

### “Ballet for Learner as of 60 Years Old”

I have had the opportunity to talk about “ballet for adults”, however, in this article I shall talk about ballet class for adults at elderly, learners as of 60 years old. I particularly do not like to call “ballet for third age” or “ballet for old age”, I prefer “senior ballet” and this is an actual theme which maintains appropriate with the actuality because the human life expectancy is increasingly lofty around the world.

Here in Brazil, a few dance schools have been offering classes for these learners, the majority of schools do not have it or their learners have been inserted in the ballet of adult’s classes. However, in countries around Europe, this concept of ballet class has already been widespread, moreover with specific programs as in the case of Royal Ballet in London. The project called “Silver Swans” has offered ballet class for adults as of 55 years old. The professor, besides being graduated from Royal Ballet, they have had a differentiated training to teach ballet class for learners in this age range.

It is absolutely important not only the technical, didactic and physiological preparation but also the awareness about the psychological moment which people in this stage of life are living. First of all, when we talk about the “ballet for adults” background, we are referring the one age range between 40 and 60 years old, as we had discussed in another moment. When we talk about adults older than 60 years old, we are talking about one period that the life reflexion is intense what mobilizes different kinds of emotions and feelings. We can identify people more nostalgic at this stage, reminding what they used to do in their youth and reminding about good things in their time or with the “duty fulfilled” sensation. This is one of the specific psychological conflicts that in the same time is positive because it mobilizes emotions, can be disruptive from the moment that it becomes something excessive and to hamstring the person how do not feel desire in doing anything because she or he does not feel productive or interested about current things. Nevertheless, adults in this age group could be involved in several interesting activities and could have one positive experience! One example is volunteer activities in which they may offer their experiences and expertise to youngsters.

Another conflict identified at this stage is the reflection on death that in a glut, it can lead to despair or depression. To face this conflict is necessary to search new types to structure the lifetime which they still have, in other words, to grasp the time in a positive way! In this part, we should talk about leisure activities and physical activities as well, and, of course, the dance is a complete activity, working body, and mind! Not necessary these learners just had had a qualification in dance before or had done ballet class in their lives, we are talking about senior adults who have not had experiences in dance.

The dance benefits, in special that the ballet brings, are countless! Physically speaking, its practice provides an improvement in the muscle strength, balance, motor coordination, posture, functional mobility, speed, body awareness, it increases the body energy levels. Researchers prove the benefits of dance in the treatment of diseases as Parkinson’s, Alzheimer, dementia, cancer, schizophrenia, and high blood pressure as well as disease preventions. When we analyze the psychological aspect the outcome is excellent! It takes action in the memory, executive functions, psychomotricity; it improves moods, cognitive function, it assists the socialization process that in this age is fundamental. We could not forget that the ballet classes help one important point, to transmit the sense of well-being that the dance brings.

In accordance to what was previously mentioned, the teachers who teach ballet class for senior adults should be prepared to know how to offer one ballet class not only with technical quality but also to acknowledge and to answer the practitioner's different necessities in this age range. We could tell that the dance is a way to ensure one long and healthy life, working not only the body, with aerobic exercises and physical and special knowledge but also mind exercises, emotions, and social contact!

**Cintia Diniz (Brazil)** – Psychologist, MBA in Psychology, studying Master in Psychology of Development and Education. RAD RTS, Ballet Teacher, classical, and contemporary choreographer. Columnist about the psychology of dance in the magazine, digital newspaper, and dance web sites. Consultant at ballet schools in Brazil.

**Contact:** fb.com/decorpoementecomadanca / fb.com/diniz.cintia / @diniz.cintia

**References:**

BEE, H. (1997). *The Life Cycle*. Trad. Regina Garcez. Porto Alegre: Medical Arts.

LOPES, M.C. (2017). *Human development*. Dance Psychology course, 4 article. Rio de Janeiro: Ballet without Stress.

ROYAL ACADEMY OF DANCE – RAD (2017). *Silver Swans*. Viewed 04 October 2017. Available from: <https://www.royalacademyofdance.org/learn-to-dance/silver-swans-1/why-silver-swans>