

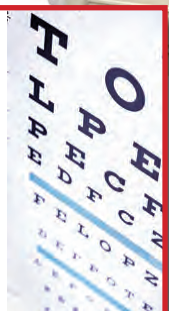
# HEALTHY LIVING

Your Guide to Local  
Healthcare, Sports &  
Fitness Programs



**Regular  
Check-ups  
Key To  
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**October is  
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# Set Free the Healing Power of Dance

By Ashina Maron, Ph.D., BSN, RN, MA

One of my colleagues with whom I've taught over many years at seminars on healing is Dr. Carl Hammerschlag. When Carl first graduated Yale University Medical School back in the sixties, he humbly took a job as a physician for a rural Indian pueblo in New Mexico and immediately began to treat a long line of patients of all ages. Throughout his first and very busy day, he noticed an elderly man sitting in the corner, observing his every move. Finally, Carl approached the elder and asked if he, too, had come to be treated.

"Who are you?" asked the elder.

"I'm a doctor." Carl replied. "A healer," he restated, in case "doctor" wasn't the right word in the pueblo culture.

"Do you know how to dance?" asked the elder.

"**Dance?!**" blurted Carl, puzzled by the question. "No. I'm a healer, not a dancer."

The elder slowly rose and headed for the door, then turned around, looked Carl straight in the eye and said, "If you don't know how to dance, then you don't know how to heal!"

Needless to say, Carl has been dancing ever since.

Healing is essentially the restoration of aspects of our complex Selves that have either become lost, neglected or traumatized. When this happens, we become unplugged, severed from the balance of our core Self. Both music and dance are essential languages that speak to and are understood by every part of our being and can, during such episodes, shift our minds and emotions out of their routines or patterns so that we might restore the balance we lost and fine-tune the many

parts of our totality.

It has always mystified me how every single ancient people, regardless of how many thousands of miles they lived apart from one another, shared similar instruments of music, tools of war and the importance of dance. While we can hope to avoid war, I doubt if we

can do without the universally common attributes of music and dance. Both were believed, from time immemorial, to be not only good for the soul and body but also important to the process of physical and emotional healing. I often encourage participants of my classes and workshops not to leave their troubles outside the dance, but rather to invite them into the dance to transform and heal them.

Dance is a remarkable time-proven method for awakening the body, while music and chant work wonders for inspiring the spirit, and meditation for clearing the mind. In the indigenous language of my people, the word for dance and the word for illness are actually the same: ma'cho'l for dance, machah'lah for illness. Not by accident do they both share the same word. After all, dancing brings one to a state of joy and, when the body is in a state of joy, the negative energies contributing to illness are more likely to dissipate. The Life Force that moves us along our life-walk, taught the ancients, is drawn more into manifestation in our lives when we are in a state of joy, and the gift of dance is that it is either inspired **by** joy or brings us **to** joy.

I've been a dancer my entire life, beginning at age two when I attended local ballet classes and would also joyfully dance through my father's cornfield on the farm where I grew up. In the adult phase of my life, I continued to dance both recreationally and professionally, while blending contemporary scientific studies with ancient inspirational wisdoms to create modes of promoting wellness in a way that considers the entirety of a person, rather than only individual parts. This way of fostering physical and



emotional well-being has helped many who are struggling, whether with debilitating illness, trauma, grief, life transitions, simply wanting more happiness in their lives, or reaching a crossroad with difficult choices.

There is so much mystery and value in each of us, and so little time and resources to engage them and bask in them. Life is incredibly rich, but we need to carve out the time and space in our lives to experience it and to be nurtured by it physically, emotionally and spiritually. This is all the more important in these precarious times. There is a great deal of tension building in the world. More people are on edge. The future has become less certain than in years past. Our vision is blurring. Too much information and stimulation are jamming our heads daily, and the pressure we feel is at an all-time high. We are very fortunate, those of us who live up here on the mountain, and, hopefully, we take the time to feel the inspiration Nature invites us to enjoy daily. After all, the mountains — says a 3,000-year-old song — “they dance like gazelles!” And so should we.

It is told that once, during a religious service, the 18th-century wisdom master, Mendel of Kotzk, chose to sit quietly in a corner, watching his disciples dance around and around, singing and clapping their hands as they danced. Finally, they approached him and asked why he was not joining them in dance. His response: “I would if you knew how to dance.” Hearing this, they attempted a more frenzied dance, with more fervor and elevated voices and louder hand-clapping, but still the master chose to sit out the round, watching his dancing disciples with a critical eye. Again they stopped and invited him into the dance circle and, again, he declined, repeating his dissatisfaction with the way they were dancing. After several attempts to dance even better, and even **better** than better, they finally gave up and begged the sage to just teach them the proper way to dance.

“Shut your eyes,” he said, “and imagine you are standing perfectly balanced at the very edge of the Abyss. **Now** dance!”

*Dr. Miriam Ashina Maron, Ph.D., BSN, RN, MA, is a spiritual healer and mentor in private practice and teaches Zumba as well as Meditation and Entrancing Movement at Bullworx Studio in Cedar Glen. As a singer/songwriter, she has nine albums of songs and chants to her credit, as well as a new cover single, “Life Uncommon,” available through i-Tunes, Apple Music, CD-Baby, Spotify or her website, www.MiriamCyberWell.com. She is also a published author. Her most recent books: “Ancient Moon Wisdom” and “The Invitation: Living a Meaningful Death.” She can be reached at (310) 281-3016 or via her website.*



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