

With articles from researchers and dancers from the whole world and one Article about BIODANZA with children:

Stueck, M., Villegas, A. (2017) Evidence-Based BIODANZA Programmes for Children (TANZPRO-Biodanza) in Schools and Kindergartens: Some effects on Psychology, Physiology, Hormones, and the Immune System. *in: The Oxford Handbook of Dance and Wellbeing*, Vicky Karkou, Sue Oliver, Sophia Lycouris, New York: Oxford University Press, S. 77-98

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford. It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship, and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered trade mark of Oxford University Press in the UK and certain other countries.

Published in the United States of America by Oxford University Press
198 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016, United States of America.

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Karkou, Vicky, editor. | Oliver, Sue, 1952– editor. | Lycouris, Sophia, 1961– editor.

Title: The Oxford handbook of dance and wellbeing / edited by Vicky Karkou,
Sue Oliver and Sophia Lycouris.

Other titles: Handbook of dance and wellbeing

Description: New York, NY : Oxford University Press, 2017.

Identifiers: LCCN 2016050561 | ISBN 9780199949298 (hardback) | ISBN 9780190655112 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Dance—Psychological aspects. | Dance—Social aspects. | Dance—Physiological aspects. | Dance therapy. | Well-being. | BISAC: MUSIC / Genres & Styles / Dance.

Classification: LCC GV1588.5 .O84 2017 | DDC 792.8—dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2016050561>

1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2

Printed by Sheridan Books, Inc., United States of America

CONTENTS

<i>Foreword by Raymond MacDonald</i>	xi
<i>Foreword by Sharon Chaiklin</i>	xv
<i>List of Editors</i>	xvii
<i>List of Contributors</i>	xix
<i>About the Companion Website</i>	xxxvii

Introduction	1
VICKY KARKOU, SUE OLIVER, AND SOPHIA LYCOURIS	

INTRODUCTION TO PART I: DANCE AND THE BODY

VICKY KARKOU AND SUE OLIVER

1. The Dancing Queen: Explanatory Mechanisms of the ‘Feel-Good Effect’ in Dance	11
CORINNE JOLA AND LUIS CALMEIRO	
2. Dance in the Body, the Mind, and the Brain: Neurocognitive Research Inspired by Dancers and their Audience	39
BETTINA BLÄSING	
3. Subjective and Neurophysiological Perspectives on Emotion Perception from Dance	55
MARIE-HELENE GROSBRAS, MATTHEW REASON, HAODAN TAN, ROSIE KAY, AND FRANK POLLICK	
4. Evidence-Based BIODANZA Programmes for Children (TANZPRO-Biodanza) in Schools and Kindergartens: Some Effects on Psychology, Physiology, Hormones, and the Immune System	75
MARCUS STUECK AND ALEJANDRA VILLEGAS	
5. Dancing to Resist, Reduce, and Escape Stress	97
JUDITH LYNNE HANNA	

6. Body Memory and its Recuperation through Movement HEIDRUN PANHOFER	113
7. Listening to the Moving Body: Movement Approaches in Body Psychotherapy LAURA HOPE STECKLER	127
8. Authentic Movement as a Practice for Wellbeing JANE BACON	147
9. Authentic Movement and the Relationship of Embodied Spirituality to Health and Wellbeing ZOË AVSTREIH	163
10. Reimagining Our Relationship to the Dancing Body ANDREA OLSEN	177

INTRODUCTION TO PART II: DANCE WITHIN PERFORMATIVE CONTEXTS

VICKY KARKOU AND SOPHIA LYCOURIS: WITH A CONTRIBUTION
BY TAIRA RESTAR ON HER WORK WITH ANNA HALPRIN

11. A Greater Fullness of Life: Wellbeing in Early Modern Dance MICHAEL HUXLEY AND RAMSAY BURT	201
12. Therapeutic Performance: When Private Moves into Public THANIA ACARÓN	215
13. Portals of Conscious Transformation: From Authentic Movement to Performance MARCIA PLEVIN	235
14. Butoh Dance, Noguchi Taiso, and Healing PAOLA ESPOSITO AND TOSHIHARU KASAI	251
15. Flow in the Dancing Body: An Intersubjective Experience LOUISE DOUSE	269
16. Common Embrace: Wellbeing in Rosemary Lee's Choreography of Inclusive Dancing Communities DORAN GEORGE	289

17. Wellbeing and the Ageing Dancer	307
JAN BOLWELL	
18. Being in Pieces: Integrating Dance, Identity, and Mental Health	325
MARK EDWARD AND FIONA BANNON	
19. Writing Body Stories	345
JUNE GERSTEN ROBERTS	
20. (Im)possible Performatives: A Feminist Corporeal Account of Loss	365
BEATRICE ALLEGRANTI	

INTRODUCTION TO PART III: DANCE IN EDUCATION

VICKY KARKOU AND SUE OLIVER: WITH CONTRIBUTIONS
BY JULIE JOSEPH, JO BUNGAY-ORR, AND FOTEINI ATHANASIADOU

21. Provoking Change: Dance Pedagogy and Curriculum Design	393
ANN KIPLING BROWN	
22. Pedagogies of Dance Teaching and Dance Leading	409
JAYNE STEVENS	
23. Creative Dance in Schools: A Snapshot of Two European Contexts	423
SUE OLIVER, MONIKA KONOLD, AND CHRISTINA LAREK	
24. Moving Systems: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Enhance Learning and Avoid Dropping Out	441
CLAIRE SCHAUB-MOORE	
25. Dance/Movement and Embodied Knowing with Adolescents	453
NANCY BEARDALL	
26. Movement Therapy Programme with Children with Mild Learning Difficulties in Primary Schools in Saudi Arabia: Links between Motion and Emotion	473
ABDULAZEEM ALOTAIBI, VICKY KARKOU, MARIETTA L. VAN DER LINDEN, AND LINDESAY M. C. IRVINE	
27. Dance Movement Therapy, Student Learning, and Wellbeing in Special Education	487
SUE MULLANE AND KIM DUNPHY	

28. The Wellbeing of Students in Dance Movement Therapy Masters Programmes 511
HILDA WENGROWER
29. Cultivating the Felt Sense of Wellbeing: How We Know We Are Well 529
ANNA FIONA KEOGH AND JOAN DAVIS

INTRODUCTION TO PART IV: DANCE IN THE COMMUNITY

VICKY KARKOU AND SUE OLIVER: WITH CONTRIBUTIONS
BY CAROLYN FRESQUEZ AND BARBARA ERBER

30. Free to Dance: Community Dance with Adolescent Girls in Scotland 547
ANNA KENRICK, CAROLYN LAPPIN, AND SUE OLIVER
31. Methods of Promoting Gender Development in Young Children Through Developmental Dance Rhythms: A Kestenberg Movement Profile (KMP) Dance/Movement Therapy Approach 565
SUSAN LOMAN
32. Together We Move: Creating a Laban-Style Movement Choir 581
CYNTHIA PRATT
33. Touching Disability Culture: Dancing Tiresias 599
PETRA KUPPERS: WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY LISA STEICHMANN, JONNY GRAY, MELANIE YERGEAU, AIMEE MEREDITH COX, NORA SIMONHJELL, NEIL MARCUS, ELIZABETH CURRANS, AMBER DIPIETRA, AND STEPHANIE HEIT
34. Building Relations: A Methodological Consideration of Dance and Wellbeing in Psychosocial Work with War-Affected Refugee Children and Their Families 623
ALLISON SINGER
35. Reconstructing the World of Survivors of Torture for Political Reasons through Dance/Movement Therapy 639
MARALIA RECA
36. Haunted by Meaning: Dance as Aesthetic Activism 653
SHERRY B. SHAPIRO

37. Cultural Adaptations of Dance Movement Psychotherapy Experiences: From a UK Higher Education Context to a Transdisciplinary Water Resource Management Research Practice 673
ATHINÁ COPTEROS, VICKY KARKOU, AND TALLY PALMER
38. Capoeira in the Community: The Social Arena for the Development of Wellbeing 691
ANDRÉ LUIZ TEIXEIRA REIS AND SUE OLIVER
39. The 5Rhythms® Movement Practice: Journey to Wellbeing, Empowerment, and Transformation 709
MATI VARGAS-GIBSON, SARENA WOLFAARD, AND EMMA ROBERTS

INTRODUCTION TO PART V: DANCE IN HEALTHCARE CONTEXTS

VICKY KARKOU AND SUE OLIVER: WITH CONTRIBUTIONS
BY CHAN NGA SHAN AND ANIA ZUBALA

40. Dance Movement Therapy in Healthcare: Should We Dance Across the Floor of the Ward? 729
IRIS BRÄUNINGER AND GONZALO BACIGALUPE
41. Dance as Art in Hospitals 747
DIANE AMANS
42. The BodyMind Approach: Supporting the Wellbeing of Patients with Chronic Medically Unexplained Symptoms in Primary Healthcare in England 759
HELEN PAYNE
43. Dance Therapy: Primitive Expression Contributes to Wellbeing 779
ALEXIA MARGARITI, PERIKLIS KTONAS,
THOMAS PAPARRIGOPOULOS, AND GRIGORIS VASLAMATZIS
44. Dance Therapy: An Aesthetic Experience to Foster Wellbeing for Vulnerable Mothers and Infants 793
ELIZABETH LOUGHLIN
45. Dance Movement Therapy and the Possibility of Wellbeing for People with Dementia 811
HEATHER HILL

46. Emotions in Motion: Depression in Dance-Movement and Dance-Movement in Treatment of Depression	829
MARKO PUNKANEN, SUVI SAARIKALLIO, OUTI LEINONEN, ANITA FORSBLOM, KRISTO KULJU, AND GEOFF LUCK	
47. (Dis-)Embodiment in Schizophrenia: Effects of Mirroring on Self-Experience, Empathy, and Wellbeing	853
SABINE C. KOCH, JENNY JÜNGER, JANNA KELBEL, ASTRID KOLTER, HERIBERT SATTEL, AND THOMAS FUCHS	
48. Dance/Movement Therapy and Breast Cancer Care: A Wellbeing Approach	873
ILENE SERLIN, NANCY GOLDOV, AND ERIKA HANSEN	
49. Attending to the Heartbeat in Dance Movement Psychotherapy: Improvements in Mood and Quality of Life for Patients with Coronary Heart Disease	893
MARIAM MCHITARIAN, JOSEPH MOUTIRIS, AND VICKY KARKOU	
Conclusion	915
VICKY KARKOU AND SUE OLIVER	
<i>Index</i>	919

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CHAPTER 4

EVIDENCE-BASED BIODANZA PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN (TANZPRO- BIODANZA) IN SCHOOLS AND KINDERGARTENS

*Some Effects on Psychology, Physiology, Hormones,
and the Immune System*

MARCUS STUECK AND ALEJANDRA VILLEGAS

INTRODUCTION

IN order to increase wellbeing in children, it requires being with them in a systemic attentive, mindful, and loving way, which means to be fully present and to include parents, teachers, families, and the field, helping them to express their own identity, autonomously, initially in a non-verbal and later in a verbal way. Those working towards the wellbeing of children often need to understand that the body (e.g. senses and feelings) is the greatest thinking organ for children who feel the world through their bodies (Stueck 2010). Such physical experiences are often associated with play that can make a contribution to the child's sense of wellbeing, as argued by Krenz (2009), and with dance, that may enable a child to express instincts, needs, and feelings in connection with others (Stueck et al. 2010). Moreover, a sense of wellbeing in children can be enhanced through:

Biodanza: Theory and Empirical Research

Dance is a deep movement arising from the most unfathomable depths of human beings; as the founder of the discipline Ronaldo Toro (2010) called it, this form of dance has to do with the movement of life. The name Biodanza makes these references: bios means 'life' and danza (Spanish) means 'dance', and his aim was for people to learn how to live well and happily together and how everyone can express its identity by dancing. Thus, Biodanza encourages movement that is full of meaning, because it expresses true feelings or emotions, its own identity, and is based on the development of nurturing relationships in the dances, while supporting personal integration. It works with four powerful factors: music, movement, emotion, and group. It is a technique that takes place in the here and now (Spanish: *Vivencia*) engaging with auto-regulation, self-organization, and affective integration. It means that everything that you dance or do should be connected with the feeling to yourself, with others, and with nature.

The theory of Biodanza is based on the concept of human integration on a personal, interpersonal, and transcendental or transpersonal level. The impact of Biodanza-*Vivencias* penetrates deeply on the central nervous system, immune system, and hormonal system. Toro (2010) has stated that 'Biodanza is not about peace of mind . . . it is about intensity of living', and he assumed that there was an association between people being optimistic, happy, and healthy, as various research approaches have shown (see, for example, the Positive Psychology approach of Seligman 2004). In order to achieve this he created Biodanza—a system of dances which consist of five Lines of Experience, as he called them. These were Vitality, Affectivity, Sexuality, Transcendence, and Creativity. In the 1990s, Marcus Stueck, Alejandra Villegas (coordinators and pioneers of the Biodanza research worldwide; see Institute of Biodanza Research Leipzig,

..... since 2010 Development of Evidencebased Biodanza Programms for Institutions (in a Project of the German Ministry of Health).

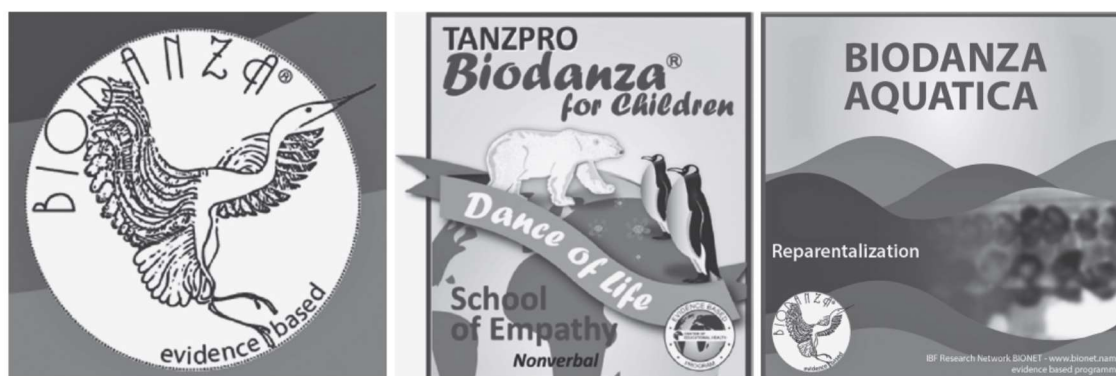


FIGURE 4.1. Examples of evidence-based Biodanza programmes (Logos). (Credit: M Stueck.)

Table 4.2. Overview of sessions and related themes of basis version of TANZPRO-Biodanza.

Sequence	Theme	Notion (life focused value)
1	Travel to Spain	Love and care
2	Travel to Egypt	Joy
3	Travel to Tanzania	Leisure and courage
4	Travel to Chile	Wishes and risk
5	Travel to Brazil	Feeling of security and embrace
6	Travel to Mexico	Diversity and friendship
7	Travel to Ireland	Acceptance and integration
8	Travel to Russia	Humbleness and sportsmanship
9	Travel to China	Creativity and solidarity
10	Travel to Germany	Respectful communication

Some results:

Change in Cortisol Level in Kindergarten Children because of TANZPRO-Biodanza

This study showed the change in cortisol of kindergarten children after taking ten sessions of TANZPRO-Biodanza. Children initialized with high cortisol level seemed to be ‘normalizing’, whilst those with low cortisol level seem to be already ‘normalized’ (Stueck et al. 2015). Furthermore, the findings from this study suggested that there might be an autoregulatory effect of TANZRPO-Biodanza sessions in children of kindergarten age.

Effects on Emotional Recognition and Its Relation to Cortisol Reduction

The same study (ten children, aged 4–5; ten sessions of TANZPRO-Biodanza) confirmed that cognitive performance in children (e.g. emotion recognition, measured with the Emotion Recognition Test in the Vienna test system, whereby the children had to recognize different emotions from photographs) could be developed by dancing. The effects were on average greater when participants had higher initial cortisol levels in their saliva (before the TANZPRO-Biodanza sessions) than those with lower levels of cortisol (Stueck et al. 2015).

Heart Rate and the Improvement of Physiological Auto-regulation

In the same study, looking at the heart rate for each child before and after the TANZPRO-Biodanza course, there was a significant decrease in the average score, which was statistically significant ($p = 0.04^*$, $d' = 0.77$, $1-\beta = 0.68$). The low-level and high-level groups showed significant change of heart rate (average over ten session) between pre-session and post-session, towards the value of the medium heart-rate group (see Table 4.3).