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[Enewsletter Home](#)

Remember!
You can post your events and event flyers on our website Calendars:

[International Events](#)
[Dance Leader Training Events](#)

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September 2020

Leaders Guild News and Update

Dance resource library continues to grow

Dear Dance Leaders,

We are now celebrating 270 new dance write-ups that have been added to the resource library this year and still many more are in preparation! Communities everywhere are connecting with each other in order to participate in this momentous process as together, as an international community, we expand our cross-cultural ties.

Dance write-ups are not the only resources on our website. Videos of the Walks, presented by Murshid Wali Ali, are included in the resource library - 35 of these precious teachings have been added so far; and Leaders Guild members can also access the [articles and resources](#), including a series of articles on the Elements of Mastery. These articles provide background to the elements of mastery described in the [Leader Guidelines](#).

There is also a wealth of information in the [Timeline of the Dances](#). Maybe now is a good time to explore the website, and find one new resource you didn't know was there.

If you have any suggestions for the website, please contact the webmaster - director@dancesofuniversalpeace.org.

With love,



Magic nights



On September 16th, well over 200 members of the DUP circles in Latin America got together on zoom in what they have called "Magic Night Celebration". It was both a space to practice online DUP, and a party celebrating friendship. There were practices, but the main part of the program was to share in small groups conversations.

The first block of small groups was just to chat about anything and update with old friends.

The second block was to practice deep listening and share around how do we really feel and what has come for us in these times of the pandemic.

The last part of the call was for art performances and sharings, including an optional unstructured open space afterwards (after party).

This gathering had an expressed purpose of keeping the Latino DUP family fire warm and nurturing the fabric of relations. It was organised by an "ad hoc" group of mentors from different Latin American countries who call their small committee "mentors in the shadow" and are the same group who was behind the effort of recently publishing new Latin American DUP write ups.

Dance Leader Training during the Pandemic by Sylvia Sophia Murillo, Colombia

These are strange and unprecedented series of events that we are living in these times. Everything so unexpected and so sudden. One day we could roam freely and carry on with our daily routines and the next day we were all confined... these extreme and drastic changes have called for creative ways to meet the challenge.

Concerning the Dances, the first proposal was to invite people to participate in dance gatherings via zoom. The intention was to get together and share and dance and feel the presence of the family. In the cusp of the shutdown, this initiative was very enthusiastically embraced. It was soothing to know we were gathered to share this practice we love so much. This led to a proposal of doing an online class of dance leading.....

I started to work with a group of mentees who were relatively new. I figured they had participated in recent dance events and that they were enchanted by the practice; I had noticed that they were especially smitten by many of these beautiful new dances that were shared in the events, but that they hadn't had the experience of many foundational dances, so I thought it would be a good idea to study these in our classes.

It has been an experiment that is in constant evolution week by week. The focal points of this training have been the deepening in the spiritual tradition from which the dance comes, the deepening in our qualities and shortcomings as leaders and the deepening in the atmosphere created when leading a dance.



So far, we have touched some of SAM's dances, some Buddhist dances and now we are traveling through the Christian tradition. So, for example, for the deepening on the Buddhist spiritual tradition I invited a dance mentor who is a Buddhist practitioner. He has led us by example through Buddhist meditation practices and has expanded the information regarding the Buddhist tradition.

Next, the loving compassion that is necessary to be able to look at ourselves and others: as dance leaders we have qualities and we have shortcomings. Through the walking meditations we can explore ourselves to refine our reading of ourselves, in a loving manner, to be able to see if we are too solar or too lunar, too martial or if we lack the feminine beauty and demeanor. This relates to our willingness to deepen within ourselves and to discover our strengths and weaknesses, so we can be of better service in our dance leadership.

Also, the atmosphere created when leading a dance: this is the product of the deepening of the aspects mentioned above, and it is observable when these emergent dance leaders share a dance with the group. Though the current reality doesn't allow for the group to hear each other, this in no way hinders the possibility of the leader guiding us through an experience of deepening in the dance. As a matter of fact, it enhances it....somehow the attunement is the space for deep reflection which is then supported by the exploration of the feminine and masculine energy, to be softer or louder, to go faster or slower, to be in our breath. All these tools we can implement to deepen the experience that can be practised by the leader.

As you see, this experiment is constantly evolving. I hope we will have many other guests that come to share their wisdom with us so as to offer the most profound possible experience for each of the class participants. We are all learning, sharing and growing from this.

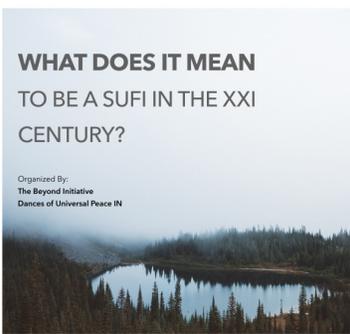
Engaged sufism

Dear Friends,

In this link you will find a summary I prepared with the most important points around ENGAGED SUFISM, from the teleconference last January with Shaykhs Saadi, Fadlallah and Issa Baba held by the Beyond Initiative, DUP.

**WHAT DOES IT MEAN
TO BE A SUFI IN THE XXI
CENTURY?**

Organized By:
The Beyond Initiative
Dances of Universal Peace IN



ENGAGED SUFISM
IN TIMES OF GLOBAL CHALLENGES

January 25th, 2020
6PM GMT
ZOOM WEBINAR
Meeting ID: 302 689 340





Shaykh Saadi Issa Baba Shaykh Fadhlalla

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1PpkVK5ZfP4u4waWT7B9i1NX7IfprluFM/view?usp=sharing>

This link will take you to the doc in Spanish. You can then download it from the web:
[SUFISMO COMPROMETIDO.pdf](#)

Love,
Jorge Calero

Cuba, January 2020

The Magic and Mystery of Cuba, January 2020: observations by Grace Marie, Tania Chamorro, David Coral and Charlotte Henson, from a world before lockdown

In January 2020 we spent seven glorious days dancing on the beaches and terraces of Cuba, where sixteen DUP dancers lost themselves in the excellent weather and magnificent culture of Cuba. Our hearts were full from the dancing, warmth of our fellow dancers and the passion of the Cuban people.



For years Grace Marie, a dance leader and dance composer from Colorado, has been taking the DUP dances to Central and South America and across Canada and the USA. In January of this year Grace took the Dances one step further, to Cuba. We danced morning and night in Spanish, Arabic, English, and other languages. Afternoons we played tourist, visiting many places, including local celebrations such as Jose Marti day in old Trinidad. We stayed in either hostals (small, privately owned mini-hotels) or Casa Particulares (home stays).

We danced to *Bienvenidos*, *Paz Contigo*, *Queremos Paz*, *Yemaya*, *The Time Has*

Come, *Hacia El Uno, Madre Tierra*, and other Grace Marie creations. They all were particularly relevant in Cuba.



Our Colombian dance leaders, Tania and David, taught us a dance commemorating the Tahinos, people indigenous to the Caribbean, a dance from Brazil, and some of our own southern spirituals that I had never danced.

There was something particularly satisfying about dancing, especially dances in Spanish, in Cuba. Occasionally outsiders would join the circle but mostly the locals watched us, wondered, and appeared to appreciate the sentiment of the dances..

Many questions came to mind when touring Cuba with its many nuances and contradictions:

What is poverty and wealth really? How do we use power and freedom? What do we really have to change to be sustainable or sustainable?

Cuba is a beautiful, confronting and deeply complex country, which lives with what it has, where creativity abounds, where food is necessarily local and seasonal, where education is the color of the flag, a clean country of commercial propaganda and without doubts a very strong, open and beautiful spirituality, where the songs and dances to pray are from day to day.

So we don't have the answers to the complex questions from the beginning of the trip, but we do have more questions as we continue to learn, pray and honor the ancient traditions.

We encourage everyone to feel the call to have this experience, to witness within themselves what the gift of responsibility means in these times of profound social transformation.

"Welcome the past, welcome the future, We are the time we have to live, Here we are, Here we will be"

**'We think we are about singing and dancing,
but we are really about
creating peace.'**

Murshid SAM, paraphrased by one of his early students, quoted in the [Leader Guidelines](#)

At a time of reflection in the [Sufi Ruhaniat International](#), explored in a recent SRI 'Town Hall meeting,' I was asked by some dance leaders about the relationship between dance leading and belonging to the Ruhaniat. In my most recent newsletter I confirmed that 'it is not necessary to be in the Ruhaniat in order to be a dance leader or mentor.' (It is necessary to have a mentor, abide by the [Leader Agreements](#), and be current with fees to or fee support from the [Leaders Guild](#).)

Our website gives [more detail](#) on how the Dances of Universal Peace have spread and evolved as a manifestation of the life and work of [Murshid SAM](#).



I'd like to take this opportunity to review how the transmission of the Dances and Walks is supported by organizational frameworks.

1. The Spiritual Guide (Pir Shabda, Spiritual Director of Sufi Ruhaniat International) appoints four to six senior mentors on a rotating basis to the [Guidance Council](#). The Guidance Council holds in trust the transmission of the Dances of Universal Peace and Walking Meditations in the lineage of Murshid Samuel L. Lewis. Members of the Guidance Council have the responsibility of guiding leaders and mentors by encouraging their spiritual expansion and personal development, supporting learning opportunities, setting guidelines for certification and for mentor acknowledgements, recognizing mentors, and upholding standards of conduct and human relationship that are in keeping with the transmission of the Dances of Universal Peace.

2. As part of this leadership, the Guidance Council oversees the [Leader Guidelines](#) and [Leader Agreements](#). To pursue this path requires great and sustained commitment. It is indeed a form of self-transformation in public. Beyond self-development, the path of dance leading is essentially one of service for the benefit of others. The foundation elements requisite to one's development on this path are listed in the Guidelines and described in [Elements of Mastery](#).

3. The Guidance Council also oversees the [process for mentoring](#), the six criteria for [certification as a dance leader](#), and the path for deepening in dance leadership. These are doubtless familiar to you, and the web links here give further information. In honor of the diversity of our beautiful family, DUP International strives to make these key resources available in up to six languages.

In summary, while it is clear that leading Dances is open to committed leaders of all spiritual traditions, our work as leaders is centred on and inspired by our living connection to Murshid SAM.

I am confident that Dances of Universal Peace International has the mechanisms in place to ensure this continues to be the case, as we look forward to the next generation of dance leading in an outwardly changeable world.



Aziz Dixon
Executive Director,
Dances of Universal Peace International

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 since our last newsletter:

MIT

Rashida Márcia Virgínia Bezerra de
Araújo

Brazil

24.07.20

Certified
Petaluma Livelli

MA, USA

22.08.20

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