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"The Beauty is in the Journey" Yoga Instructor Certification

Jennifer Michelle Zepp
Loyola Marymount University

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“The Beauty is in the Journey”
Yoga Instructor Certification

Jennifer Michelle Zepp

Mentors:
Judy Scalin
Tamal Dodge

In partial fulfillment of
The Bachelor of Arts Degree in Dance
Loyola Marymount University
May 6, 2011

“The Beauty is in the Journey”

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"The Beauty is in the Journey"
Yoga Certification
Yoga Alliance 200 hour Teacher Certification Training Course - Tamal Yoga School
Jennifer Zepp

Mentors:
Judy Scalin
Tamal Dodge

"The Beauty is in the Journey" – Yoga Teacher Certification

My senior thesis encompassed the completion of the Yoga Alliance 200 hour Yoga Instructor Certification Training Course through the Tamal Yoga School. This included, but not limited to, teaching and practicing yoga, therapeutic applications, seeing energy, breath awareness, anatomy, physiology, and ethics. This training was held at YogaCo in Santa Monica, CA, and was completed April 8, 2011.

You never know what opportunities you may come across, what realizations you may come to discover... the beauty of life is in the process; the journey; discovering what you want to do, and making it happen.

I had briefly been exposed to yoga before college, and took classes throughout my time at LMU, though it was just recently that I determined that I wanted to have yoga more fully a major part of my life. As with dance, each yoga class has always left a smile on my face, and in a state of bliss.

Last semester, I was in the sports law course, which in a sense led me to where I am now. Mary Strong, LMU alumni, Emmy-nominated NFL sports broadcaster, and owner of The Green Yogi, came to speak at our school. Her flyer quoted, "Combining passion and professionalism into a career" and touched on spirit, passion and success as one... In hearing Mary's story, and in searching for what I wanted to do, I started to discover this for myself.

I met with her, and I will be starting a mentor program with her, at the studio The Green Yogi, and have the opportunity to learn how to run the studio, in opening a studio, and the business side as well. And most importantly, she referred me to Tamal Dodge, and to look into the yoga training course, which I have now completed. I am now a Yoga Alliance certified instructor, through the Tamal Yoga School, as of April 8, 2011.

This training program was based in the foundational power yoga, a general term used in the West to describe a vigorous, fitness-based approach to vinyasa-style yoga. The word Vinyasa means "breath-synchronized movement."

When I first started taking yoga, it was primarily just the physical practice. It then became a highly revered and appreciated practice to myself, and yoga began to form into an even more integral part of my life than I had anticipated.

Teaching yoga is something in itself – sharing with others the beauty of the practice. Where yoga has changed for me mostly is in what the training itself has taught me, in understanding yoga in more of a comprehensive sense, including everything from anatomy to life lessons... and in exposing us to the loveliness yoga brings to life. It's all wonderful!

TAMAL YOGA SCHOOL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

The Tamal Yoga school is a 200hr yoga alliance certified course. Our teacher trainings are recognized world wide as one of the most comprehensive certification programs that takes a student from A-Z in yoga understanding and teaching. There are no prerequisites other than having an open mind and a thirst for knowledge.

Course Topics

- Practicing Yoga Asana
- Pranayama
- Anatomy
- Teaching
- Discussions and understanding of different yoga styles
- Adjusting
- Philosophy and meditation
- Yoga diet
- Learning Sanskrit words
- Working with injury
- Creating a yoga sequence
- The Business of yoga

Location: Yogaco (1408 3rd St, Santa Monica, CA 90401)

Materials for Tamals Yoga certification program:

- Yoga Manual
- Bhagavad Gita
- Meditation paraphenalia
- Anatomy flash cards
- "Light on Yoga" by B.K.S Iyengar
- Yoga Mat
- Yoga Block and Strap

ABOUT TAMAL DODGE

Tamal has been teaching yoga since childhood and was raised in a Yoga ashram since conception. He has traveled around the world teaching yoga and meditation and in so doing has experienced a wide variety of situations and personalities that has given him the knowledge and understanding of a seasoned yoga instructor. Tamal has written and published several books on yoga and composed many spiritual albums sold internationally. Tamal's goal for every student attending his teacher training is to expand their knowledge and understanding of yoga while inspiring the desire to know more and keep their journey going for the rest of their lives.

DATES FOR TAMAL YOGA CERTIFICATION

Spring Teacher Training Feb 4th-April 8th 2011

REGISTER FOR TAMAL YOGA TEACHER TRAINING

Email Tamalsound@yahoo.com

<http://www.tamalyoga.com/teacher-training>

A BREIF UNDERSTANDING OF THE
DIFFERENT STYLES OF YOGA TODAY



Hatha Yoga

Branches of the yoga practice that involves physical exercise, breathing practices, and movement. These exercises are designed to have a salutary effect on posture, flexibility, and strength and are intended ultimately to prepare the body to remain still for long periods of meditation.

Ashtanga Yoga

Patanjali's eight-limbed path, also called Raja Yoga. This yoga contains or should contain eight components: morality; ethics; posture; breath control; sense control; concentration; meditation; absorption. Also the "brand" name for the style of yoga developed and taught by Sri K. Pattabhi Jois with set sequence of yoga posture that take a student from A-Z in Asana.

Vinyasa/Power Yoga

Power yoga is a vinyasa style of yoga in which one pose is linked to the next by breath. It is a vigorous class and often modeled after poses in ashtanga yoga. Power yoga increases internal heat and focus; it infuses the grace of movement with the strength of stillness.

Iyengar Yoga

Iyengar Yoga, created by B. K. S. Iyengar, is a form of yoga known for its use of props, such as belts and blocks, as aids in performing asanas (postures)... This style of yoga is extremely alignment based and the asanas are often practiced individually.

Bikram Yoga

Bikram Yoga, commonly known as hot yoga, is a system of yoga that Bikram Choudhury synthesized from traditional yoga techniques and popularized beginning in the early 1970s. ...Bikram yoga is always practice in the same sequence only using 26 of out of the hundreds of yoga asans out there... The rooms are heated to 100 degrees.

Anusara Yoga

Anusara (a-nu-sar-a), means "flowing with Grace," "flowing with Nature," "following your heart." As The founder John Friend would put it. It was founded by John Friend in 1997, Anusara yoga is a school of hatha yoga, which unifies a life-affirming yin and yong principles with Tantric philosophy of intrinsic goodness with Universal Principles of Alignment.

Yin Yoga

Yin yoga, so named because of its correspondence to the Taoist concept of yin, is a very distinct style of Chinese yoga similar to hatha yoga that stretches the connective tissue (joints) rather than conditioning the muscles, the latter being the aim of most other styles of hatha yoga. .

Restorative Yoga

Restorative yoga is a method of healing the body with props so that very little muscle strength is used. The goal is to find deep relaxation so that you body can open up subtly and restore damage.

YOGA PHILOSOPHY



Texts from
'SRIMAD BHAGAVATAM' 3rd Canto, Part 4, Ch. 28
translated by Bhaktivedanta Swami

TEXT 5

मौनं सदासनजयः स्थैर्यं प्राणजयः शनैः ।
प्रत्याहारश्चेन्द्रियाणां विषयान्मनसा हृदि ॥ ५ ॥

*maunam sad-āsana-jayah
sthairyam prāṇa-jayah śanaiḥ
pratyāhāraś cendriyāṅām
viṣayān manasā hṛdi*

SYNONYMS

maunam—silence; *sat*—good; *āsana*—yogic postures; *jayah*—controlling;
sthairyam—steadiness; *prāṇa-jayah*—controlling the vital air;
śanaiḥ—gradually; *pratyāhāraḥ*—withdrawal; *ca*—and; *indriyāṅām*—of the
senses; *viṣayāt*—from the sense objects; *manasā*—with the mind; *hṛdi*—on the
heart.

TRANSLATION

One must observe silence, acquire steadiness by practicing different yogic postures, control the breathing of the vital air, withdraw the senses from sense objects and thus concentrate the mind on the heart.

- Kapila
(India)

TEXT 6

स्वधिष्यानामेकदेशे मनसा प्राणधारणम् ।
वैकुण्ठलीलाभिध्यानं समाधानं तथात्मनः ॥ ६ ॥

*sva-dhiṣṇyānām eka-deśe
manasā prāṇa-dhāraṇam
vaikunṭha-līlābhidyānam
samādhānam tathātmanah*

SYNONYMS

sva-dhiṣṇyānām—within the vital air circles; *eka-deśe*—in one spot; *manasā*—with the mind; *prāṇa*—the vital air; *dhāraṇam*—fixing; *vaikunṭha-līlā*—on the pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *abhidyānam*—concentration; *samādhānam*—*samādhi*; *tathā*—thus; *ātmanah*—of the mind.

TRANSLATION

Fixing the vital air and the mind in one of the six circles of vital air circulation within the body, thus concentrating one's mind on the transcendental pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is called *samādhi*, or *samādhāna*, of the mind.

—spiritual bliss
one with God

TEXT 7

एतैरन्यैश्च पथिभिर्मनो दुष्टमसत्पथम् ।
बुद्ध्या युञ्जीत शनकैर्जितप्राणो ह्यतन्द्रितः ॥ ७ ॥

*etair anyaiś ca pathibhir
mano duṣṭam asat-patham
buddhyā yuñjīta śanakair
jīta-prāṇo hy atandritaḥ*

SYNONYMS

etaiḥ—by these; *anyaiḥ*—by other; *ca*—and; *pathibhiḥ*—processes; *manaḥ*—the mind; *duṣṭam*—contaminated; *asat-patham*—on the path of material enjoyment; *buddhyā*—by the intelligence; *yuñjīta*—one must control; *śanakaiḥ*—gradually; *jīta-prāṇaḥ*—the life air being fixed; *hi*—indeed; *atandritaḥ*—alert.

TRANSLATION

By these processes, or any other true process, one must control the contaminated, unbridled mind, which is always attracted by material enjoyment, and thus fix himself in thought of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

~ unity w/ God ~

Tamal Yoga School Teacher Training

Hw

Yugas

Jennifer Zepp

Yugas – state the world is in...

To answer which yuga I think the world is in is a difficult question... I first thought this because I feel like our world today has some aspects that would place us under one yuga, and other aspects that may place us under a different yuga... I thus think that we are maybe on the brink of one yuga, looking to re-align our world with another, or maybe in transition, from Kali Yuga to Satya Yuga. There is much despair, poverty, misalignment and unfortunate things happening in the world as a whole. Though there are many wonderful things as well, and a common thought in working to return to true goodness... for example, in the United States, even amongst an essentially economically driven country... there is much attempt to give back, as seen in slowly a greater emphasis on philanthropy, service, taking care of our community and world (i.e. even with 'going green').

I also think the statement made in class that there is always free will, and you don't have to participate in the yuga the world may be in is of utmost importance. The world may ultimately be in one condition, but it is how we each react and respond to this that is truly important, and as a community as well. It is important to find passion in spite of unpleasant circumstances, love amongst cruelty, and compassion despite indifference.

From Yoga Philosophy Lesson 1...

"yoga" = yoke/unite; some say union of body, mind, spirit

Yoga – non-denominational, all-inclusive, all have goal to higher Enlightenment

Tamal Yoga School Teacher Training

Hw

Jennifer Zepp

What do you seek to get out of this training?

Mostly, I am so thankful I am able to do this training. Physically, I know this will help to take care of my body, build strength and flexibility, get my body in good shape, and even help to contribute to dance in building a true inner and outward strength. Beyond just the physical, yoga classes for me have always helped to center myself. It will push your body to what you think maybe it's limit, and then further, helping you to grow. And attends not only to your body physically, but also relieves stress, and re-focuses your mind and body, and creates an ease.. and facilitates breath. I know this training will bring not only that fulfillment, but also push me to grow physically, mentally, spiritually, and re-focus on what's important... life, and even the simple graces we experience every day. I hope to get out of this training additionally the study aspect, and a further understanding of yoga as a whole – not just the physical practice, but also the theology, lifestyle, and all encompassing aspects of yoga – for myself, but also to then be able to share as a teacher – to friends, family, loved ones, and in class, as an instructor, and share the joy of yoga. Yoga is a practice I will always have and cherish, and hope to continue to deepen my understanding, and thus to share yoga with others.

Tamal Yoga School Teacher Training
Hw
Jennifer Zepp

Why do you want to become a yoga teacher?

I answered this question partially in the first week, in that ultimately, I want to bring the joy, peace and serenity yoga brings for myself to others. Yoga is a passion of mine, and, given the time, I would love to be at the studio, taking a class, or just surrounded by yoga a lot more than a few times a week. I truly enjoy yoga, and to be able to share that with others, and to be able to teach yoga, have a deeper understanding of the practice is something I discovered I definitely want to do. And to have the opportunity to have this as additional work, and do something I truly love for work is a blessing.

Yoga was something I had briefly been exposed to before college, maybe even taken a class here and there.. but never really thought much of it. In college, I took yoga for dancers, where I first really studied yoga. The instructor herself I found to be at times discouraging, making us feel like we were never really "working hard enough, or trying hard enough"... though we believed and felt we were... though to me, that is not what yoga is about. It is about pushing yourself, in order to grow – physically, mentally, spiritually... though in a positive sense. Working towards things in no way means failure; it is in the process we find the beauty; reward comes from work. After this class, I still knew though that the yoga practice itself was something I enjoyed.

Last summer, being down here in LA and working, I purchased 2 weeks of classes at YogaWorks, and attended at the studio on Larchmont. These 2 weeks were wonderful, and I wanted to continue with a membership, though being a student, and responsible for most of my expenses, I wasn't able to purchase a membership, though still went to a class here and there. I had not at this point learned of such wonderful donation based studios :) As I had signed up for their e-mail list, I had received an e-mail about the deadline approaching for registration for their yoga instructor teacher training course... and something sparked. I had a revelation, or whatever you would like to call it. I knew this was something I wanted to do. I contacted the instructor, and person running the program, as the deadline was approaching, and it had actually been full. Though after talking with them, they were going to still permit me to participate... however, long story short, and after many negative conversations with my dad... I was unable to participate in the program. Financially, I still work with my dad. I have loans for school, and essentially loans from him, for living expenses and such, as I am expected to cover everything (minus tuition, which is covered by my grandparents, of which I am most grateful for). I requested to loan money from my dad, and would pay him back, with interest, as we have set up for my car loan, though he would not agree to this, and didn't understand why I would want to do this... One thing as well, is he didn't understand why I couldn't just teach dance... I will be receiving a Bachelor of Arts from Loyola Marymount University, Dance major, Business Administration minor. I know I want to participate in the concert dance world

after school, and in the performance aspect of dance, and possibly teach on occasion. And I now knew yoga had to be something as well a big part of my life. Dance and yoga are my passion. However, teaching dance is completely different than teaching yoga. Yoga is a lifestyle, and a different environment, a different focus when it comes to teaching, than opposed to with dance. It is more participatory in a way, and about the practice itself, than the competition... in teaching yoga, I feel one is more sharing in the practice, than simply instructing... At this time, it thus did not work out then, though I knew I would make this happen at some point, and take a teacher training course.

Last semester, I took sports law, as I do enjoy the study of law, and was considering going to law school (as I did start out in the business school at LMU as well – as a Business Law major). However, after much toying with the idea... I realized this is not something I wanted to do right away. If I chose to do law school, and even as a lawyer, especially in the beginning, this is all you can do. As much as I enjoy law, I realized that law is not all I want to do. However, this class led me in a sense to where I am now. Mary Strong came to speak at our school. And from the time our professor handed out the flyer, and told us we were required to attend the talk, I had a good feeling. The flyer quoted, "Combining passion and professionalism into a career" and touched on spirit, passion and success as one... Long story short, in hearing Mary's story, and in searching for what you want to do, I started to discover this for myself. I met with her, and I will be starting a mentor program with her, and work at the studio The Green Yogi, and have the opportunity to learn how to run the studio, and opening a studio, and the business side as well. And most importantly, she referred me to Tamal Dodge, and to look into this yoga training. After re-addressing this with my dad, and again expressing that this was something I knew I wanted to do, I was able to work out a loan with him, and begin the training now. 😊

Tamal Yoga School Teacher Training
Hw
Jennifer Zepp

Why is yoga important to you?

Well, this is something I have definitely expressed in previous weeks writings – in writing why I want to become an instructor, and in what I seek to get out of the training. Honestly, I feel like I could continue a long narrative of endless reasons of why yoga is important to me, in many different aspects. I am so grateful I have the opportunity to practice yoga, and to deepen my understanding an training. In short, yoga brings me such joy. It brings peace, serenity, accomplishment, appreciation, grace... I remember once walking out of a class, talking to someone who had also just taken the class, and she said, "You are absolutely glowing!" I am not sure exactly how to describe how exactly it magically does this all... but it does. Even just in the physical aspect, yoga is extremely beneficial, and for one's health. I took 2 semesters of kinesiology – required for dance majors – which was a study of anatomy, physiology, and biomechanics, and as well specified in studies geared towards dancers, which I feel will additionally help me as a yoga instructor. Understanding something, and for example as we understand the benefits of yoga, can help one express this to others; and contribute to their understanding and appreciation as well.

Ultimately, I love it. I truly enjoy yoga. In the world of yoga, and in the practice, the people, the culture, the study, we see such grace, beauty, strength, growth, life... yoga is life. Appreciating the calm in breath, the strength in the practice, and the gift of life, is something I am forever grateful for.

How has yoga affected your life?

Yoga has affected my life in more ways than I would have thought. It is my center. It gives me a deeper sense of purpose. Yoga has lit a path for myself – one that I am even not necessarily sure where exactly it is leading, or what all the path entails of course, but that light is lit. I am inspired per say to lead a path of numerous ideas and aspirations I have; a path that entails many things, but one I am extremely excited I am on. I am genuinely excited for what lies ahead, and for the most part, where I am at now.

As I had said before, something clicked with the idea of teaching yoga. I am truly looking forward to being an instructor, and being able to share the joy yoga brings for myself with others. As well, in furthering my knowledge of what yoga involves, including beyond the physical practice itself, I have found this yoga training course to be important and informing for myself as a human being. It has brought light to new awareness, ideas, goals, and even in going about my current daily life. As well, the people I have met through yoga are a blessing. Each has inspired me in a different way, brought light to something, been a friend, a confidant, or even just put a smile on my face! 😊

I am excited for life, for life after school, growing myself as a human being, as a friend, a sister, a teacher, a dancer, in starting my own family at some point. I am excited to start taking more time for service – for myself (in pursuing my passion of dance and yoga), and as well for others. I have grown up having many amazing opportunities of building houses in Mexico, working with a day camp as well there, and even in college, and as a mentor for students at a PeaceJam conference. I want to continue more with this as well after school, even in small ways. I know this much, of that I want to find more time to work with kids – seeing their faces light up from even the ‘simplest’ of things, and that I truly enjoy yoga – the practice, the culture... and that I adore dance – so many aspects of it... how this will all fit together of course I am still working on. But I know these are all things I will actively be pursuing approaching graduation, and am excited for the next stepping stone!

How will you share this or apply this training to your life or others?

I believe I have answered this question quite a bit in previous weeks reflections, but to re-emphasize, this training has contributed to more factors of my life than I could have possibly thought. This training has helped physically and spiritually, and I have applied this to my life as a student, dancer, sister, friend... The yoga physical practice itself has helped to build strength, in both the body and mind, and provide serenity. This is something I will continue to practice throughout all my life. As well, I am excited to teach yoga, and share this joy, peace, serenity, bliss, exercise and experience with others. The beauty of yoga is that it is not only an exercise for the body, or for the mind or heart separately, but it is a unity of the whole. Who knew that in even just an hour and a half class, the whole body, mind and spirit can be nurtured. I look forward to beginning to teach and share what this training has taught me, as well as continue in future trainings, workshops, classes and so on, to deepen my learning and understanding as well.

Yoga philosophy, study, diet, anatomy in both eastern and western views, the physical practice, meditation, and encompassing all aspects touched on in the training, have helped to shape a stronger individual, bringing light again to much of what makes life so beautiful; something so cherished. I am so thankful to have this, and to continue in my yoga practice, share this with others, and carry on in searching for my own inner peace, bliss, and purpose, and thus also allowing for my contribution.

Tamal Yoga School Teacher Training
Hw
Jennifer Zepp

How has this training affected your life and practice?

Whenever I say I am also a second semester senior, as well as with doing this training, I get some form of 1 of 2 questions. The first is, "What? You're giving up your weekends?? Your last semester in college is time to party!!" Many of those who thought this was 'taking on too much' did not yet realize how this was one: something I just needed to do, and two: the hours this training requires were previously put to just going out, or watching tv... outlets to tune out from life, a way to shy away from responsibility, confusion of not knowing what I wanted to do (such as figuring out what directions I wanted to take after college), and so on. Granted not all of that time was frivolous; it also encompassed spending quality time with friends, even if it was just going out to eat, or to a movie, or the wonderful side of going out dancing! It is college, it is about enjoying life while we are still students, and not yet 100 percent out in 'the real world' as adults... though along with the positive side of all of this, I also took advantage too often of the negative side... resulting in not always the best decisions, most often due to confusion, disappointment, feeling lost...

The second question or response I get is more of a positive one, often along the lines of: "Oh wow! That's amazing! I have such respect for that you are doing that..." as well as, "I would love to talk to you more about it! I love yoga, and would love to know more about it..." I knew I wanted to do this training, and I am so excited for what is to follow. Even already with the number of people I have inspired through this is such a blessing. The fact I am able to do this now... and yes, it is tricky with school of course... but was what I needed to do, and for more reasons than I could have imagined. This training does make you think deeper, and leads you to focus on things that do need to be addressed, and the deeper questions of life such as "Who am I?" and "What is my purpose?" And even though it is challenging to do this, it is something so valuable that I am grateful I am doing now, and with such an amazing group! I completely believe that your surroundings do affect you, and being surrounded by such an amazing community and group of people is such an honor. I adore our shared journey, and absolutely cherish everything this training has brought to my life. And how inspired I feel, and confident in my confusion – in that yes, it is not about knowing, but knowing that you do not know, and that the beauty of life is in the process; the loveliness is in the journey.

What is yoga to you and have your ideas changed?

When I first started taking yoga, it was primarily just the physical practice. It then became a highly revered and appreciated practice to myself, but still primarily just in the sense of enjoying it as a class, a workout, or just simply an hour and a half of my day. Though held as a cherished hour of my time, it was primarily just that. As soon as I first received the e-mail from YogaWorks this summer about teacher training coming up... yoga began to form into an even more integral part of my life than I had anticipated. Something clicked. I can't quite explain it, but teaching yoga was something I knew I wanted to do, from that moment. However, even then little did I know how much yoga would even more so become an integral part of 'the bigger picture'.

At the time, this being really the first time I proposed the idea to my dad, certification classes for yoga seemed frivolous to him. In that I currently am a student, and am paying for living expenses, housing, school fees and so on, I unfortunately have to work with my dad financially. And when he rejected even allowing me to loan money for the program, I was extremely frustrated at first. However, looking back on it, I am so grateful that happened, because that is what led me to continue looking more into yoga on my own, as I still knew teaching was something I was going to do.

From my sports law class I was taking, is how I came to meet Mary Strong, a soon to be mentor, as well as being introduced to Tamal, and informed of this training. The cards all began to line up, it is amazing how it all worked out so beautifully, and how blessed I am to be in *this* training, for everything it has given me. The excitement to be a teacher has remained a constant, since that first spark when I read that e-mail from YogaWorks, and had the idea planted in my mind. It makes me so happy to know so fully that teaching yoga is something I 100 percent want to do. Teaching yoga is something in itself – sharing with others the beauty of the practice.

Where yoga has changed for me mostly is in what the training itself has taught me, in understanding yoga in more of a comprehensive sense, including everything from anatomy to life lessons... and in exposing us to the loveliness yoga brings to life. It's all awesome! ☺

Where do you want to go from here?

My first thought when I read this question was, well, it sure sounds a lot like, "So what are you doing after graduation?" A question I have been getting quite frequently... I just want to say, "GOOD QUESTION!" I am not completely sure of course. Yes, maybe if I was for example, going to be in finance, I'd get a job in that field, or going to be a doctor, I'd go to medical school. And previously, I was planning to go to law school, after working for a year. However, that has changed. Maybe that is still something I will consider at some point; I never completely count out anything. However, for myself, as of now, that is not all I want to do. If I were to continue with that, in making that choice of going to law school, and then needing to work likely long hours as a lawyer to pay for that school, that would be *all* I could do, with no time for anything else.

I am not sure what I am going to be doing exactly, but who really does know? But I will tell you one thing, as of now, for when I first get out of school, I will be taking a moment to breathe, and then to figure this out, or at least where to start. In making the choices I have, and with finishing school in 3 ½ years (with having to withdraw from a semester from pneumonia), and then switching majors around, and to complete the Bachelor of Arts, with a major in Dance, minor in Business Administration, with an emphasis in Business Law, as well as working through some semesters, I have packed my schedule. I am looking forward to getting started in looking beyond school when I graduate, and have the time to.

I feel blessed to know for sure that I plan to teach yoga, perform and work with dance on some level, and make that happen, whatever that means. I believe I am going to look into possible marketing positions, though I know that now, in my 20's, is when I want to pursue dance. It is sometimes hard for people to understand the concept that you do not necessarily have to know what you are going to be doing for the rest of your life right out of college. What you may want to do at one point can change, or at least to a degree. I currently want to pursue dance on some level, though of course the degree to which I do may vary. However, I know I will always have dance in my life, to some degree. As well as yoga. One thing I do know for certain, is I can't wait to teach! And as well to continue in yoga – in the practice, the study, workshops, and so forth. Just being in this community, and that this is only just the tip of the iceberg, is so exciting. To study and participate in something you are actually interested in, and chose to do, is such a gift, and of which I am most thankful for. ☺

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Print-

Seizing the Moment: The Reality of Being in the Moment

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What scientists believe happens is that when we live entirely in the moment, we free up the brain to think visually by turning off parts of the brain that drain energy away into neurotic and anxious thinking.

When you relax in the moment, you are priming the most creative part of your brain, the visualization center in the posterior part of the brain. You supercharge your creative thinking by turning on these visualization centers. It's not clear why that is, but the observation is right there in living Technicolor. When you relax in the moment, the PET scan lights these centers of visual thought. What scientists believe happens is that when we live entirely in the moment, we free up the brain to think visually by turning off parts of the brain that drain energy away into neurotic and anxious thinking. When you see a great movie, opera, ballet, or sports event, you become totally absorbed in the moment, with your visual centers glowing brightly as the anxious concerns of the day take a rest. It is one of life's great ironies: We believe we accomplish so much by constantly worrying, when in reality we are preventing ourselves from opening the most magnificent part of the brain, the center of visual thought. Thomas G. West, who has written an excellent book on visual thinking, *In the Mind's Eye*, says that many of the great thinkers in history thought visually - physicists Albert Einstein, Michael Faraday, and James Clerk Maxwell are but a few. Many experts believe that visual thinking is the highest form of intelligence. Great athletes also think visually. They live exclusively in the moment and it pays off in Olympic Gold.

For the rest of us who are not Olympians, it is just as critical to strip away energies that are going in any direction but in the moment so that we can light up this most creative part of our brain. Many of us are so preoccupied with what we're going to do next or what terrible misfortune may befall us or what has already befallen us that we simply fail to operate fully and at our best in the moment. Many people fail to live in the moment because they believe that if you live FOR the moment you will lose your grasp on reality. That's not what being IN the moment means. If you truly want to grasp the opportunity that is laid in front of you at any given moment, you should be consumed by the moment.

How to Enter the Moment**Become an actor or actress**

The very best actors in the world succeed by becoming bold and brave enough to exist only in the moment. You can acquire these same skills. You may think that's completely wrong because actors and actresses are "faking" it. However, the very best never fake anything. They are absolutely true to every word that comes out of their mouth. Why? Because they are living totally in the moment, living the lines they are speaking as they speak them. Here's how you can practice.

READ ALOUD

The best and most practical way of practicing how to be in the moment is to read aloud. Try reading aloud on a daily basis. The key is to truly own the material. Glance at it, lift it off the page, and just say it. Don't dramatize the line. Think of lines as thoughts or images and let the line do the talking. Say it as if it were it real conversation and you're the one speaking. Reading aloud will immediately get you to think, act, and be in the moment. If you have children or a spouse, read to them. Or volunteer your time to read to the sick in the hospital - a great way to escape your own troubles and dive into the moment.

Harold Guskin is the most famous acting coach in New York, teaching stars such as Kevin Kline, Glenn Close, and Bridget Fonda. First and foremost, he will teach you not to "do" anything with the words that you read. By just saying the words as they hit you, you'll find that your mind colors the words in a wonderful way. Take Robert De Niro as an example. He often speaks in the most understated manner possible. His voice, however, is still exploding with color and meaning. Being in the moment is what matters. Harold says: "It is an exploration of the moment without concern for where the moment is going. One's concentration should not be on how to do something or how to say it but rather on what it is and what it means. For an actor, if you think about how you're going to do something or how you're going to say it, you will manipulate the way you say it and it will sound contrived. You want it to sound like a human being so the audience can forget that you're an actor on stage. Even if what you're saying is effectively contrived, you will still seem false or 'actorish' - or like an 'old-fashioned actor.' The key is to say what you mean without trying to fix it up. What you say must be more important

than how you say it."

You may say, "My life isn't a goddamn Bruce Willis movie! It's real life. How can this advice help me?" Well, Harold's advice has to do with courage, trust, and fear, traits most of us, including actors, have trouble with. Once you have mastered reading aloud in the moment, carry these techniques into conversations with friends and relatives, then colleagues at work. You'll be amazed how useful this skill will be in meetings with your boss or coworkers, dinner dates, or gatherings with your family. Rather than rambling, you'll be talking and listening to others as if there were nothing else going on in the universe, and as a result, all of your interactions will become more fresh and alive and you'll suddenly find yourself much more attractive to others.

Here's how you can incorporate Harold's advice into your everyday life: Concentrate on each word you say as you say it. Block out all other thoughts. Don't try to monitor yourself or think ahead. Most of us try to prepare the next couple of sentences, but that makes us extremely dull and predictable. When you look at a really great talent, say David Letterman, he literally doesn't know where he's going next because he's exploring the moment. That's what makes him so unexpectedly funny. You will be amazed how creative you really are when you just allow the next thought to come. Be assured that it really will come and will be far more interesting than whatever rote statements, stories, or jokes you might have prepared. Success in my own career during TV and radio interviews and public speaking was having the courage to just let the next thought come rather than preparing rote answers. This allowed for the unexpected and made me much fresher and more interesting than if I simply rattled off a bunch of facts. You'll be amazed at how much more positive and natural an impression you'll make. When you do thinking work, such as writing a proposal or reading a document, try to be totally in the moment so that you are consumed by what you're writing or reading. Read it aloud. Allow yourself to read and reread it aloud to find innovative solutions to problems you thought were insoluble.

Next time we'll look at Selflessness and its role in Seizing the Moment.

Dr Leo Kady

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About the Author

USE MY DEFAULT BIO

Reflection: Summary of Dance Studies

Fundamentals of Dance Composition I and II:

- Due to transferring into the major, took only Fundamentals II.
- Met students in the major
- Studied dance terminology, in order to more intelligently speak about dance, and create a bridge for communication of dance and about dance
- Discovered that dance is an exploration and art beyond just what is considered to be "western dance style"
- Exercised improvisational skills and experimented with improvisation
- Exploration of dance as a movement art
- Creativity in composition and examination of dance
- Studied the principles of composition in relation to time, force, space, and kinesthesia
- Introduced to aesthetics and composition theory

Dance Styles and Forms:

- Explored dance composition through three different methodologies: chance procedures, music/dance relationships, site-specific locations
- Organized the body to move through or into the shapes and spatial relationships to itself
- Organized the body in relationship to other dancers
- Organized the body in relationship to music and/or environment
- Made intentional choices throughout the choreographic process that determined the movement vocabulary and how the movement vocabulary was executed
- Throughout the choreographic process, performance qualities, determined though the intentional use of space, weight, flow and time (Laban Efforts) were intentionally executed

Laban Movement Analysis:

- Practiced Laban/Motif Notation
- Learned Laban terminology to describe effort (Space: Direct/Indirect, Weight: Strong/Light, Time: Sudden (or Quick)/Sustained, Flow: Bound / Free), shape forms, modes of shape change, shape qualities, space, and body connectivity and patterns
- Played with effort qualities
- Studied Rudolf Laban's method of systematic description of qualitative change in movement
- Learned to apply Laban in choreography, teaching and learning movement
- Movement Improvisation
- Movement Study and Body Connectivity

Music for Dance/Drumming:

- Took course that counted for MUSC 104 – Music Fundamentals Class through De Anza college

- Fundamentals of Music
- Reading Music
- Understanding time signatures, rhythm

To Dance is Human: Dance, Culture and Society:

- Explored the importance of dance and the arts in society
- Learned to appreciate and be thankful for everyone bringing "their own" to the table
- Learned to open our eyes, and be *being*, loving human beings
- Studied dance as a cultural, political, and socioeconomic phenomena
- Focused on the study of dances of selected cultures in the United States today with origins in Africa, Asia, and Europe
- Studied dance as a form of Social Action
- Looked at current life in the United States

Dance History:

- Gained an appreciation of the history of Western theatrical dance
- Made connections between own personal dance history and the larger history of the discipline
- Developed research skills and learned how to incorporate observation and personal experience into well synthesized papers
- Learned how to watch dance with a critical eye
- Contextualized various choreographers and their strategies in order to understand why particular aesthetic concerns were paramount throughout dance history

Kinesiology I and II:

Overview/Over-arching content for both:

- Developed a deep understanding of the anatomy, physiology and biomechanics of the body
- Learned basic functions of the body
- Learned cellular structure (RNA, DNA)
- Origins, Insertions, Line of Pull and Function of Muscles
- Studied bones and bony landmarks of the body
- Studied basic and complex movements and actions of the body
- Mechanics of the body

Kinesiology I:

Provided by Judy

- Learned how to view the body as a form of architecture regarding the structure of the skeleton and the muscles which move it
- Learned about the function of the cell, the relationship between cells, and specific functions of each type of cell within the body
- Learned about the components of the skeletal system including cartilage, bone and bone maintenance
- Learned about the components of the muscular system and the relationship between the muscular, skeletal and nervous systems

- Learned about the function and anatomy of the circulatory system, cardiovascular system, and the heart
- Learned about the nervous system, including the relationship between the central and peripheral nervous system
- Learned about the influence of stress, nutrition, environment and lifestyle on the cells of the body, and on the body as a whole

Kinesiology II:

Provided by Judy

- Developed a further understanding of kinesiological ideas and anatomical fact which we could relate to dance based theory
- Learned to identify specific bones and muscle groups within the body such as the pelvis, hip, knee, patellofemoral joints, ankle foot, and both lower and upper extremities
- Learned about major regions and functions of the body with particular attention to the spine and pelvis
- Gained a greater understanding of the different types of joints within the body and how they function and move
- Learned about the importance of taking care of our own bodies with the idea of longevity for our dance careers in mind
- Considering longevity, we created a personal conditioning program in which to practice in conjunction with our dance practice to keep our bodies strengthened and flexible
- Cultivated a knowledge of common dance injuries and how to prevent them through correct alignment and awareness of the body's placement

Principles of Teaching Dance:

- Explored learning patterns
- Investigated various teaching methods
- Studied the development of a child's mind/habits
- Learned about the requirements needed to teach arts in a California high school, and also became familiar with the National Standards for Dance guidelines
- Learned how to create a lesson plan and were able to practice teaching these lesson plans to our peers
- Studied the theory and practice of effective dance instruction, including methods, lesson plans, and practice teaching of high school students and adults

Philosophy of Arts:

- Took The Art of Rome – a study abroad Art History course in Rome, Italy
- Traveled around Italy, and primarily the center of Rome
- Studied the history of Rome and it's art and culture
- Observed the Italian and Roman influence of art and culture on the world as we know it

Ballet:

- Studied with Caprice Walker my first year at LMU, then Tekla Kostek
- Ballet movement and technique
- Exercised traditional and contemporary practices
- Worked on strength, precision, execution of movement, carriage and technique

- Learned variations from the repertory of classic ballet
- Developed familiarity with the music, scenarios, and staging of several traditional ballets
- Introduced to dance films and the study of current research on dance criticism

Modern Dance:

- Studied my first year with Yvette Wolf, then Damon, Rogelio and Lillian
- Various Modern Styles and Techniques: Limon, Graham, Taylor, release and counter technique
- Raw/organic movement as well as sequential
- Worked on strength and technique, endurance, acrobatic experimentation, control
- Worked on complex rhythmic patterns and movement design
- Concentrated work on performance and projection techniques

Jazz Dance:

- Studied with Mecca, Denise, and Paige
- Enhanced technical skill level
- Enriched level of musicality and a concise understanding of the importance of musicality in dance
- Improved in stylistic interpretation of choreography, in a manner consistent with the choreographer's intent
- Enhanced performance quality

World Dance:

Yoga for Dancers:

- Pushed body and mind to limits
- Strengthened body and mind connectivity
- Studied various yoga practices including Hatha, Vinyasa, Ashtanga, Iyengar
- Developed strength, flexibility, endurance
- Yoga practice for pursuing in-depth dance technique training

Dance of Hawaii:

- Learned to apply the basic vocabulary, fundamental skills, and basic technique of hula
- Studied two styles of hula: Kahiko, the ancient classical form of hula, and Auana, the contemporary modern style of hula
- Trained in proper concepts and technique of hula
- Acquired knowledge of the Hawaiian terminology of hula
- Gained cultural awareness and appreciation of the ancient oral traditions that is preserved in the chants and dances of Ancient Hawaii

Pilates:

- Worked on alignment, strength, flexibility, neutral pelvis
- Worked on protecting my knees, and not to hyper-extend
- Worked on posture
- Worked on feet – arches, ankle strength
- Studied Pilates exercises, focus and technique

The Value of Somatics in Dance

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Senior Thesis – Dance Perspectives Essay

Professor Judith M. Scalin & Teresa Heiland

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Introduction

This paper will discuss the somatic and its relation to dance. This history of somatic will also be discussed. This paper will also dwell on the different concepts that are involved in the somatic education.

Somatic studies can be termed as the body therapies, body mind integration, body work, body mind disciplines and movement awareness. From the beginning of 1970 there has been growth on the number of who have considered further training in the mind body techniques which are generally referred to as somatic studies or somatic. This technique that was once regarded as esoteric is now considered a household word in the dancing world.

Knaste, (2001). Why do some dancers fully inhabit their bodies, creating a seamless whole between the dancer and the dance? Can we attribute this to a kind of somatic intelligence? Dancers have heard the term somatics tossed around for three decades, but few know the exact origins of the practice. And yet, dancers have been a driving force in the field. (p.67).

History of Somatics

Western somatic education is believed to have originated from the philosophical revolt that was mooted against the Cartesian dualism. The gymnastic movement in Europe which happened in the nineteenth century by the somatic founders named Francois Delsarte, Bess Mesendiek and Emile Jacques Dalcroze and they aimed to replace the current ideology which emphasized on rigor while physically training with an approach which was natural and one based on the listening to cues of the body which arise from touch, breath and movement. The word somatic was coined in 1970 by Thomas Hanna who was a philosopher and also a Feldenkrais

practitioner. This word comes from a Greek word "soma" which means the wholeness of the body.

Knaste, (2001) explains that the somatic movement was already well under way when the philosopher Thomas Hanna coined the term in 1976. Somatics derives from the Greek word for the living body, soma, and is the study of the body experienced from within. The roots of somatics can be traced back to the late 19th-century European Gymnastic movement, which used breath, movement, and touch to direct awareness. Francois Delsarte, Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, and Bess Mensendieck encouraged a kind of inside-out expression that questioned the traditional nature of movement training. They seemed to be saying, "The body is the person," thus joining mind and body in a celebration of the human form. (p.432).

"The humanistic psychologists during that time were criticizing the idea that the brain provides the only valid content for experience, one trend which gave impetus to the birth of the human potential and holistic health movements in the 1970s." (Knaste, 2001). Advocates supported the unity of the mind and spirit as important to the human body. The human body brought a whole new language of consciousness and wisdom of the body through awareness of the self and self guidance. Western practioners in somatics who started their work in the turn of the twentieth century evolved their training by observing closely their body signals and movement. Modern way of dancing was at this time emerging and it was an attempt to create a way of moving that was more autonomous and democratic.

Somatic education was taken more seriously in the dancing world with the series in dance magazine in 1980 on the therapies of the body which was written by Martha Myers. She spent a lot of time trying to bring together dancers, somatic practitioners and scientists at the American

dance festival. In the twentieth century there was the rise of porous boundaries which occurred within the dance education. There were influences from Contact and some other forms of improvisation, the Skinner Release Technique, ethnic dance and others.

Key Concepts

Hanlon , (1998) says that five components of a somatic discipline: using sensory feedback, slowing down and paying attention, learning through internal experience rather than imitation, applying a rhythm of doing and resting, and exploring movement rather than simply completing exercises.(p. 12).

Somatic education is different from the traditional dance pedagogy. The difference is in the philosophical aspect which involves dismembering the dualism of the mind- body in the pursuit of autonomy. The major themes of this education involve self awareness, control of the self and the application of the desire to the growth and development processes. This change in philosophy had a major impact on the practice. The key elements of somatic education are sensory attunement, novel learning context and finally arguemented rest.

A) Novel learning context

the learning of somatic contexts usually involves the removal of dancers from the traditional constraints of space- time- effort and the psychological demands involved in dance classes. Quieting the mind body is the first step of creating a learning environment for somatic. This mode of learning involves personal exploration and self acceptance. It also involves non competitiveness. Therefore there is no striving to make the correct moves instead the dancer or learner learns from a source that is embodied. This is a technique that is receptive fully and it responds to the movement at the moment.

Sensory Attachments

Somatic education has an emphasis on sensory awareness over motor action. In this education what matters most is how one makes a move that dwelling on what is the movement. The opportunity given to dancers to explore the inner sensations helps in sensory authority a basic element for self guidance and self control. It can be argued that somatics and dancing both share the kinesthetic awareness as a basic value. In the case of somatics the kinesthetic awareness performs mostly as an important agent of change which is an instrumental way of changing habit. The mind is in charge of organizing the body tissues into one life processes .sensations on the other hand are involved in the organization of the mind. It can be correctly said that they are not only involved in giving the brain material to organize but they themselves are the ones doing the organization.

Augmented Rest

This is the third concept that occurs in somatic studies that differentiates it from the training of the traditional dance. Practice can be said to be a very powerful tool in training of dancing but in many times it is not counterbalanced with the other concepts. Somatic education involves the resting periods between the phases of physical activity. The ratio of rest to activity is usually designed to help the nervous system to process and integrate and also give time for the physiological systems to recover. The resting phases in somatic education are not only used as a strategy for recovery but also for programming of the motor. Memory is also consolidate during the rest period and one is able to remember what he has learnt and also one is able to improve on the motor recall in that one can call it forth when he needs it. The actual performance is also improved meaning that one will be in a position to perform better next time.

Constructive rest is a practice well known in motor learning and it was described first by a practitioner known as Lulu Sweigard (ideokinesis). The hook-lying position helps in the reduction of the effects of gravity on the dancer's body and reduces muscular effort that is strenuous and joint loading that is involved in postural support. It is at this environment that the dancers can easily visualize the lines of movement that help neuromuscular condition with no extra physical help. It is always advisable to have a rest of between 10 to 20 minutes which helps the dancer to recuperate from the dancing. This is a constructive rest and it helps in the restoration of energy which was used in the dancing. Repetition can be said to be important in motor skill learning it can be also said to be a very powerful combination that helps in the learning of the motor skill and performance than physical practice alone.

According to Knaste, (2001) Other motor learning research supports the use of rest phases in training and performance that is common in somatic practices--the concept of "distributed practice." Whether rest periods are very brief (Alexander Technique's pausing and inhibiting), brief (the few moments between repetition and variation in Feldenkrais Awareness Through Movement), or fairly long (10-15 minutes or more of Ideokinetic Constructive Rest), they appear to improve memory consolidation and recall, and actual performance. (p.56).

Somatic Practices in Dance Technique

The somatic practices mostly integrated in the dance education are ideokinesis, the Alexander technique, the Feldenkrais method and body mind centering. These methods have the same goals in the somatic education system. They dwell on the process and are not goal oriented, they use sensory awareness in order to modulate and finally involve resting.

Ideokinesis

The major concept of this method is the visualization of the motor imagery in order to change mechanical forces that are injurious by programming patterns that are neuromuscular so as to improve mechanical balance and realignment. This method dwells on the philosophy that it is not possible to remove the stress of movement but it is possible to reduce the strain. The main component of ideokinesis is using the mind's eye to visualize movement with no sensation of muscle effort.

Hanlon, (1998). Among the somatic approaches, Ideokinesis is the most substantiated by science: More than seven decades of sports psychology research have shown that visualizing a clear goal of an action readily coordinates the neuromuscular details of the movement (the muscular recruitment, sequencing, and timing and force requirements). (p.45)

Physical science together with mental practice can enhance improvement in the performance of the motor and strength than mental or physical practice alone. Visualization can be said to be a major tool that links the mind and the body in the programming of the intended action with no much wear and tear that physical practice brings on the body.

The Feldenkrais method

This is a system that is centered on the movement in the education of the mind body and personal development. The work is programmed to improve ability and freedom and also to minimize pain or limitations in movement and also improve on the general well being.

According to Sevey, (1996), the Method is named after Israeli physicist and judo expert, Moshe Feldenkrais, who developed an experiential approach to self-organization through movement. Feldenkrais believed that movement was the

“language” of the brain, and that awareness of movement was a potent ingredient in refining the body schema (the image of self and action in the brain). (p.67).

The main component of this method is termed as the awareness through movement and it is much structured and a movement lesson that is guided verbally. The dancers are made to attend to the sensory feedback and they are guided through the performance of small range movements while lying down. These movements can be compared to the ones in a baby's repertoire. The movements are supposed to be done in a slow easy and quiet manner and should be below the normal muscular effort. This helps the dancers to identify and also differentiate the degrees of muscle contraction which would help in promoting the feeling of ease in the movement accomplishment.

Alexander technique

This is a technique that helps the dancer to learn his way of moving especially in the every day and the skilled activities. This technique can be said to have no specific physical exercises. There is also no meditation. It has an emphasis on learning of the use of movement in the day to day life. It helps dancers to move with ease accomplishment no matter the style of movement.

Conclusion

The somatic education and how it is employed in dance have been the major themes of this paper. Somatic is a concept that was introduced to dancing and has gained popularity. There are some key concepts that are involved in this form of dancing that has been explained in this paper.

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Jennifer Zepp

Aesthetic Statement

As I have continued to experience, throughout my college career, and as well as through this semester: dance is my escape; it is my freedom. The energy I get with every dance class, with every form of dance, and with every expression of the music, instills in me feelings of achievement, accomplishment, and pure happiness.

I have been dancing since I was little, at least to some extent, whether on and off, or sporadically, and have been exposed to many varieties of dance. In short, dance stuck with me, and even though, due to various circumstances, I wasn't able to dance as much as I would have liked when I was at home, it stuck with me. Let's just say, I couldn't shake the craving to dance. Dance is a universal language; it is understood by everyone. Every variety has its sole sensation, and invokes a different emotion. I love the intensity, fast-paced jazz dance, the sharpness of hip-hop, the rigorous technique of the basics of ballet, and the deep expression of modern. Dance is defined by human movement, and expression. I love every type of dance, from dancing to a favorite song to the high energy and enthusiasm of dancing at a competition.

Confucius once said, "Wherever you go, go with all your heart." And that I did. I danced each and every movement with ambition and fervor. Dance requires effort, time, and dedication. Dance is my motivation. It has given me the determination and resolve to succeed.

Dance is my passion. Dance is something that I will always have with me. To dance is to be out of yourself; larger, more beautiful, more powerful. Dance is my driving force. It has given me the power to thrive. It is human nature to be passionate, enthusiastic, and inspiring.

Everyone needs their own passion, with a commitment that produces vast results, and invokes the ability to achieve excellence. Having passion gives one the strength to reach one's aspirations. The influential German philosopher Hegel proclaimed, "Nothing great in the world has ever been accomplished without passion." Passion is the key to success; it is the answer to life.

I arrived at the dance studio just before eight and began to stretch. Minutes later, the music boomed on, and warm-up at the barre began. For the next hour, my heart raced as sweat, or chills, went down my face and back. Constantly moving, thinking, working – with intensity, and a smile spread across my face. We laughed – nervously, happily, and cracked up at our mistakes, but focused instantly and worked to improve the next time around. My mind, my body, my heart – everything challenged and fulfilled. I thought only of each and every movement. I felt every muscle as I flew off the floor – my core was firm as my quad tightened, and my calf tensed, as the arch in my foot stretched through to a pointed foot and my body lifted as if on air. All the power and energy of my body being used, I felt my strength. My body ached with pain, but pushed through every movement – each stretch of my hand, each turn. My eyes caught a glimpse of myself in the mirror, seeing a girl determined, smiling, and with eyes of a different light – at peace. I wiped the sweat dripping down the side of my face. I was in another world. I was at home. I was happy. I had the happiness that is reached through one's passion. I had fulfillment. There is happiness one achieves through love, there is happiness one obtains from success, there is happiness one acquires from a joke that made them laugh, and there is the simple happiness gained only from our true fervor. This is the happiness that spreads deep down into our heart; at the root of our soul. Complete bliss. This happiness is the happiness that

erases everything else, and allows one to exist only in the glorious moment – our reason to live; the point to living.

When the class ended, I rushed to head to my next class, recalling the afternoon. As I reminisced on the material of the class, and the things we worked on, I felt like a feather, and noticed I carried myself a different way. I walked confidently, beaming of happiness. I felt content. I was happy. In that moment, and for the past hour, nothing else existed. I was in the world of dance. Not a single sad thought ran through my mind. My heart was light, my mind clear – filled only with thoughts of dance, and my breathtaking class. It was pure bliss. I would hold onto that feeling for as long as possible. All I could do was smile. There is one thing I am certain – after I dance, I feel fulfilled. Sheer happiness.

My senior year in high school, I tore the cartilage in my knee, and was out of dance, and any other physical activity, for months. This was very difficult, both physically, and emotionally. Working to gain back strength, flexibility, and technique has been a long, difficult process, and is still continuing today. I really want to pretend it never happened, and in no way have it prevent progress, though it is frustrating to still notice significant differences in my left v. right knee, especially just in the flexibility of my right knee, and the ability to quickly straighten the leg when balancing or turning on the right standing leg. Dance study and training in our program at Loyola Marymount University has begun to help me to regain what was lost back.

There are many things I can work on and improve in technique, including flexibility, turnout, strength of arches, and flexibility through ankles, in order to enable my full potential. Form is critical, which I have aimed to pay attention to in class (i.e. stretching through foot, non-sickled/correct point, turnout, alignment, extension, supported arms). Correct form will enable

the full "grace" and goals of the movement. We have worked on this in class in warm-up exercises, across the floors, and in phrases. I have also worked to develop my core to improve balance, dance ability, and posture in every day life. However, I have also developed various strengths, including musicality (in taking each count for the movements and phrases), and body placement (overall, seen in the "picture" of each position). It is always a challenge to work on turns and spotting, as there have been gaps in training, which is something I look forward to working more on in the future. Additionally, I hope to improve numerous forms of turns, including technique correct execution.

Training in dance has given me the tools to use correct form, build strength, and technique in all my dance classes, including ballet, modern and jazz. Dance technique courses have also challenged me to become familiar with various styles, and forms of technique that my body is still getting used to, or comfortable with, and movement my body has not yet fully settled in. Not only have my courses expanded my dance aptitude, but they have also facilitated growth as a learning, thinking, doing human being. I love the grace that is present in dance, and carries with me throughout the day. Rigorous demand, and poised beauty are present in dance, and this I am working to achieve. I always feel better after walking out of dance class!

Throughout my courses, we have worked on ballet and modern movement and technique and exercised traditional and contemporary practices. We have worked on strength, precision, execution of movement, carriage and technique. We learned variations from the repertory of classic ballet warm-up and practices, as well as modern, and other styles, developed familiarity with the music, and were introduced to dance films and the study of current research on dance criticism, and different schools of ballet and modern.

Additional to this all, I have personally focused most this semester on *doing* rather than *thinking*. It is one thing to understand something, and another to actually *do* this in your body. I had developed the habit of doubting, over-analyzing, and predominantly thinking about how I could do things rather than just doing it – and practicing the movement in my own body. I also focused on just the enjoyment of just being present, listening, performing what is asked, and just simply dancing, and moving in my body. This is of course a very conditioned habit I am still working to overcome, and to shift focus. Though I definitely noticed a difference this semester. Maybe even from yoga! Or hearing the same feedback enough times... I worked to let myself trust I would figure it out, and just do; just go! I love dance, and it feels great just to move in your body.

For immediately after school, I do plan to continue to train, and enjoy having the ability to invest in new things that I am choosing to do, and experience world after school. With finishing up afternoons and evenings of homework, I am excited to have this time to allocate to other things, maybe even as simple as taking the time to take care of my body, or go to another dance class!

I know I love dance; I love to move. We have such a gift we are able to. Regardless of when, or how, or to what extent, I know I will always continue to have dance as a part of my life, and I am so thankful for that.

Jennifer Zepp

Moving to a New City

Chicago

Housing

<http://www.chicagoapartmentfinders.com/search-apartment-rentals.aspx>

<http://www.apartmentpeople.com/>

<http://www.chicagotribune.com/classified/realestate/apartments/>

<http://www.domu.com/>

craigslist, roommates.com

<http://www.nbcchicago.com/the-scene/real-estate/>

<http://www.gradspot.com/blog/top-10-cities-recent-grads?page=0,10>

Top 10 Cities for Recent Grads

#1: CHICAGO (pop. 2,853,114)

The jewel of the Midwest combines cosmopolitanism with a refreshing dose of hospitality, catering to those who like city life but don't like the "f*ck you, a*^hole!" mentality of places like New York. There are few big cities that are prettier than Chi-Town, which offers a mix of leafy neighborhoods, an architecturally stunning downtown, and a gorgeous lakefront. Tons of bars, live music, and museums keep recent grads entertained, but beware: The winters are not for the faint-hearted.

KEY STATS

Major Industries: Aerospace, finance, and consulting

Climate: Four distinct seasons, but beware of freezing winters (Winter—28°F, Summer—74°F)

Transportation: The 'L' and buses will get you where you need to go (Fare: \$2.25)

Avg. Price of a One Bedroom Apartment: \$1,106*

Cost of Living Index Value: \$126**

Closing Time: Su-F 3AM, Sa 4AM

Professional Sports: MLB—White Sox, Cubs; NFL—Bears; NBA—Bulls; NHL—Blackhawks

Famous Foodstuffs: Hotdogs with the works and deep-dish pizza
You'll love it if... you like your big city flavor tempered with a dash of Midwestern hospitality
You'll be miserable if... you are suspicious of nice people
Best Thing Ever: The coolest architecture in America
Worst Thing Ever: The wind off Lake Michigan

TESTIMONIALS

The two things that stand out about Chicago for me are sports and the arts. The Cubs, Bears, and Bulls are always on the tip of someone's tongue, to the point where its even annoying if you're not into sports. The concert scene is wicked, especially during the summer when there are lots of festivals going on in the parks, a major highlight being the Pitchfork festival which is two days of chill indie rock. The ringer for me is that you can find cheap housing and beer. I'd pay double in New York for the studio I have in Chicago. — Ben Herzberger, store clerk

No matter what you're in to, this city has it all: from extravagant nightlife, to a relaxing night at a theater, or getting together with your friends to engage in social and sports clubs. The best part about Chicago is everyone in the city is about the same age looking to experience the same thing, a great time. — Kelly H., teacher

A few apartment listing examples from research/listings I have saved...

West Loop neighborhood info

\$1,750

2+BR/2BA

CONVENIENCE AND QUALITY! West Loop new construction features: Walk-in closet, intercom, Jacuzzi tub, dishwasher, microwave, marble bathroom, stainless steel appliances, cherry cabinets, granite countertops, recessed lighting, 10 foot ceilings and under-cabinet lighting. Pink and Green EL lines three blocks away. Easy access... [more details](#)

South Loop neighborhood info

\$1,900

2BR/2BA

NEW CONSTRUCTION SOUTH LOOP CONDO! This 2 bed / 2 bath condo in the South Loop features about 1100 square feet; the open soft loft layout provides an airy feeling with tall ceilings and floor to ceiling windows. Both bedrooms can fit queen-sized beds, possibly a king in the master bedroom. There is laundry in unit and good storage, a... [more details](#)

Kingsbury Plaza

520 N. Kingsbury

Don't forget the habitat extras. [more >>](#)

Chicago, IL
60654

Chicago Neighborhood Map

Chicago is a big city made up of many smaller neighborhoods each with its own particular characteristics and personality. To learn more about a specific neighborhood, click on the neighborhood name below.

