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Dances of Universal

May 2020

Leaders Guild News and Update

The Opportunity of Social Distancing

by

Darvesha

President of DUP International



Having been for most of my adult life part of what Morris Berman calls the "New Monastic Society" (we may not live in monasteries, but we do not subscribe to the values of the main stream and we attend mostly to the 'interior', understanding that doing solitary practices is an effective way to change the world), I am surprised by the amount of scurrying around and anxiety in our sangha. I am so deeply concerned for certain communities (refugees, prisoners, homeless, farm workers, those in debt, health care workers, mothers who work from home while homeschooling their children), but confused by the proliferation of on-line activity. I would have thought most of us would have simply settled in, welcoming the opportunity to have more time to practice all that we have been given over the years.

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When you can't go out, go in!

"You cannot experience radioactivity and relativity and quantum mechanics without the experience of the laboratory outside. How does one know what is experienced in the laboratory within if one does not go in?" p. 96. Sufi Vision and Initiation. Samuel L. Lewis.

In this time the word proliferation is mostly used to describe virus cells. But perhaps this is a time when we can also see this tendency in ourselves. What a relief it is to experience the relentless, ever-expanding human activity dwindling. Isn't this tendency to proliferate part of what got us into this mess in the first place? How liberating it is to see empty highways, smog-less skylines, animals roaming freely in the forests, and whales birthing in quiet waters. All because human activity has decreased.

What is this tendency toward "more, more, more"?

Is it symptomatic of an inner emptiness that causes us to seek "more" outside of ourselves?

Here in our home monasteries do we see ourselves thinking up projects, making more plans, making more and more zoom dates, writing more and more emails, making more and more phone calls? Or do we welcome the opportunity to embrace an atmosphere of inner quiet? Yes, the whole world is resorting to the proliferation of digital socialization, but as spiritual practitioners aren't we more attracted to mining and refining our inner spiritual resources and spending more time getting closer to the natural world" ?

"In a pandemic, self-isolation is called quarantine. In Buddhism, it is called retreat."

~ Lama Willa Miller

Lama goes on to say, *"Fear is an invitation. It is not an invitation to weigh risks or to adjust the externals. It is an invitation to look deeply within and befriend the animal in oneself."*



"We are sitting with the unknown. The unknown is exactly what pulls back the veil. It offers a glimpse of the truth that nothing has ever been certain. This world with all its beauty and all its vibrancy is just so because it is not fixed, because everything is contingent. Life's natural cousin is uncertainty.

"But I forget, most every moment of every day. Lulled by the predictability of my days, I believe that tomorrow will be just like today. Today just like yesterday. The toilet paper will be there."

What is behind this tendency to proliferate? Is it fear? In the stillness, might we discover the underlying emotion? And befriend it?

How do you befriend fear? By turning towards it and facing it! Open to it. Where do you feel it in your body? When you feel it closely, how does it behave?

Differentiate the sensations from the thoughts that drive it: feel the sensations fully but ignore the thoughts! **WHEN YOU KNOW THAT THOUGHTS ARE SIMPLY THOUGHTS, YOU ARE FREE OF THEM!** But when you identify with the thoughts and 'buy' into them, you are caught, and you will exacerbate anxiety and turbulent emotions.

If you do this practice you will see disturbances dissolve. Watching tensions dissolve brings peace, tranquility and a kind of nirvanic liberation.

The endless expansion of consumerism and endless variety of distractions of contemporary society is a symptom of a society that is out of touch with inner fulfillment. If we have a tremendous need for digital communication during this time, maybe that is telling us something about ourselves. How much is enough? How much is too much? Maybe instead it's time to begin our inner journey?

There are "2 methods of spiritual training, called the "monkey method" and the "cat method". In the monkey method, the baby holds onto the mother and where ever the mother goes the mother carries the baby. In the cat method, the cat picks up the kitten and teaches it to walk. So the cat tries to make its offspring an adult as soon as it can, and the monkey tries to keep its offspring an infant as long as it can. So you have 2 types of spiritual training: those who lean on the teacher to do everything and those who teach their disciples how to become adults."

p151. Sufi Vision and Initiation. Samuel L. Lewis.

Maybe this pandemic is the call our dancing lives has been preparing us for?

As Lama says, "From the cave of our home, like the meditators of ancient times, we can consciously kindle the lamp of compassion and connection."



Metta practice

May I be free from danger.

May I be peaceful and happy.

May I be strong and healthy.

May I have ease of being.

May you be free from danger.

May you be peaceful and happy.

May you be strong and healthy.

May you have ease of being.

May all beings be free from danger.

May all beings be peaceful and happy.

May all beings be strong and healthy.

May all beings have ease of being.

May I be free from suffering.

May you be free from suffering.

May all beings be free from suffering.

May my goodness and wisdom ever increase

May your goodness and wisdom ever increase

May the goodness and wisdom of all beings ever increase.

.....

Toilet Paper

How many rolls of toilet paper
will make you safe?
How many bottles of Purell?
How much peanut butter or pasta,
bread or beer?
How much money will make you secure?
Ten thousand dollars? A million?
A billion dollars and a yacht?
At what point do you say
"I have what I need"?
Ask the Buddha. He says
It is the nature of all things to change.
It is the nature of all beings to suffer.
It is the nature of all beings to die.
How many rolls will make you safe?
Wouldn't it better if you, yourself,
were multi-layered, and soft, and strong?

Lynn Ungar 3-16-20

lynnungar.com



Coming home to the dance resource library

Arjun Calero

At the time of writing, we are all more or less 'locked down.' The Beyond caravan has not left the oasis, though the caravanserai has very good zoom connections.



© Lydia Dixon

In a recent call, Arjun described a journey we can all share, through the dance resource library. He explained it like this:

in our different parts of the world, (Latin America, Russia, Australia and New Zealand, and elsewhere), can we

- explore the online resource library

- call to mind the dances we know about that we do not find there and
- work together to choose the top ten dances we want to add to the library?

It is a journey in which we can revisit the riches we already have, and we can enjoy exploring together the most meaningful parts of the repertoire in our own areas.

The *process* for this may vary from region to region, but here is how it is working in Latin America:

We started with an announcement on facebook for Latin America.

We received many nominations for the top 10. These included many dances not originated in South America.

Arjun logged the 40 nominations in a spreadsheet, and ranked them according to popularity.

A committee of 6 mentors, drawn from across the region met to discuss the nominations.

Nominations included some, for example from Amida, that have been translated into Spanish already.

The mentors identified several categories of dances:

- brand new dances originated in Latin America
 - dances that are fully 'ours' in Latin America
 - dances with pre-existing melodies: they are tracking the originators to get permission for a Spanish translation
- dances which include some English: the aim here is to compare variants eg between Peru and Argentina and arrive at an 'official' Spanish language version
- dances which are important in Latin America which are not in the resource library and not originated by us eg Da pacem Domine: the mentors are tracking originators for these
- dances which are in the resource library but not originated in Latin America: classic repertoire of mantric dances: we want to translate these into Spanish.



He says, it's too much to take all of these forward at once.

Arjun will now close the top 10 nomination process. The nominated dances will mostly include unpublished dances which originated in Latin America, and a few from other categories. He will 'keep the wheel turning' - so we can add

dances from other categories as time allows.

Arjun does not want to encourage publication fever so everything gets published.

The selection process will be:

- top 5 as voted on
- 5 more chosen by mentors, with emphasis on mantric dances.

Other countries

If dances with worldwide appeal emerge, they can be translated into English.

Arjun recommends we get the wheels turning.

You can do this in the way that best suits the dance family where you are.

If you would like to discuss this further, please [contact Aziz](#).

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Photos please

We want to update our photo gallery and website with dance photos from all over the world. Please send them to [Aziz](#) with a caption (country, date).

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Grants program

DUP International is taking forward a grants program, to support the transmission of the Dances and Walks. This will draw on funds received from Oneness Project. Details will be announced after the coronavirus pandemic when we can again travel to dances and hold hands in a circle.



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Rosina's Legacy

(When Bequeathing Becomes A Legacy)

In 2017 the International Organization of the Dances and Walks of Universal Peace (DUP IN) received an endowment of \$17,800 from Rosina Horeth.



The IN BOD considered how to best use this money. The members of the IN BOD wanted to use this gift in a way that would make a difference, and would best honor the legacy of Rosina.

A proposal came from Arjun Jorge Calero, for what would become known as the Beyond Initiative. Arjun

proposed that he attend the international gathering of the Global Ecovillage Network that was about to meet that year in Brazil. For years Arjun had been part of this movement and it was partly because of this participation that he was able to bring so many young dancers to the dance gatherings he sponsored at his own eco-village, Atlantida, in Colombia. Most of the young people who attended these Dance events at Atlantida were from Latin America and Europe. Arjun's vision was to expand the focus to include regions in under-privileged countries in the Middle East, Africa and Asia-Pacific and take the dances to people who might not otherwise have the opportunity to experience them, and to places where peace is especially needed right now.

The first part of the process was for Arjun to attend this event in Brazil and make connections with people in eco-villages in these areas of the world to see if they would be interested in partnering with our organization.

The IN BOD did not want to spend any of Rosina's endowment until they were certain the project would succeed, so one of the BOD members approached Judy Jones of Atlanta and Hal Hilal Brill of Colorado who generously bought the ticket for Arjun's trip of exploration to Brazil. The trip was a success and Arjun began a formal partnership with the [Global Ecovillage Network](#) and youth who are dedicated to global sustainability. The Beyond Initiative was launched and Rosina's legacy was begun.



The **Beyond Initiative** is an endeavor to bring together two of Murshid SAM's visions:

- spreading peace, and
- spreading it in a sustainable world.

As a result of the first year of the Initiative, there are now permanent dance circles in Turkey, Israel, and Iran! We are making a 3 year commitment to the continual training of these new dance leaders. In the meantime, we are beginning to work with leaders in Africa and the Asia-Pacific region.

Current numbers of engaged dance leaders in the Middle East include: Israel 5, Iran 3, Turkey 4, Kazakhstan 1. A second phase, taking the dances beyond to Sri Lanka and China across other parts of Asia was set up and in place, but now has been paused due to the coronavirus pandemic. We have a dedicated, long-term commitment to the training of the new leaders in these regions.

The younger generation Mentors who are traveling to these non-Western cultures are taking with them caravans of DUP dancers of all ages who want to be part of the adventure! Last year 50 dancers from 16 countries traveled to Turkey, Israel and Palestine. Our message of Universality and Embodied Spirituality was embraced and welcomed. A similar caravan was set up for 2020 but has had to be postponed due to the virus.

The model for seeding the dances is not to focus on established Western dance leaders continuously traveling to that country, but to cultivate local dance leaders who can carry on the tradition themselves.

This means

- we are creating events (camps, dance leader trainings) in new countries
- we are bringing emergent dance leaders to Sufi and dance events in Western countries
- we are fostering links between emergent dance leaders in these new territories with dance communities in Western countries.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N1kfH5gwP_E&feature=youtu.be is a video dated January 2019 which explains more about the Beyond initiative. Arjun undertook this project with the objective to make it pay for itself. And it has! As a result, amazingly, Rosina's endowment is still completely intact and will be able to continue giving even more support to this Initiative. Hers is a gift that keeps on giving!

Thank you, Rosina for making all of this possible!
To read more about the DUP IN bequest program on our website click this link: [bequests](#)

You can also click here to donate to DUP International, including the Beyond initiative: <https://www.dancesofuniversalpeace.org/doncontribute.shtm>

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Something needs fixing on our website?

Please let us know! Contact the [webmaster](#).

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Bosnia: dances for the next generation

As you may know, for 20 years already we have been dancing The Dances of Universal Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina, or to be precise, in the



Amica Educa association
in the city of Tuzla. All these years we have been dancing on a weekly basis, as well as organising seminars and workshops for adults.
Today, however, I would like to tell you about the DUP workshops that we do with teachers.

For twelve years we have been teaching, instructing and supporting primary school teachers, so that they can dance the DUP with their pupils.

In October 2019 we had a jubilee celebration - our 30th DUP workshop for teachers!

The teachers gladly attend our workshops and then transfer and enjoy the dances to their pupils in Culture of Religion (History of Religion), Music and Physical Education classes, which are all a part of regular school curriculum. Prior to this, we have taken the time to make sure that the teaching of DUP in schools is approved by the Ministry of education.

In this way, children in Tuzla get to dance Ave Maria, Altissimo Corazon, Custom Zikr, Ganesha, Gopala, Hevenu Shalom Alehem, Heyanana, and many other dances.



The DUP team of Amica Educa and the teachers tell the children about the beauty of all religions, about their similarities and qualities. At the same time, we teach them about different relaxation and concentration exercises.

According to our experiences so far, and the feedback that we have received from the teachers and parents (and on various occasions, the children themselves), the children react very well to the dances, and they express great joy and interest in dancing again and again.

I wish that this concept that we apply in our practice might spread to all the countries where Dances of Universal Peace are danced, and with this thought and intention we stand at your disposal and we would gladly share our experiences with the DUP community.

Tenzila Hujdur and the Amica Educa Dance team,

Tuzla, Bosnia and Herzegovina
November 2019.

Here is some news from the dance family in Brazil.



Since April 1993, we have held in Vale do Capão, Chapada Diamantina, BA, [Bahia] regular circles of Universal Peace Dances every Thursday, led by Zelice Habiba Peixoto, DUP mentor and Sheika of Sufi Ruhaniat International and in 2019 also led by Mércia Andrade, DUP mentor.

For more than 20 years, every December 31st, we have been dancing for Universal Peace, in an immense circle, with many people, in Praça da Vila do Capão.

Starting in 2008, every January, for 5 days, we have held a Retreat of Sufi Practices and Dances of Universal Peace. Every two years we have Murshida Mariam Baker leading these retreats together with



Sheikha Zelice Habiba Peixoto.

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The Mandala of the Tide
by Maria Lalla Cy Aché

We arrived at Complex of Maré through an invitation to perform Meditative Dances at the WOW - 2019 Women of the World Festival. Inspired by London's Southbank Center, the WOW has been held in 23 countries in Europe, Asia and Africa. Rio de Janeiro was chosen as the host city because of the international repercussion of the murder of Councilwoman Marielle Franco, a human rights activist, born and raised in Maré, the largest set of slums on the outskirts of the city. In this context, the interactive "Mandala Forest" dance circle created by me and the Dances of Universal Peace were one of the most beautiful and empathetic performances with the public. The women of Maré asked us to continue with the meditation work in motion at Complexo da Maré.



We accepted the challenge and managed to have a meeting every Wednesday with the women. In partnership with Maré's Network, which gave us space at CAM - Maré Arts Center, we were able to provide a safe space to continue the work.

Throughout this year, along with the women in the community, we had to deal with a number of dangerous situations generated by the confrontation between drug trafficking and state security operations.

This work has been supported by a group of women volunteers who develop mandala-shaped work where we strengthen every link in this stream of strength, beauty, and feminine wisdom.

We want to bring peace to the hearts of these women so stressed by the violent daily life at "Complexo da Maré". We want to root the energy of the Great Brazilian Mother, Cy and activate the Feminine Ray of Fearlessness between them. The Dances of Universal Peace are being introduced as a movement meditation and the breathings and walk meditation are beginning to be part of the weekly practices there.

We have also started working with adolescents from João Borges High School, aiming at the development of moving meditation practices and professionalizing creative workshops in order to generate income for these young people, preventing them from being co-opted by drug trafficking as the only alternative for affirming their lives, themselves and their families. The need to make money is the main reason young people drop out of high school.



I'm really happy to be engaged with this work because through the dances and meditations, I can share with them how to cultivate in themselves a place where we know peace.

Maria Lalla Cy Aché is a mentor of DUP, mureed and guide with Sufi Ruhaniat International.

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My name is Patricia Tolentino, I'm Brazilian, Aquarius, guidance counselor and I have always been involved with music, dances and group activities movements, I usually say that "where there are groups and people growing together, I'm there"



Since I met the Dances of Universal Peace at Lama Foundation Camp in 1997, recovering from the fire, I decided that taking this message forward would be part of my life forever. At that time I already I had had experiences with Sabira and Monica in Brazil, but there I met Prema Dasara and Anahata Iradah who would be my mentor and friend all these years until now. Since 1997 I lead and maintain a regular weekly group in my space in São Paulo, the largest city in Brazil. Most of the people are still dancing together in this group every Wednesday.

I have been moved to organize a DUP training for a 5-year cycle for 7 days a year, mentored by Anahata and many guests.

I started to spread the Dances of Universal Peace in many kinds of organizations, in companies, schools, health and social areas. At times I'm in circles with truckers, nurses (taking care of caregivers), teachers, factory workers, church volunteer groups, youth and children in schools, squares and parks in the city of São Paulo Brazil, among others.

Last July I was invited to Spain to present at the Education Congress of the University of Barcelona, my work with dances, whose title was: "Dances of Universal Peace and Sacred Circle Dances - a soul experience of belonging, integrity and self-confidence". I love working with people and love to feel and participate in the processes of blooming of people and groups. It makes my eyes shine and my soul sing. I thank all of my lineage especially Anahata who gave me all the tools so that I could hold the transmission preciously and pass these teachings honorably. May I keep moving circles and circles bringing peace, harmony and beauty to my country!

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Munira Reed visited Brazil from USA in November 2019 to lead a dance leader training, shown here.

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Leader Recognitions

The Guidance Council would like to congratulate and acknowledge all the Walks and Dance leaders who have been certified or recognized as Mentors in Training, Mentors or Senior Mentors over the last several months, since our last newsletter:

Certified

Adora Nuri Deva	CA, USA	
Akia Woods	OR, USA	
Catalina Ramelli Prati	Colombia	since 2018
Cynthia Valenzuela	Mexico	
Deva Baumbach	Mexico	
Gustavo Albuquerque Germanos dos Santos	Brazil	
Hasibah Penny Dalton	Canada	
Henrike Bessel	Germany	
Jessica Bromby	FL, USA	
Josue David Peña Coronel	Ecuador	
KJPhoenix	NZ	since May 2019
Michael Jabbar Tank	CA, USA	
Mieke van Elten	Australia	
Petra Metta Kafiya Leible	CA, USA	
Rahmana Karuna Karen Beesley	OR, USA	
Rob Kularofsky	AZ, US	
Sally Azima Mabelle	NZ	
Shannon Clare Gorres	KS, USA	
Tarana Wesley	NC, USA	

MIT

Adriana Fatima Duran	Ecuador
Catalina Ramelli Prati	Colombia
Deva Baumbach	Mexico
Diana Pinkham	WA, USA
Doris Fatima Nuri Nebel	Germany
Karina Catherine Palmer	MD, USA
Lucinda Abbe	WY, USA
Neferti Babbs	AR, USA
Nirtana Robertson	Australia
Solène Garrin	France
Yekena Dudarjoka	Latvia

Mentor

Teia Crosas	Spain
Michel Dumoutet	France
Matin Stephen Pierce	OR, USA

Senior Mentor

Shafia Stevens	NZ
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