate a Wisdom greater than our own, which we might not have been able to discover before seeking and also surrendering to that Guidance.

Sacrifice and surrender develop strength and strengthen our relationships with others and with the Divine. To the extent that we can trust in and attune to the Divine Hand as we entrain with the rhythms of both forward movement and repose or redirection, each when called for, we walk the new path not only willingly, but joyfully.

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