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Hi, just a reminder that you're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in Dances of Universal Peace North America. Don't forget to add naoffice@dancesofuniversalpeace.org to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

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Dances of Universal Peace North America



When we ask for healing, what are we really asking for? There are cautionary sayings, "Healing is not the same as curing" and "Healing doesn't mean going back to how things were before." So what does healing really look like? Are we able to let go of our pre-conceived ideas of what we think healing should look like in order to let God (however we name that cosmic energy) do God's healing work?

In This Issue

[Gratitude for Donations](#)

[Gratitude to Yamuna Devi](#)

[Physiological Benefits of the Dances](#)

[Dance Origins: Ancestors, Sky People](#)

[Newly Certified Dance Leaders](#)

[Featured Song of the Month: Medicine Buddha](#)

[Featured Video of the Month: Only a Heart with Wings Can Fly](#)

[Dances on Healing](#)

Quick Links

For example, can dying after a long painful illness be a form of "healing"? Can two people who have been at odds in their relationship finally choosing to go their own separate ways be "healing"?

Perhaps at a deeper level, healing is related to letting go of all that stands between the sufferer and God, allowing in unconditional love, forgiveness, etc. With that ease and that cessation of tension and resistance, healing can begin.

The Dances offer us opportunities to heal on many different levels. There are physiological and psychological benefits to singing and dancing, spiritual healing in mantras, and the experience of being in community in a new way. The group cohesiveness allows us a taste of letting go our individual boundaries and being One. The circle provides us a safe place to show up as are, sharing laughter and tears, supporting our growth, whether it is tentative baby steps or giant strides.

***"The heart is itself its own medicine.
The heart, all its own wounds heals.
And none can ever imagine
the pain that the loving heart feels.
The path of the heart is thorny,
but leads in the end to bliss.
Hope is the staff the heart holds in hand,
And the goal, the heart shall not miss."***

~*~ Inayat Khan ~*~

Gratitude for Donations

DUPNA would like to thank the following circles and 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!

Columbia, SC Dance circle
Heart of the Matter Retreat in NC

Although no longer requiring memberships, the organization still accepts voluntary memberships and

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**Featured Song
of the Month:**

**Medicine
Buddha**

originated by
Tansen Philip
O'Donohoe
who writes:

***One could say that the
syllables of the
mantra are essentially
the
wisdom heart energies
of the Medicine
Buddha and act as the
channel
for the mystical
healing blessings to
come to us, through
us and as us.***

donations of any kind, which enable us to continue providing services such as the extensive website and these monthly newsletters. Thank you!

[Return to the Top](#)

Haiku on Healing

*You can never know
what may come along to heal
what may knit a wound*

*Love sent for healing
knowing just where to settle
daily miracles*

~*~ karima gayle gilmore ~*~

We Show Gratitude to Yamuna Devi

If you have ever seen the Blythe, California address on the DUPNA website, it is because Yamuna Devi has been holding the post of Office Administrator in the small desert town for the last eight years. She has



selflessly given service and covered all the bases for the organization with a generous heart and often a willing laugh. We thank Yamuna Devi and wish her all the best as she moves 'on to the next adventure' as our Ruhaniat Pir, Shabda Kahn often says.

Yamuna is currently packing up the office to pass the job on to Jen Friedman, who is a former DUPNA board member and Dance leader from Colorado and the layout editor for this monthly email newsletter, which was a project she started while serving on the board! Jen will begin working the position in May.

As a non-profit organization there is much paperwork to keep track of for IRS and state agencies. Handling all of the banking on a daily basis which includes depositing

~*~ ~*~ ~*~

Featured Video of the Month:



Only a Heart with Wings can Fly Video

**a short, lighthearted
video using this song
from the Dances of
Universal Peace
repertoire.**

~*~

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 to be shared in upcoming newsletters.

~*~ ~*~ ~*~

**Our newsletter is
now being archived
on the website!
Click here if you
recently missed a
month.**

~*~ ~*~ ~*~

donations, paying office bills, and reconciling bank accounts monthly. Working with our accountant to make sure our taxes are filed in a timely manner. Helping members with their information requests, answering emails and processing the mail. It's all regular office stuff. Then there are the special projects such as the annual holiday card fund-raiser and DUP logo pins, t-shirts, and banners.

In her retirement from the position, Yamuna Devi plans to give her "left brain a lovely break from business and let my right brain catch up on fun." She will be using her gifts and following her passion to promote her own business as a healer, working with the energy fields of others to facilitate their personal growth and healing.

And, Jen looks forward to continuing her relationship with the DUPNA organization in this way. Keep an eye out for an announcement with the new address and phone number for the office in next month's email newsletter.

For now, we wish Yamuna many blessings on her journey and welcome Jen to the DUPNA office!
Ya Fattah!

[Return to the Top](#)



The Physiological Benefits of the Dances

by Jamila Nur Carla Hannaford, Ph.D.

The Dances of Universal Peace not only incorporate a wide variety of dances from around the world, the deep spiritual dances of Samuel Lewis, and a constant growth of new dances based on sacred phrases and a remembrance of how to live deeply in our

modern world --- they have great physiological benefits as well. The movements are most often cross-lateral integrating all areas of the body. The more we move in

**A Few Dances
with an Attunement
to Healing**

Healing Time

Medicine Buddha

**Healing Dance
(Ya Shafee, Ya
Kafee)**

**Om Mane Padme
Hum Healing Dance**

**I am a Circle
(I am Healing You)**

**Kyrie Eleison
Healing Dance**

Nayaz

Haiku on Healing

*August rains fall fast
soaking parched
landscapes and me
such simple healing*

~Karen Mastracchio

~*~

**Upcoming Dance
Camps & Events
submitted to the
DUPNA website**

this way, the more integrated is the brain, thus improving our learning, memory and ability to be creative.

For the Elders among us, research shows that people (ages 70 - 90) who danced once or twice a week decreased their chances of dementia and Alzheimer's by 79%. Scientists have discovered that when we do cross-lateral integrated movements in an easy, relaxed way, we have the potential to grow at least 6,000 new nerve cells per day in the hippocampus of our brain (for memory), spine and olfactory nerve system (for smell). The dances tend to relax us, bringing us into the moment, thus raising our dopamine levels--- the chemical that makes us more curious, passionate and playful, while decreasing our stress levels. Also, when we dance, we actually grow more mitochondria in our muscles and in the brain. Mitochondria are the cellular organelles that extract energy from our food --- so the more we dance, the more energy we have.

Added to the dancing is the singing. The most complex instrument on the planet is the human body and voice. We are the only animals with both music and language. When we sound our instrument, we are vibrating every cell in our body, activating all areas of the brain, and toning the muscles. Our sound, especially when joined in harmony with those voices around us, increases our energy and health. Have you noticed that when you sing, your posture is better?

[Click here](#) to read the complete article.

[Return to the Top](#)

from around our Region:

~*~

Illuminating the Path of the Heart

**April 18-19
Nelson, B.C.
with Tui Wilschinsky**

**Contact:
Sonia
250-449-2152**

~*~

Sufi Youth Jam

**April 29-May 4
Bailey, CO
with Sufi Ruhaniat
International Youth
Council leaders and
friends**

**Contact:
Sàra Rain
970-227-5275**

~*~

Canyonlands Spring Dance Camp

**April 30-May 4
Moab, UT
with Bernie
Heideman,
Sky Majida and
Friends**

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

~*~

Coming Together: The Joy of Spirit in Motion

**May 2-4
Rowe, MA**



Dance Origins: "Ancestors, Sky People"

***written by Chris Englund
with guidance from Harmony Grisman***

Lyrics by Mischa Saez, Music by Harmony Grisman.
Movements by Sharee Anderson.

One of the most powerful Dances of Universal Peace (DUP) I've experienced is "Ancestors, Sky People." Curious about its creation, I contacted an originator, Harmony Grisman, living near Pt. Reyes, CA. She's dedicated her life to creating Medicine songs, and works with healing retreats and workshops in the US and Europe. Gracious answers to my questions deepened understanding of this inspired Dance, and indeed affected my life. I cried writing this article.

Harmony's voice: "For many years I have been writing, and helping others write, Medicine Songs. For instance, for the past 23 years I have worked with AIDS/HIV community to help create songs and give voice to the least heard, the children, families, and adults who have endured this disease. 'Ancestors' is one of those songs."

"When I help people write their songs they do not need to be musical, just willing to express what is in their hearts. Then I write down their words and try to shape the music to whatever would please them. 'Ancestors' was co-written with Misha Saez who was the Art Director at Camp Sunburst (Livermore, CA) for children and families with HIV/AIDS in the early nineties. She showed me a longer poem she had written and I excerpted this section

**with Amina, Arif, &
Friends
Contact:
Arif Leininger
978-502-0247**

~*~

**Dancing on the Path of
the Heart
May 2-4
San Francisco, CA
Contact:
Violetta Reiser
415-821-0939**

~*~

**Community Day at the
Sufi Youth Jam
May 3
Bailey, CO
Contact:
Sàra Rain
970-227-5275**

~*~

**Live at Lava!
Spring Camp
May 9-11
Lava Hot Springs, ID
with Connie Zareen,
Narayan, Sky Majida,
and Jennie Akers
Contact:
Connie Zareen
Delaney
208-756-3076**

~*~

**Dance Deepening
May 24-26
north of Boston, MA
with Abraham &
Halima Sussman, Jon
Maitreya Stevens, and
Malika Salazar and
friends
Contact:**

to make what I knew would be a powerful chant. She and I both have great respect for Native American traditions and you are correct in thinking there is some of that tradition in these words. As always, I shaped a melody and chord accompaniment to fit with the words and we were both very happy with the result. Since that time, the song has spread to many Singers and Dancers throughout the world. We are both very happy that it has been strong Medicine for so many."

Harmony knows her creation is "in the wild." While an "original" version is officially archived as a DUP write-up, numerous variations have evolved. The original score, and latest update, is available on request for those interested. But she believes, "The important thing is for the song to live its life through people's hearts, voices and dancing in whatever ways that evolve." I personally believe Harmony released a beautiful white dove going where it may... All versions are powerful!

It should be noted the "official" current 2014 DUP write up of this Dance uses chording of E-B-A, which Harmony has never used. She was surprised hearing this from me, having always used D-A-G (in the key of D). I prefer the emotion of the key of E, with her blessing.

Harmony's latest version has sped up the pacing. Many leaders continue using the original. Slowing things down gives deep luscious eye contact, more time to share souls. You've got to sing it many times to grasp the non-intuitive 6 beats at every "blessed" (don't assume the version you've learned does this). For me, this guarantees vulnerable heart opening making it so riveting. Her latest version brilliantly ends with the circle standing and chanting in harmony, "We are truly blessed."

[Click here](#)
to read the complete article.

[Return to the Top](#)

~~*~~~ Nayaz Prayer ~~*~~~

Beloved Lord, Almighty God,
through the rays of the sun,
through the waves of the air,
through the all-pervading Life in space,

Abraham Sussman
617-876-5272

~*~

**Northern Colorado
Dances of Universal
Peace and Sufi Camp**
May 29-June 1
Berthoud, CO
**with Grace Marie &
Gregory Gayan Long**
Contact:
Grace Marie
970-498-8422

~*~

Triangle Dance
Intensive: Attuning to
the Elements
June 6-7
Durham, NC
Contact:
Farrunnissa
919-361-2383

~*~

**Wilderness Dance
Camp**
June 22-28
Flathead Lake, MT
**with Allaudin Ottinger
and Lila Flood**
Contact:
Misty Harding
406-209-3857

~*~

**24th Annual Ithaca
Dances of Universal
Peace Camp**
June 26-29
Ithaca, NY
Contact:
David Gallahan
OR
Diane Olden
607-351-3000

purify and revivify me
and, I pray, heal my body, heart and soul.
Amen.

~*~ Hazrat Inayat Khan ~*~

Newly Certified Dance Leaders

We send blessings to the newly certified leaders within our region. We bow in gratitude to their service and devotion, and in joy at their stepping forward to do this work!

This month we bless Donna Schiller (IL, USA)

[Return to the Top](#)

May you be blessed with the healing energy that the springtime has to offer; with its gifts of rebirth and renewal. May a seed of gratitude be planted in your heart.

Sincerely,

The board and staff

Dances of Universal Peace North America

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



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The Physiological Benefits of Dances of Universal Peace

By Jamila Nur Carla Hannaford, Ph.D.

The Dances of Universal Peace not only incorporate a wide variety of dances from around the world, the deep spiritual dances of Samuel Lewis, and a constant growth of new dances based on sacred phrases and a remembrance of how to live deeply in our modern world --- they have great physiological benefits as well. The movements are most often cross-lateral integrating all areas of the body. The more we move in this way, the more integrated is the brain, thus improving our learning, memory and ability to be creative.

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Before there was language there was singing and dancing. It has always been an

important part of the tapestry and connection within a culture. When we look into another person's eyes, consciously, the levels of oxytocin rise. Oxytocin is the chemical that increases bonding, and a sense of belonging. Touch is also an important part of the dance. It is our strongest anchor to the world, connecting us with others and letting us know we are real. Our hands are the most complex structure on our bodies, the last to fully develop at around 21 years of age. A very large area of the brain in the motor and sensory cortex has to do with the hand, its abundant sensory organs and amazing agility. Holding hands as we dance stimulates huge areas of the brain, allowing us to communicate more deeply with each other. When we touch another, each of us produces Brain Derived Nerve Growth Factor (BDNF), that helps to stabilize our new nerve cells and increase our understanding of ourselves and others.

At the heart of the dances is the heart. Research shows that it controls the brain, is a very complex step-down transducer that is the first to pick up information from our environment and send it to the rest of the body and finally to the brain. It becomes our "in-tutor" (intuition), our inner knowing of what is safe, true, and growth-filled. When we are truly in the dance, our hearts become coherent and entrain together, thus that feeling of oneness, enthusiasm (in God), and joy. As we become more coherent, the beings and environment around us also become more coherent. It is one of the greatest gifts the Dances of Universal Peace bring to the planet at this time. They align us with our community, and keep us in the present so that we don't miss the mystery that is this blessed life.

For more information and research references, consult: *Playing In The Unified Field.*

In Joy,

Jamilla Nur/Carla Hannaford, Ph.D.