



# How To Dance With a Partner

The Gentle Method of  
Unambiguously Communicating  
Every Step in Every Social Dance



Invented by

**Andrew Weitzen**

# How to Lead and Follow Every Step

You learn to communicate every step in every social dance following just three laws and using just three signals.



# The Safest, Easiest, and Most Natural Way to Dance With a Partner

You learn to dance without the use of force. You improve your balance. You learn to dance as light as a feather.

# The Most Important Advance Since Men and Women Began Dancing Together

For the first time, you know what to do without confusion. Learn once. Apply the same principles in all your dancing.



# The Science of Communicating

You learn the clearly defined language for partner dancing. You understand more, get better faster, and have more fun.

# The ABCDs<sup>sm</sup> of Social Dancing

The method is so simple the main rules fit on a single page which you can learn in an afternoon.



# How To Dance With a Partner



Andrew  
Weitzen



Bronze



# Excerpts of

## How To Dance With a Partner

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[www.PartnerDancing.com](http://www.PartnerDancing.com)

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# Comments

I just wanted to thank you again for your class tonight. You always get me to dance my best. You have built a simple, logical, understandable system, demonstrably superior to anything that this dancing mouse has seen.  
~ Erin, social dancer

\* \* \*

I have been a huge fan of your method. Thanks so much for early access several years ago. ~ Paul Hughes, ballroom dance instructor

\* \* \*

I thought your presentation on lead and follow techniques was extremely well thought out and helpful. It would be a wonderful elective activity at workshops like Chagiga and Machol Miami, etc. ~ Rhea, Israeli dance instructor and social dancer

## More Comments

For more comments, see the Appendix topic What Others Have to Say at the back of this book.

# **How This Book Helps You**

## **The Solution to a 1,000-Year-Old Problem**

This book solves the biggest problem in social dancing, a problem that affects millions of people. The problem is how to communicate unambiguously. Dance teachers have an enormous wealth of knowledge. However, when explaining how to communicate, they are surprisingly vague. This vagueness is not the fault of dance teachers. Men and women have been social dancing at least as far back as the eleventh century. Until now, there was no clearly defined method for communicating.

## **Learn the Language for Partner Dancing**

This book explains how to communicate every step in every social dance following the three laws of balance, connection, and direction. The method is so simple that the main rules fit on a single sheet of paper which you can learn in an afternoon. You learn to communicate as effortlessly in dancing as you do in speaking.

For the first time, you have a clearly defined language so you know what to do without confusion. You only need to learn how to communicate once. You apply the same principles with every person in every dance. You understand more. You learn faster. Your dancing is easier.

## **Learn To Dance Gently**

You learn how to dance without force. You learn to dance without pushing and pulling. You learn to dance without tension and pressure. The benefits are transformative. You learn to dance safely. You learn to dance naturally. You learn to dance as one with your partner with more freedom to express yourself. You learn to dance as light as a feather.



# **How To Dance With a Partner**

**The Gentle Method of Unambiguously  
Communicating Every Step in Every  
Social Dance**

Invented by

**Andrew Weitzen**



Bronze Inc.  
Gainesville, FL

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# Dedication

The most important things in life are determined by luck, the most important being who your parents are. I got lucky. For my parents

Sheldon and Edith Weitzen

## Acknowledgments

Thank you to all the people who make recreational dancing possible, organizers, teachers, dancers, musicians, and other supporters. If you have ever thought you wanted to contribute to the well-being of others, you have succeeded.

Thank you to those willing to explore my unconventional ideas. To honor my dance teachers, partners, friends, and those attending my sessions for contributing to my development, and therefore to this book, I have included quotes from them or shared stories about them to name them in some way.

I must specifically mention two people, Erin King and Jeff Subeck, without whom my method would surely lack in quality. Their acceptance of my method demanded that I meet the standards of their tenacious, logical minds. Thank you to Erin for letting me work out my ideas on her, still the best follower I know; and to Erin for editing my original work. Thank you to Jeff for being the first person to put my method into practice from the written word.

Happy dancing,  
Andrew Weitzen

# **Books by Andrew Weitzen**

**How To Dance With a Partner: The Gentle Method of Unambiguously Communicating Every Step in Every Social Dance invented by Andrew Weitzen** - The solution to a 1,000-year-old problem. The most important advance since men and women began dancing together. [www.PartnerDancing.com](http://www.PartnerDancing.com)

**My Fight With Hospice: A Family Caring for Mom, Witness to the Misuse of Prescription Drugs by Andrew Weitzen** - A cautionary tale for anyone caring for family members. "Unique, touching, reflective, homage," Phillip Schwartz.  
[www.MyFightWithHospice.com](http://www.MyFightWithHospice.com)

How To Dance With a Partner

\* \* \*

# The ABCDs of Social Dancing





# First Steps

I do not care what your friends say. I think you are a good guy. ~ Hal Kanter, a good guy

Congratulations on your willingness to explore your dance experience in this unique way. Reread this book often. As your dancing progresses, you will have new insights.

## Visit [www.PartnerDancing.com](http://www.PartnerDancing.com)

Go to the website now. On the website you can:

1. Pay for this book.
2. Sign up for the partner dancing newsletter.
3. Print the rules.
4. Get additional instruction.

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# How To Dance With a Partner

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## Part Overview





# 1. What This Book Does for You

Thank you for so much, Andy. You have opened my eyes in ways I never could have imagined. ~ Cheryl, Israeli dancer

Anyone can dance enjoyably with a partner once you know how to communicate. This book shows you how to communicate so you can make every dance a pleasure.

## No Time to Negotiate

Everyone is telling me something different. How do I know what to do? ~ Malissa, beginning Argentine tango dancer

When you go social dancing, you dance with a lot of people. You have no time to negotiate about how you are going to proceed. You need a common language that all dancers speak.

## The Language for Dancing With a Partner

The method in this book is a language. We will call this language PDL for convenience. PDL stands for Partner Dance Language. This language is the only explicit language for communicating with your dance partner. You learn to explicitly communicate what you want your partner to do. The language is so accurate you can communicate better when the follower is blindfolded because she is not tempted to use external clues. You learn to speak this language while you dance.

## **Unambiguous Communication**

This language is the only unambiguous method of communicating in social dancing. You learn how to communicate unambiguously so your partner knows what to do without confusion.

## **Clear Definition of the Rules for Leading and Following**

You learn the only clear definition of the rules for leading and following. These principles will transform your understanding of how to dance with a partner.

## **The Three Laws and Three Signals**

Incredibly, you can communicate every step in every social dance by following three simple laws and using just three signals. You learn the three laws of balance, connection, and direction. You learn the three signals that let you communicate each move. You learn how to give and respond to subtle signals instantly. This should be the first dance class you take so you can communicate clearly.

## **Have Fun**

Hannah asked me to dance, then she corrected me. A little while later she asked me again, then corrected me again. The third time she asked me to dance, I made up an excuse. ~ Richard, social dancer

Social dancing is about having fun. You have more fun in a welcoming atmosphere. This book addresses all aspects of the communication that goes on at social dancing. The most important thing you learn is how to get along with others.

## 1. What This Book Does for You

### **Embrace Nonjudgmental Dancing**

For me, stress is both physical and psychological. I worry about not performing well enough to suit my partner. It would be nice if we did not judge other people's dancing. If we did not want to dance with only the best dancers. It is like elementary school, where people who are not athletic get picked last. ~ Margaret, social dancer

Everyone who goes social dancing is entitled to have a good time without the fear of being judged. You learn the difference between social dancing and performance dancing. You learn to create a nonjudgmental environment for your group. You learn to create a respectful relationship with your dance partner. No matter what your level, you learn to have a good time dancing with people of every other level.

### **Dance Safely**

I have a shoulder injury. Even slight stress inflames the joint. With many people, my shoulder starts hurting almost immediately. With the method in this book, I can dance all night without any strain.

You learn how to dance safely. You learn how to dance without pushing and pulling. You learn how to communicate through body language without the use of force.

### **Gentlest Method**

You have the gentlest lead. ~ Rene, vintage waltz dancer

Since there is no use of force, this is the gentlest possible method of dancing with a partner. You learn to dance softly, which is a joy for you and your partner.

## Part Overview

### **Improve Your Balance**

You move like a cat. ~ Andrea, Argentine tango instructor

You learn how to move so you stay balanced. When you are balanced, you are in control of your body. This gives you the ability to respond to your partner's movement. Only when you are balanced can you communicate completely.

### **Feel More Comfortable, Confident, and Popular**

When you understand the principles of how to communicate, you dance with confidence. You feel more comfortable. You feel more popular.

### **Dance Naturally**

I can never tell if I am following you or if I am leading myself. ~ Esther, West Coast swing dance teacher

You learn to dance so naturally that the woman does not feel she is being led. You simply follow the natural flow of your bodies.

### **Greatest Freedom of Expression**

You are so musical. I love dancing with you. ~ Rosanna, Argentine tango dancer

Since you dance without force, you have the maximum physical freedom of movement. This, along with clearly defined rules, gives you the greatest freedom of expression. You can improvise as your partner inspires you. You can add meaning as the music moves you.



## 1. What This Book Does for You

### **Universal Method for Communicating**

How do you know so many dances? ~ Dina, social dancer

You learn to communicate once. You use the same method in all your dancing. We have tested this method on dozens of social dances and countless pieces of choreography. The method works for every dance that we know. Here are some of the dances we tested: Argentine tango, balboa, bachata, ballroom, blues, Cajun, cha-cha, contra, Country Western, East Coast swing, English country, folk, foxtrot, hustle, international, Israeli, Latin, lindy hop, mambo, nightclub two-step, Nordic, polka, round, rumba, salsa, samba, square, Texas two-step, waltz, West Coast swing, Western-style square, zydeco, and many others.

### **Learn New Dances Faster**

I went to my first class in nightclub two-step. The instructor told me this was an advanced class. He said I could watch. If I felt I could keep up, I could jump in. I jumped in right away. When I rotated to the instructor's partner, she wanted to know where I had been dancing. I was already better than the other students in the class, not because I knew more moves, but because I knew how to dance with a partner.

You learn the skills that apply to every dance. Once you know how to dance with a partner, you learn new dances more easily.

### **Empower Your Social Life**

I was in South Florida for a week. Friday, I went to Argentine tango. Saturday, I took my sister to the movies. Sunday, I went to salsa. Monday, I went to lindy swing. Tuesday, I went to hustle. Wednesday, I visited

## Part Overview

my cousins. Thursday, I went to Argentine tango. Friday, I went ballroom dancing. Afterward, I stayed for West Coast swing, hustle, and country two-step.

Being able to do many dances empowers your social life. You can go out dancing almost every night, meet people, and have fun.

### **Works Even If Your Partner Does Not Know**

That was the most beautiful waltz I ever danced. I felt like I was dreaming. ~ Evan, social dancer

You learn the fundamental principles for dancing with a partner. Even if your partner does not know these principles, they still work for you. Your partner will appreciate them.

### **Works for Choreographed Dances Too**

The method in this book works for choreographed dances too. You learn how to do every choreographed dance whether you know the steps or not. You learn how to dance together so you are not just doing choreography but are two people dancing as one.

### **Get Powerful Insights Into Your Dancing**

You learn new ways of understanding your dancing that you can put to practical use. As you progress, the principles in this book help you understand your dancing more deeply. They continually reveal powerful insights on your dance teachers' explanations.

### **Easy To Understand**

Some local teachers disagreed with my advertisement that Argentine tango, although among the most sophisticated of dances, was also among the easiest. Yet,

## 1. What This Book Does for You

my beginners were dancing Argentine tango the first day. One of them, who was taking another class at the same time, said, "That was so much fun. I loved that we got to dance."

The method in this book is so easy to understand that the main rules are summarized on a single page of paper, which you can learn in an afternoon.

### **Accelerate Your Progress With the ABCDs**

The principles are organized in a simple structure of ABCD, which helps you learn faster. While others are trying to assimilate hundreds of pointers, you see the whole picture in a way you can easily remember. You understand more of what your dance teachers tell you. You are better able to apply what you learn to take your dancing to a new level.

### **Be the Smartest Dancer in Your Group**

The method in this book is built on a logical foundation. A logical foundation gives you the terminology to discuss what you are doing with others. Understanding basic elements guides you in new situations. A logical foundation lets you subject each element to analysis. This provides an opportunity for finding flaws, making improvements, and uncovering new possibilities.

### **Get Better Each Time You Go Dancing**

Practice does not make perfect. Practice makes permanence. ~ Swing dance instructor

You have to be careful you are practicing skills that make you better and are not reinforcing bad habits that make you worse. This book guides your progress so you know you are practicing the correct skills in the right way. You invest years into the dancing that you love.

## Part Overview

As long as you have made this commitment, give yourself every opportunity to improve. Be sure you are learning the skills that help your dancing flourish. Make sure you get better each time you go dancing.

### **Helps Dance Teachers**

This book helps dance teachers by providing a simple explanation of how to communicate. The ABCDs make teaching easier by providing a consistent set of ideas across all dances. Your students are better able to apply what you teach them.

### **Points To Remember**

1. This book solves the biggest problem people have in social dancing, which is how to communicate.
2. You learn the only unambiguous method of communicating every step in every social dance.
3. You learn the three laws and the three signals that let you communicate every step.
4. You learn to embrace nonjudgmental social dancing.
5. You learn to have fun dancing with people of every level.
6. You learn to dance safely, free from injury and stress.
7. You improve your balance.
8. You feel more comfortable, confident, and popular.
9. You learn to dance naturally.
10. You learn to communicate once. You apply those principles in all your dancing.

## 1. What This Book Does for You

11. You learn faster, understand more, and accelerate your progress.
12. What you learn works even if your partner does not know the same principles.
13. What you learn works for choreographed dances too.
14. Helps dance teachers by providing a simple explanation of how to communicate.

## 2. Introduction

First, learn to dance. ~ Sheldon Weitzen, social dancer

Welcome to *How To Dance With a Partner*. You will learn to lead and follow every step in every social dance.

### First, Learn To Dance

When I was young, my dad asked me if I was going to a dance at my high school. I said, "No, I do not like to dance."

My dad laughed at me. He said, "That is like saying you do not like to play the piano. You have no idea what playing the piano is like. You can say you do not know how to play the piano, but you cannot say you do not like playing the piano. The same with dancing. You have no idea what dancing is like. You can say you do not know how to dance, but you cannot say you do not like to dance." He finished, "First, learn to dance then you can say you do not like to dance."

For the last few decades, I have been learning to dance. After a fling with disco in college, which I have not gotten over, my first organized dancing was Israeli folk dancing. The first thing I learned was to enjoy the company, enjoy the music, get some exercise, and have fun. Was that four things?

### Choreography Is Not the Answer

We went somewhere else first, but they just tried to teach us a routine. We like what you are doing so much better. You are teaching us how to dance. ~ Tabitha and Don, wedding dancers

## 2. Introduction

Next, I tried salsa, during which the antecedents of this book were born. I made an attempt to document the complex choreography, but the book stalled. How we change as we grow. I like to think my intuition rightly understood choreography was not the answer. This book is the antithesis of rote choreography.

### **Dance Teachers**

Along my way, I have found dance teachers to be excellent. Dance teachers are surprisingly consistent, regardless of the dance they are teaching. This consistency reflects universal truths about how two people move together to music. However, this consistency includes being surprisingly vague about communicating with a partner. Until this book, there was no set of precise rules defining how to unambiguously communicate in social dancing.

### **Communication Instead of Choreography**

Nancy took me several times to four different dance studios. I learned more in one class with you. ~ Hank, beginning dancer

When I found myself taking on a leadership role in recreational dancing in my community, I focused on communication rather than choreography. In organizing the mass of information I had accumulated, a logical method emerged. I saw that communicating with a dance partner followed a few simple principles, easily learned by anyone, even novice dancers. I have codified these principles into the method in this book.

### **Print and Memorize the Rules**

If you have not done so already, go to the website, print, and then memorize the rules now. Take them with you when you go dancing.

## Part Overview

Refer to them often. Apply them however they make sense to you. This is the quickest way for you to get started. As you progress you will understand them better. They will guide you.

### **Complete Method for Communicating With a Dance Partner**

This book provides the complete method for communicating in social dancing. Included in this book are all the rules you need. There are no superfluous rules. You do not need to make up additional rules.

### **Subconscious Communication**

Sometimes you come across an extraordinary follower who can follow nearly everything you throw at her. Whether she knows or not, subconsciously she is using a simple set of rules that allow her to follow so well. Similarly, the best leaders are using those same subconscious rules.

Dancing happens too fast for conscious thought. People communicate using subconscious cues. This book elucidates these subconscious cues into an easy-to-understand language. The extraordinary effectiveness is a testament to the accuracy of the language. Once you understand the language, you can train yourself to communicate as effortlessly in dancing as you speak in everyday life.

### **Important Insights Explained**

This book provides an original, comprehensive explanation of how to dance socially with a partner. Some of the insights you learn include:

1. Definition of social dancing
2. Definition of social dance choreography



## 2. Introduction

3. Definition of the ten foundational values so you have a clear understanding of what is important for social dancing
4. Definition of the three laws that let you communicate every step unambiguously
5. Definition of the three signals that let you communicate every figure
6. Definition of the man's responsibilities
7. Definition of the woman's responsibilities
8. Definition of signals relative to horizontal and vertical movement so you know when and where to move
9. Definition of woman's line of dance so the woman can dance with precision
10. Definition of the three positions
11. Examination of balance so you understand why balance is the most important skill in dancing
12. Examination of pressure and tension so you understand why you should not push and pull
13. Examination of the two types of horizontal movement so you understand why every step can be communicated unambiguously
14. Examination of the two types of horizontal movement so you understand why every step can be communicated unambiguously
15. Explanation of the four basic patterns that make up every figure in the woman's choreography

## Part Overview

16. Explanation of why the man can communicate the woman's choreography
17. Explanation of why the woman cannot communicate the man's choreography
18. Guidelines for navigating the dance floor to improve safety
19. Guidelines for etiquette in the social dance setting to make your group more respectful
20. How to communicate unambiguously without using visual clues
21. How to communicate unambiguously visually when not physically connected
22. How to communicate unambiguously in choreographed dances
23. How to communicate rhythm changes
24. How to step for effective communication
25. Rules for connecting and breaking the connection
26. Rules for the woman's choreography
27. Rules for when the woman follows the man
28. Rules for when the woman maintains and adjusts her frame
29. Rules for when the woman stops her motion
30. Rules for when the man waits for the woman
31. Rules for not getting your foot stepped on

## 2. Introduction

### **How to Use This Book**

This is the rule book for how to dance with a partner following Andrew Weitzen's ABCDs method for social dancing. Refer to this book to clarify issues. If you find that needed rules are missing, unnecessary rules are included, or there are logical inconsistencies, the author welcomes your feedback on these, as well as other concerns.

An overview of the method of communicating every step is presented in the chapter Language of Partner Dancing. This prepares you for the details in the ABCD sections. Although each principle you learn is helpful, to understand the method in full, you have to make your way through all the ABCDs. Only then will you know how to communicate every step unambiguously.

This book presents the ideas in the order in which they logically build on one another. Read the chapters in order so you understand why the method works. Any information that is not essential is in the Appendix. This book is divided into these parts.

Part Overview - covers in brief the ABCDs that follow. You learn the objective of social dancing, the main problem people have in social dancing, and the solution to that problem.

Part A for Attitude - establishes the ten foundational values for social dancing. You learn to use these principles to help you apply what you learn in your dance classes.

Part B for Balance - helps you to understand your balance, the most important skill in dancing. You learn the law of balance with the profound implications for how you dance.

Part C for Connection - examines how you connect both physically and emotionally with your partner, the music, and your community. You learn the law of connection. You learn how to use the connection to communicate. You learn how to initiate the woman's movement.

## Part Overview

You learn the three positions, when to connect, and when to break the connection.

Part D for Direction - covers how to communicate what the woman is to do. You learn the law of direction, the deep revelation that allows you to communicate every step in every dance. You learn the three direction signals. You learn where the woman is to go. You learn how the woman knows to stop. You learn the reasons why you can communicate unambiguously.

Part Skill - continues the subject of balance. You learn the physical skills you need. You learn how to move your body to communicate effectively. You learn how to transfer your weight to control your step.

Part Summary - you have a short review of the essential elements you learned throughout this book.

Appendix - contains the author's bio, the rules list, terminology, and testimonials. There are discussions on a dozen different topics including Choreographed Dances, the Circle signal, Counterbalance, Musicality, Pressure and Tension, and more.

## **Basic Principles**

This book makes extensive use of basic principles to help you understand the reasons behind what you are doing. Pay attention to the principles. They guide you when you have questions. An example of a basic principle is safety first, do not hurt yourself or anyone else.

## **Key Ideas**

Key ideas help you apply basic principles. Understand the key ideas to put the basic principles into practice. An example of a key idea is do not apply force to another person.

## 2. Introduction

### **Catchphrases**

This book makes extensive use of catchphrases to help you remember useful information. This book frequently expresses basic principles and key ideas as catchphrases. The catchphrases help you to focus on what you need to do. Repeat the catchphrases like a mantra. An example of a catchphrase is everyone does their own dancing.

### **Anecdotes**

This book makes extensive use of stories to illustrate the points in the text. Stories bring the key ideas to life, reinforcing your memory. The anecdotes, when not attributed, are the author's.

### **Quotations**

This book makes extensive use of quotations. With the exception of a biblical reference, I have used only those quotes that I have heard. The quotes are from my recollection, or possibly my wishful thinking. I may have taken some literary license. In some cases, I have changed the names of those quoted. The use of quotes is not an endorsement by any person of this book. The quotes have not been confirmed by those attributed.

### **Terminology**

Technical terms are defined throughout this book. You can find these definitions in the Appendix under Terminology. These terms are not capitalized within the text because too much capitalization disrupts the English reader.

## **Points To Remember**

At the end of each chapter is a list of the most important Points To Remember. Make sure you understand these before proceeding. Use these to review the material in the book.

## **Text Formatting**

Each chapter starts with a heading for the subject of the chapter. The heading is followed by a quotation in offset text. Throughout the chapter are topic headings. Under the topic headings, in offset text, may appear rules, definitions, basic principles, key ideas, catchphrases, anecdotes, and quotations. Lastly, in plain text, the author discusses the topic.

## **Read This Book More than Once**

The topic headings throughout each chapter help you skim through the book. Each time you read the book, as your dancing progresses, you will have new insights. If you do not understand something, wait. When you are ready, what you missed will make sense. Like learning anything new, do not try to get everything. Try to get anything.

## **Learning to Dance is Only a Matter of Time**

Training your body to dance takes time. For new dancers, if you dance once a week, you should expect to feel like a beginner for a couple of years. You only get to be a beginner once. Enjoy the process. Remember, everyone who shows up learns to dance, as long as you keep showing up. By following the principles in this book, you can be confident that each time you dance you get better by developing good habits.

## 2. Introduction

### **Keep Taking Classes**

In the salsa classes I was taking, all the women dropped out after level six. The reason they gave, "I just have to follow. I do not need to know any more moves."

Often there are more women than men in the beginning classes. Many women drop out of the classes when they reach the intermediate level because they feel they are only learning patterns. While technical skills should be learned from day one, often in lower-level classes, many students focus on patterns. You should not think you are at a dance class to memorize patterns. The patterns serve as useful pedagogy tools. Focus on skill, not figures.

In higher level classes, there are often more men than women. As the level moves to intermediate and advanced, the instruction moves from figures to technique. Rather than learning more figures, you learn how to improve the quality of your movement, dance more in sync with your partner, dance with more style, and dance with more musicality. The men that keep going to class move beyond the women that drop out. The women that drop out cannot keep up, though they may not know, because the advanced men lead to the level of their partner. Whether you are a leader or follower, if you want to improve, keep taking classes.

### **Trust Your Teachers**

Do not worry about your progress. That is your teacher's problem. If you want to learn to dance, you have one job. Show up to class. Try to be coachable. Eventually, you will be dancing as well as everyone else.

### **Seek Enlightenment Everywhere**

There are wonderful teachers all over the world with an incredible wealth of knowledge. You can learn from everyone, even if you do not

## Part Overview

agree with everything they are doing. The burden is on you to seek what is right for you when you learn from others. Different people will speak to you differently at different times in your life. On your dance journey, seek enlightenment everywhere.

### **Small Groups**

If you want to learn faster, seek out small groups where you get personal attention from the instructor. The fastest way to improve is with personal feedback.

### **Group Leaders Need Feedback Too**

Your teachers need feedback too. Let them know what they can do to make the dance sessions better for you.

### **Do the Simple Things Well**

The steadiest way to improve is to build your foundation. Work on your fundamentals. You will be well rewarded.

### **Find Something That is Hard for You To Do**

When I go to a dance class, I am happy when the teacher shows me something that I cannot do. I just found something I can work on for the next couple of years to help me get better.

The adding up of small advancements is how you improve your skills. At some point, you maximize a skill. After that, there is not much room for improvement. When you go to a dance class, if what you are learning is easy, you are only refining something you already know how to do. To get to a new level, you have to find something that is hard for you to do.



## 2. Introduction

### **Destroy Your Bad Habits to Reform at a Higher Level**

After dancing for years, I felt like I could do anything on the dance floor until I saw myself on video. To my embarrassment, I looked like a big block of wood. How did that happen? I felt so fluid.

You may be comfortable in your bad habits, but they are holding you back. When the music comes on, you do what you always have done. You have to intentionally seek out change. In a sense, you have to destroy yourself to reform at a higher level.

### **Think for Yourself**

Andy, I find myself using what I learned from you everywhere I can, in the rest of my life too, not just at dancing. ~ Jim Rust, folk dance instructor

Learn from everyone. Think for yourself. People have a tendency to overestimate what they know, including me. I have not done a scientific research study. I am not a professional in biomechanics. The explanations in this book are from my own experience. They are only my interpretation. Still, the method in this book is astoundingly effective. Take these ideas on their own merit. Understand them. Be critical of them. Put them to work for you as you see fit.

### **Technicalities**

This is a practical rule book for social dancers. The descriptions are technical enough for dancers to perform as needed. We have omitted technicalities that are not necessary for social dance instruction.

### **Repetition**

Tell them what you are going to tell them. Tell them. Tell them what you told them. ~ IBM training instructor

## Part Overview

You learn by repetition. This book puts the method of repetition to use. The same principles come up under a variety of topics.

### **Points To Remember**

1. You will learn how to lead and follow every step in every social dance.
2. Learn to dance before you say you do not like dancing.
3. Communicating with a dance partner follows a few simple principles, easily learned by anyone, even novice dancers.
4. This book provides the complete method for communicating with your partner in social dancing.
5. This book elucidates the subconscious cues dancers use to communicate.
6. This is the rule book for Andrew Weitzen's ABCDs method.
7. Print and memorize the rules.
8. Learning to dance is only a matter of time.
9. Keep taking classes.
10. Trust your teachers.
11. The burden is on you to seek what is right for you when learning from others.
12. Seek out small groups to get personal attention.
13. Support your instructor.
14. Work on your fundamentals. Do the basics well.

## 2. Introduction

15. To get to a new level, find something that is hard for you to do.

16. Intentionally seek out change.

17. Think for yourself.

## 3. Social Dancing

Try to be a little charming. ~ Edith Weitzen, social dancer and my mother

This book is only concerned with social partner dancing.

### Social Dancing Is Social

Definition of Social Dancing: dancing that puts the social nature of dancing first.

While there are many reasons to dance, such as getting exercise, challenging yourself, and entertaining the crowd, at social dancing you put the social nature of dancing first. You put the feelings of others, in particular your partner, first.

### Magic Moments

Whether at a dance camp, a lindy exchange, or an evening social, when most of the people have gone home, and the time is late, when there is nobody left to see, that is when the best dancing happens. Everyone still dancing is loose. You feel a bit delirious. You are wholly in the present. You can do something with another person you can do in no other way. For a moment you become one with your partner, the music, and your community.

Like any undertaking, having realistic expectations leads you to better experiences. While magic moments happen in social dancing, if you are depending on the quality of the dancing alone, most of your dances are going to be more sociable than magical. Even if a dance is magical for you that does not mean the dance was magical for your partner. If you are disappointed because the dancing does not meet

### 3. Social Dancing

your standards, you are going to find yourself too frequently an unhappy dancer. Try to have fun with every partner. You can create magic moments with any person if you turn on your charm. While the quality of your dancing may not be any better, the quality of your experience can be magical.

#### **Two People Dancing as One**

Why are you dancing with a partner? What are you getting that is unique to partner dancing? In a word, connection.

The point of dancing with a partner is to dance as one with your partner. You sacrifice everything else for the sake of your partner: how you look, doing the dance properly, and dancing on the beat. None of that matters if you are not dancing as one with your partner.

#### **Dance to the Music**

The violins are on the move. ~ Ney Milo, Argentine tango performer and instructor

What is dancing? Dancing is your expression of the music. If you are just doing steps and the music is no more than a metronome, then you are marching, not dancing. The artistry is your interpretation of the music through your movement. You must listen to the music, not only the beat, all the music. You connect what you hear to what you do.

#### **The Objective**

Objective of Partner Dancing: two people dancing as one to the music.

While most of your dancing, perhaps thankfully, is not a mystical experience, the objective in all partner dancing, whether performing

## Part Overview

or dancing socially, is for two people to dance as one to the music. You add meaning to your dancing by responding to your partner. You make your dancing feel authentic by improvising to the music.

### **A Dance Performance Is for Entertaining Your Audience**

Beth came to my swing classes for years. She followed me to Argentine tango, where our teacher has us work on minutiae that nobody can see, but you can feel. At a ballroom dance, the DJ put on an American tango. Beth ran over to me and said, "Let's put on a show". Performing is not something we normally do, but she was excited, so we danced Argentine tango with a lot of big, dramatic movements.

At our next tango class, Robert announced to our group that Beth and I got a big ovation for our impromptu tango performance. I said to the group, "It was fun. People like to watch that stuff, but it was about the worst dancing we have ever done."

The purpose of a performance is to entertain your audience. Performance dancing is the opposite of social dancing.

### **A Social Dance Is for Entertaining You and Your Partner**

Ordinarily, Beth and I never get ovations except from each other.

Social dancing is about having fun with your partner. In social dancing, focus on how you feel. You may be proud when onlookers applaud, but the only people you need to please are you and your partner.

### 3. Social Dancing

#### **Performance Dancing Is Rehearsed**

I have friends that compete in 10 different ballroom dances. They have been refining the same two-minute routines for a decade.

A dance performance is like a pair's ice-skating competition. The goal in your performance is perfection. You have one partner you know intimately well. Ideally, you get a coach, pick out a piece of music, choreograph a routine, and practice each gesture. You precisely prepare every move ahead of time. You perform a routine that takes only a few minutes. You perform the same routine you practiced. You do not want surprises when you give a performance.

#### **Social Dancing Is Improvised**

Social dancing is like playing basketball at the park. You do not know what is going to happen next. You improvise from moment to moment. The goal is for you to have fun. You dance with as many people as you can, some you know well, some you are meeting for the first time. Each dance social lasts up to a few hours. Every dance is unique even when dancing to the same music with the same partner. You respond to your partner and the music. Things go wrong. Social dancing is unpredictable. Surprises are part of the fun.

#### **Learn Communication Not Choreography**

For performances, you need tools that help you perfect your routines. You need tools to keep you on the prepared choreography, preventing deviation. The primary tools are repetition of choreography and familiarity with your partner. This is the opposite need of social dancing. For social dancing, you need tools that allow you to make up the choreography as you go along. You need an explicit language that lets you communicate dynamically with every partner.

## **Social Dancing Is a Conversation**

When you dance socially with another person, you communicate via body language about how the music makes you feel. Like any good conversation, the conversation is unpredictable, ever-changing, challenging, unique, and sometimes messy. That is the fun.

## **The Challenge in Social Dancing**

I took casino salsa lessons for two years. I got through the highest level, level nine. The problem was when I went to a salsa club, the only women I could dance with were the ones from my class. I realized I had not learned how to dance with a partner. I had only learned choreography. I was relying on my partners to know the steps.

Your ability to communicate should depend only on your skills. You should not depend on familiarity with your partner nor on knowing the same figures. If you can only do certain moves with your regular partners, you have left social dancing. You have crossed into performance dancing. In social dancing, you need to communicate with people who are not your regular practice partners, some of whom you may be meeting for the first time. The challenge in social dancing is what can you communicate with people you may not know well to express what you hear in the music. To meet this challenge you need a simple, effective language for dancing with a partner.

## **Social Dance Choreography**

Definition of Social Dance Choreography: any choreography you can unambiguously communicate safely without having practiced with your partner beforehand.



### 3. Social Dancing

All other choreography we call performance choreography. Even with a common language, there is a limit to what choreography you can communicate. A move is leadable in social dancing only if you can theoretically communicate that move unambiguously with someone you have not met before. If your signal is ambiguous, the move is not leadable. If a move is not leadable, you can dance in close proximity, but you cannot move as one. You will learn exactly what moves are leadable and what moves are not and why. For those moves that are leadable, of which there are an endless amount, you will learn how to communicate them following the three laws and using the three signals discussed in this book.

#### **Gender Bias in Social Dancing**

This book is gender neutral. Anyone can dance any role. Be aware, however, there is a distinct gender bias in today's social dances. Cultural ideals of masculinity and femininity are reflected in the roles of leader and follower, as well as in the style of many dances. You can explore ways to express yourself outside traditional gender roles. You may have to pioneer your own style. This book gives you the tools to do so.

#### **Leader and Follower Terminology**

The terms Man, One, and the pronoun He are synonymous with Leader. The terms Woman, Two, and the pronoun She are synonymous with Follower.

The terms leader and follower can be problematic for a variety of reasons, so we also use the term man for leader and woman for follower, even though either role may be danced by any gender. We are introducing the gender neutral terms one and two for the two roles. However, since the terms one and two are unfamiliar to today's readers, we primarily use the terms man and woman.

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Using man and woman allows for the use of pronouns, making passages more readable. This is one impediment to removing the gender bias in terminology. An example is "The leader must be careful not to pull the follower with the leader's hand as that throws the follower off balance." Egad, trying to get through a book like that would make you nauseous. More readable is "He must be careful not to pull her with his hand as that throws her off balance."

### **Competitions**

I was at a West Coast swing weekend workshop watching the instructors in a Jack N Jill competition where the teachers get paired randomly. One couple was having a difficult time. I had been in classes with both partners. In the man's class, he encouraged us to use a lot of tension and pressure. In the lady's class, she taught with her husband, who had a gentle lead, using no tension and pressure. The competitors were good dancers, but she was not used to his use of force.

Even though this book does not address performance dancing, the communication method still works. For competitions like Jack N Jills that test communication skills, the method in this book should give you a distinct advantage.

### **Performances**

I have a friend who was the prima ballerina for the Florida state ballet. When I told her about my method, she said, "We need that too. I do not need the men muscling me around. I can do my own dancing."

When you watch movies with great dance scenes, you can often see men wrestling their partners around. Seems like the method in this book might help them too.

### 3. Social Dancing

#### **Points To Remember**

1. Definition of Social Dancing: dancing that puts the social nature of dancing first.
2. This book is only concerned with social partner dancing.
3. To create magic moments, try to have fun with every partner.
4. Objective of Partner Dancing: two people dancing as one to the music.
5. Definition of Social Dance Choreography: any choreography you can unambiguously communicate safely without having practiced with your partner beforehand. All other choreography we call performance choreography.
6. The terms Man, One, and the pronoun He are synonymous with Leader. The terms Woman, Two, and the pronoun She are synonymous with Follower.

## 4. The Problem and Solution

Dancing is a language. Your partner has to know the same language as you if you are going to dance together.  
~ Billy Fajardo, professional dancer, hustle and salsa instructor, judge, organizer, and world champion

If you go social dancing today, you will find that many people push, pull, and nudge their partner about in the belief that this gets their partner to do what they want. The pushing, pulling, and nudging is an ineffective method of communicating. This is not the only thing their partner is using to understand the communication.

### **People Do Not Know What They Are Doing**

I was watching a salsa video. I knew right away the instructor could not be leading the move the way he said. I replayed his demonstration in slow motion. Sure enough, he said one thing but did another.

How do thousands of people dance together every day? They use subconscious cues that are ingrained in their muscle memory through years of experience. Since they do not know what these subconscious cues are, there is a lot of miscommunication. This leads to experiences that can be, said nicely, improved upon.

You probably do not have a name for the method you are using to communicate. You probably cannot list the principles, rules, and signals of your communication method in a simple, logical format. In other words, while you may be doing something that seems to work, you do not know exactly what you are doing.

### **The Problem Is Ambiguous Communication**

When you lead a move, the question you need to ask is, is my lead unambiguous? How does your partner know what you want her to

## 4. The Problem and Solution

do? If your communication could mean more than one thing, you are going to have a problem.

When you teach others to lead a move, not only must your lead be unambiguous, but your explanation must also be unambiguous so your students know how to execute what you are teaching. If you use a vague term like energy, without defining exactly what energy means, your students have to work out for themselves what works. This is not necessarily bad if that is what you intend, but not good if you lack the ideas to explain what you are doing.

Ambiguous communication leads to many issues, the least of which is being out of sync with your partner. More serious issues include injuries, bad habits, limited freedom of expression, and discouragement from slow progress. These issues create unpleasant experiences.

Without a clearly defined language, you have to guess what to do. You have to be something of a mind reader to understand what your partner wants. The communication is implicit, not explicit. People seek out regular partners to minimize the guesswork. Too much attachment to regular partners tends to form cliques. This makes your group less sociable. People without regular partners are left watching from the sidelines. Your group may diminish as a result. All from a failure to communicate.

### **Everyone Has Their Own Ideas of What Is Proper**

A new woman came to our social. I asked her if her husband danced. She said, "I tried to teach him, but he will not dance. I am too critical." The man may love his wife, but when he goes dancing, she makes him feel horrible.

Communicating includes the whole range of communication that takes place at social dancing. The biggest problems are not the technical aspects but rather the emotional aspects of social dancing. The problem is everyone has their own ideas of what is proper. When people's ideas differ, you may have negative consequences like

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conflicts with other dancers, people feeling judged, loss of confidence, and people giving up.

### **Solving the Problem With Choreography Limits You to the People in Your Class**

In this class, our language is our syllabus of figures. You need to know these figures to dance with the people in this class. If you go somewhere else and they do not know these figures, you will not be able to dance with them. ~ Billy Fajardo, hustle and salsa instructor, judge, organizer, and world champion

One of the ways people try to solve the communication problem is with choreography. The choreography solution is inadequate for multiple reasons. One is that to dance as one with your partner, you must coordinate the exact timing and placement of each step, which you cannot do by rote memorization of patterns. Figures only give external clues to the movement. To coordinate timing and placement requires communicating through body language. The fallback, once again, is to regular partners. You do not want to limit your dancing to your regular partners. If you go social dancing, you want to be able to dance with everyone. If you go to places other than your regular dance studio, you want your skills to be transferable to those other venues.

### **Rote Choreography Limits Your Improvisation to the Music**

I was dancing swing, improvising to the music, when my partner, in a sweet way, said, "Do you know the basics of swing dancing? I think some beginner lessons would help you."

## 4. The Problem and Solution

I was dancing with another woman from the same ballroom studio. Instead of trying to dance to the music, I just gave her patterns she knew. After that dance, she said to me, "That was the best you ever led."

Some people consider deviation from prescribed choreography as wrong. They may only have learned figures, without having learned how to dance with a partner to the music. Dancing is so much fun, you do what you have to do to get by, but the quality of your experience suffers. There is a better way to communicate that solves these problems.

### **The Solution Is Explicit Communication**

The best way to communicate is by explicitly letting your partner know what you want her to do. You signal your partner. She knows what to do by following a simple set of rules. When you learn the method in this book, you will be able to explicitly communicate with your dance partner. You will be able to list the principles, rules, and signals that you use to communicate every step. While you need to train yourself to develop the physical skills to consistently put your knowledge into practice, you will know exactly what you are doing.

### **The Power of a Clearly Defined Language**

"You are pushing me," Soojin scolded me.

You should not underestimate the power of having a clearly defined language. Once you learn the rules, you will have a tool that teachers, students, and your community can use to discuss precisely how to communicate. Once students understand the principles, they can figure things out for themselves. They can correct the teacher when the teacher makes mistakes.

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### **Points To Remember**

1. The problem is ambiguous communication.
2. If you cannot list the principles, rules, and signals of your communication method, you may be doing something that seems to work, but you do not know exactly what you are doing.
3. Ambiguous communication leads to many issues, including being out of sync with your partner, injuries, bad habits, slow progress, and unpleasant experiences.
4. Regular partners and standardized choreography are inadequate solutions for social dancing because you want to dance with everyone while being able to improvise to the music.
5. The solution is the language in this book, the first and only clearly defined language for social dancing.



## **5. The Language of Partner Dancing**

Be a good sport. Go dance. ~ Sheldon Weitzen, social dancer

Every figure in social dancing is made up of four basic patterns. You can unambiguously communicate these four basic patterns with three signals following the three laws in this book. ...

## 48. Next Steps

You paid your money, now dance. ~ Nissim Ben Ami,  
Israeli Folk dance instructor

Congratulations on getting to this point. Put your knowledge to good use. Go dancing.

Reread this book often. Read sections that interest you at the time. As your dancing progresses, you will have new insights.

### **Visit [www.PartnerDancing.com](http://www.PartnerDancing.com)**

Go to the website now. On the website you can:

1. Pay for this book.
2. Sign up for the partner dancing newsletter.
3. Print the rules.
4. Get additional instruction.

### **Invite Others**

Invite others to learn the ABCDs<sup>SM</sup> of how to dance with a partner so you have more people to dance with.

# How To Dance With a Partner

\* \* \*

## Appendix





# Appendix Topics

When you get your black belt, then you can start learning. ~ My martial arts instructor

The topics in this appendix are listed in alphabetical order with no regard for what order you should read them. Read them in whatever order they interest you. These topics are not essential to your learning how to dance with a partner. They provide supporting information for what you have already learned. They address areas of interest in social dancing. Some of the topics deserve far longer discussions. Here, the author shares some thoughts on these topics to bring them to the attention of readers.

## Author Andrew Weitzen

Andrew Weitzen has been enamored with social dancing since he first saw Scott Annan's jaw-dropping robot during the first week of their freshman year at the University of Florida.

Andrew is an enthusiastic dancer, teacher, and organizer of recreational dancing. He dances everything from Argentine tango to zydeco for fun. He loves teaching beginners. He has taught over 5,000 dance classes. As he says, "You have to sow seeds to grow your community."

Andrew specializes in getting non-dancers dancing. He has been invited to community programs, folk festivals, club events, social activities, family programs, special-care facilities, religious observances, universities, high schools, and elementary schools.

Andrew has been a faithful promoter of dancing in North Florida, publishing two newsletters a week since 2005, one for folk and one for partner dancing. He ran the Gainesville Dance Association, an eclectic hot spot of social dancing with two to three programs daily of a score of different types of social dancing.

Andrew is a software developer. He has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mathematics from the University of Florida. His college fraternity entered him and his fraternity's sweetheart in the university's dance marathon. So he was known as the dance man even back then. He was the high school chess champion in Alachua County. A competitive athlete, he has played in, captained, coached, refereed, taught, ran leagues, and organized sporting programs since he can remember. He played basketball for Gainesville High School.



Author Andrew Weitzen

He played in the first Jose Cuervo professional beach volleyball tournament in Florida. He ran the IBM Club sports programs for 3,000 families. He has applied these experiences to dancing.

## **The Gainesville Dance Association**

From a note to the landlord Richard and Phoebe Miles:

Thank you for renting us the space.

You gave us a great price, which allowed us to start small and grow. Your support helped us provide a unique service, which I would like to tell you about, so you know how your contributions have benefitted the community. We have programs attended by people of all ages, from young children to seniors in their 80s+.

People come to Gainesville from all over North Florida to dance. We frequently hear people say they wish they had something similar in their cities. In the last month, we have had visitors from Tallahassee, Valdosta, Jacksonville, St. Augustine, Daytona, Ocala, Orlando, and Tampa. We also have guests from other parts of the country who take the opportunity to dance with us while visiting Gainesville.

I do not know of anywhere else that provides a more eclectic choice of dancing.

Here is a peek at our regular schedule:

1. Sundays: Monthly vintage waltz brunch, Sacred Groove meditative dance, swing, hustle
2. Mondays: Irish dance youth performance group, English country, Israeli
3. Tuesdays: Argentine tango, ballroom
4. Wednesdays: West Coast swing

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5. Thursdays: Senior line dancing, salsa, social dance
6. Fridays: Ballroom, UF Argentine tango club, salsa and Latin dance socials
7. Saturdays: international Folk, monthly swing socials, twice monthly Argentine tango milongas

We also provide space to the Brazilian Cultural Arts Exchange who holds classes primarily for children, teens, and young adults. They teach Brazilian capoeira Luanda and samba on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. They host a yearly Batizado festival, with visitors from Brazil, and all over the South.

We have hosted benefits including two Tango for the Cure weekends to raise awareness and funds for breast cancer research, one last month on September 29.

At the end of this month, we are running our second annual event to benefit C.A.R.D the University of Florida Center for Autism and Related Disabilities with world-class West Coast swing professional Jen DeLuca on October 27.

Last March, we ran a Gainesville Dance Festival with 18 dance teachers and 14 sessions, over 3 days.

When Maria Alvarez's Imperial Dance Studio closed after 30 years due to increased rents, we were able to provide a place for her ballroom teachers and students.

We have provided space to various young people running groups to help build leadership.

We teach classes every quarter for Santa Fe College Community Education. Our next series for them starts in November.



Author Andrew Weitzen

We have brought in world-class professionals from Argentina, Brazil, Great Britain, and around the United States. Our local instructors are wonderful as well, some with championship resumes.

People are astonished by the fantastic dance community we have created with thanks to you.

If you are in town, stop by, and check us out. I have attached our September and October schedules so you can see what has been going on at 308 West.

Once again, thank you so much.

Sincerely,  
Andrew Weitzen

## Appendix

# Voices

The following people have provided voices for the audio version of this book.

Randi Faris as Edith Weitzen, her mother

Andrew Weitzen as all other voices and the narrator

Soojin Yoo as herself

## What Others Have To Say

Dear Andy,

I am in the final stages of packing for my move to Atlanta and Stone Mountain. I would have said goodbye in person, but we have a pandemic. You have had a tremendous impact on my health and happiness and I will be forever grateful. I met you at a time that I was fearful and in considerable pain from loss. Your dance class let me feel safe with strangers and specifically safe with men. Your teaching is excellent and the atmosphere of welcome and respect for all that you foster is unmatched. With dance in general and tango in particular, you opened a community and world to me that has greatly enriched my life. You have led gently and confidently in each dance and in the whole expansion into the world of dance.

I am confident that I will see you again someday at some milonga somewhere and I will be glad. I wish you the very best in all things because that is what you give and that is what you deserve in return.

~ Sincerely, Frida, social dancer

The most important thing you learn is how to get along with others at social dancing.

Andy, would you dance with me. I was in a car accident. I do not move well. You dance so gently. You are one of the only ones that I feel safe with. ~ Deborah, contra dancer

When you learn how to dance without the use of force, everyone can feel safe dancing with you.

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At West Coast swing, one lady said, "You are so easy to dance with. You dance so softly. All the other guys are rough."

You learn how to dance gently so you are a pleasure to dance with. When you dance this way, these are the kind of sentiments you hear wherever you go.

This comment was posted on a folk dance forum in response to a friendly exchange. "Wow, it sounds like a whole lot of rules. Is there any punishment for the disobedient? :))".

Actually, there are no rules at all, just good physiology and good physics, as well as politeness, personal responsibility, and common sense. I have been dancing Israeli and international, contra, swing, and ballroom, for over 20 years. Andy's classes are the only ones where I do not get hurt--pushed, pulled, jerked, stepped on, or thumb wrestled.

He is the only teacher I have ever had who does not teach only moves, patterns, and choreography, but instead has worked out a few basic principles that apply to all types of dancing. No punishment, only pleasure. ~ Erin, recreational dancer

One man wrote the following note after attending the Chagigah Israeli dance camp in Wisconsin.

Andy,

A markida [woman dance leader] from out of town recently told me that it was a pleasure to dance with me, that I did not break her arm, and that I was very gentle. This was music to my ears, as I have been working on dancing safely and comfortably, without any pushing or

## What Others Have To Say

pulling, ever since I attended one of your workshops a few years ago.

Within the same week, I learned that two other dancers with whom I dance frequently were also complemented during a dance camp this past weekend. They were both women who were complemented on their following skills, and one of them was complemented by a markid [man dance leader] with whom she danced. I dance frequently with both of these women, and we work together on skills that you taught at your workshop in Mount Prospect, IL.

I am very pleased that people are starting to realize the benefits of dancing safely, and these experiences are a real testament to your teaching and mine.

~ Jeff, social dancer

One woman had written to me that she thought the swing dance class "was very good--and everyone we spoke with thought the same". I wrote her back asking what she liked specifically. This is her reply.

Andy,

The simplicity of the breaks (movements without a lot of steps), while feeling and practicing the lead, broke it down in a way that was extremely useful. We were able to focus on the lead and follow while not trying to learn a complex dance.

Another thing we found really useful was closing our eyes to get the feel of the lead. You had done that in another of your classes. A lot of us were dancing with our ordinary partners and that drill is useful so that we do not just watch body language.

## Appendix

Also, ending the evening with Bala was great. It gave us all some dancing that was fun and a chance to dance with everyone. It ends the evening on a positive note and shows that dancing really is fun!

~ Annette, social dancer

Annette and her partner Randy now run their own weekly English country dance session. Often, they are invited to be guest leaders in other cities. Everyone at their sessions dances gently.

### **More Comments**

All the comments here were unsolicited. All the comments were written except for the one from my mother. The author made minor editorial changes for readability, such as removing blank lines and correcting spelling. The author was reluctant to change punctuation because that would require too much editing of the original notes. The author prefers the reader see the comments as expressed by the commenter. The author removed irrelevant paragraphs such as those asking about when a class might be given. The author did not add any words to the comments. The author added the attribution after the name so you can see the commenter's background. The author's notes are in square brackets. Some names have been changed.

Hi Andy,

You are such a devoted person to build the community (of all dances) :)

~ Andrea, Argentine tango instructor

## What Others Have To Say

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

Dance class was sooooo much fun. Nice job in corralling all of us wild dancers.

~ Angie Ferkovich, social dancer and organizer

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

I just wanted to say thank you, again, for coming to our 1940s party and making it special with your dancing know-how! Everyone had a wonderful time, especially the birthday girls. Thanks so much for the wonderful music and your time and effort. Best,

~ Anita, beginning swing dancer

\* \* \*

Hi Andy!

I love the tango music and I know lots of other people would like the classes. Again, I thank you for setting up the classes!

~ Ann, recreational dancer

## Appendix

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

It really was an especially enjoyable evening. Many thanks for your hard work and patience.

~ Arlene, Israeli and international folk dancer

\* \* \*

Another WOW! You are the best and thanks again for the information. I hope the Tango class can continue in April.

~ Carmelo, beginning social dancer

\* \* \*

Thanks, Andy, for the encouragement. You are the best. Your guidelines are soooooo helpful. I am saving your comprehensive guidelines for frequent reference and reminder.

~ Carol, recreational dancer

\* \* \*

Thanks for putting together the West Coast swing classes. I had some people after class tonight mentioning how much they enjoyed it. You did a good job.

~ Cathy, West Coast swing competitor



## What Others Have To Say

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

What a great class! Thanks! It was so nice to meet new people.

~ Cheri Ruiz, recreational dancer

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

It was a pleasure meeting you on Thursday at Victor and Oksana's milonga in Boca Raton. I enjoyed dancing with you so much, I only wish I could have danced with you more that night. You are a very good dancer. Whenever you are in Boca again, please let me know. Enjoy the rest of your weekend and I look forward to hearing from you.

Thanks,

~ Cindy, Argentine tango dancer

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

I want to thank you for the time and motivation you put into the Israeli dancing. It is certainly a blessing for many.

~ Cindy, Israeli dancer

\* \* \*

Thank you Andrew for what you are doing.

~ Cindy, social dancer

## Appendix

\* \* \*

Thank you so much, Andy, for your welcoming nature!

~ Connie, line dancer

\* \* \*

Thank you, Andy,

You are so right. Excellent advice. I need this reminder.  
Love,

~ Cyd, recreational dancer

\* \* \*

You are one of the best things that ever happened to the  
Mosaics [outdoor clubs where I led dancing at their  
international event].

~ David Liebman, recreational dancer

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

I love your values and am so envious that you have this  
going on in Florida. Thanks for the encouragement,  
though. Keep up the wonderful work you do and come  
visit us again!

~ Diane, folk dancer

## What Others Have To Say

\* \* \*

Thank you for the update Andy. Is appreciated. As is your tireless efforts to find all of us a place to continue dancing. I hope you will join us this Sunday at waltz brunch.

~ Don Page, vintage waltz and zydeco dance organizer

\* \* \*

Do they pay you?

~ Edith Weitzen, social dancer and my mother

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

Dancing last night was, in my opinion, wonderful. I was so energized when I got home, it was almost like being high. You are very good at leading a group. You are welcoming, have a good sense of pacing, you encourage without being too pushy, correct without giving offense.

~ Erin, social dancer

\* \* \*

Hi Andrew,

You are a terrific teacher and it was wonderful reliving my youthful dance experiences. Best regards,

~ Gale, Israeli dancer

## Appendix

\* \* \*

Thank you for sharing your wisdom. I find your notes very insightful and useful.

~ Iris, Argentine tango dancer

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

Thanks for the information and for the lovely dances.

~ Jackie, Argentine tango dancer

\* \* \*

Andy,

Really love working with you and want to continue to get lessons.

~ Jennifer, hustle dancer

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

Thank you. And Joseph. You guys taught a great class today. It was a lot of fun and my students absolutely loved it! Again thank you for two wonderful classes.

~ Juliana, University of Florida professor of dance, dance professional, Brazilian dance instructor

## What Others Have To Say

\* \* \*

Hello Andy,

I was driving back to Gainesville from Waldo yesterday and saw your sign GainesvilleDance.com. Did a double-U on the road, parked on the side, and took a photo of the sign. Congratulations, great sign! Thanks for promoting dance. You are doing a great job. Gainesville is a dance city, very much so.

~ Julieta, international folk dancer teacher

\* \* \*

Dear B'nai Israel Board Members:

I want to express to you my feelings about the importance of the Israeli Dance program at B'nai Israel. That is because Andy Weitzen is willing to single-handedly put in the energy needed to make it happen. He provides his own music and equipment, he writes a weekly newsletter for local Israeli Dancing, and most importantly, he consistently dedicates his Monday evening each week to running the program, providing a warm environment and genuine expertise for everyone who comes. He patiently teaches and re-teaches us the dances, always able to expand our dance horizons because he knows so many dances. It is a great service that Andy provides to our community.

Respectfully,

~ Karen, Israeli dancer

## Appendix

\* \* \*

I liked what you wrote about safety, courtesy and comfort!! See you tonight! Salsa too?

~ Kathie, social and Israeli dancer [married her husband who she got to know in my class]

\* \* \*

Andy,

Last night was very fun! And Jeff and I are delighted you will continue with two-step in January.

~ Kathryn, social dancer [met her husband in my class]

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

Saturday was fun. Thanks for playing some ballroom music and for getting me into the swing rueda. I probably never would have tried it otherwise!

~ Kay, instructor and recreational dancer

\* \* \*

As always thank you and I am holding you to your word. Everyone learns to dance!!!!!! Enjoyed waltz immensely; more waltz lessons.

~ Kellyann Curnayn, social dancer [met her significant other in my class]

## What Others Have To Say

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

Just wanted to say that I thought you taught an EXCELLENT class in all ways in lindy hop tonight. I like the way you teach! VERY impressive your knowledge of the dance, and excellent the way you taught and broke down each part of each step for both lead and follower - such that by the end of tonight's class - some of the women who I do not think had danced this before were doing surprisingly good. The last song you played in the swing rueda was fairly fast - and many of the followers were keeping up to the speed. I like the technique you taught. I had done a cross behind (with my right foot) on 5 - rather than a step straight (to the right) down the aisle - but your technique seems far simpler - and I found I was able to "open the door" to get the woman swinging out rapidly without any force on my part at all (Nicely worded by you - and nicely demonstrated). After that, it became easy to "rebuild" steps (free spin, inside turn) - and it was "coming back to me". I do not think I have ever felt as unhurried and relaxed doing swing outs as you had me feeling by the end of the night.

A few suggestions/thoughts: Thanks for helping after class with Juliet. I had never met her before - and she overall was really getting the hang of everything - except the 180 degree turn on 3, which made the dance uncomfortable (because she was facing the wrong way). Very helpful that you identified her need not to break her right shoulder so that she would turn on 3 - and also helpful to me to understand how she was already by me on 2 negating any possibility for me to get her to turn unless I did something else to compensate.

## Appendix

You taught an EXCELLENT class in swing-out, with success at getting virtually everyone doing the step to reasonably fast music which is no small feat. You also were great at refreshing what I had forgotten and not used for at least 3 years. THANK YOU! : )

~ Ken, social dancer

\* \* \*

Andy,

I wanted to email you and let you know how much I appreciate your support for the dance, for supporting Annette and Randy and for being someone who is a pleasure to dance with, no matter what the dance form! I love being at the GDMA [Gainesville Dance and Music Association] building, it had gone away before I started coming to Gainesville to dance and I like the atmosphere and the floor in the room we use. So, this is my way of saying thank you very much for all you are doing to support dance in the Gainesville area.

~ Liza, social dancer

\* \* \*

Thanks Andy,

I was just curious, how you are teaching all the variety dances [online]. So, I just wanted to check out your site this week, and peeking a little bit of the other dances, like Israeli dance, etc. Just curious.

After looking at your class, I started thinking of going back to the beginner ballroom classes of our community to learn the lead role. (Still, Maybe?) Since the number



## What Others Have To Say

of female dancers are more than the male, If I can dance it, I can have some fun by myself with my female friends. Of course, this (my idea) is going to be after the pandemic lock down ended.

Sometimes, I get tired of the slow progress of Argentine Tango. There are so many expectations of flexibility which is hard for our not-so-young age. There are many No, No, Nos too. So, it seems that the easy simple dances like you are teaching, might be a good break for me.

Anyway, you have been giving me some inspiration! Thank you!

~ M. S., Argentine tango and social dancer

\* \* \*

Andy,

I am very happy to receive this invitation as it represents the best of collaborative effort for dancing. Thanks so very much for all you have accomplished and for being a central nerve.

~ Marilyn, ballroom and social dancer

\* \* \*

Dear Andy,

I had a magnificent time last night. Thank you so very much for enabling us ladies to dance with you virtually. You are an extremely hard worker. Again, many thanks,

~ Margaret, ballroom and social dancer

## Appendix

\* \* \*

Dear Andy,

We very much enjoyed the swing dance class today. As always, you are so patient and calm, and make us feel very comfortable.

~ Marsha and Teo, Argentine tango instructors

\* \* \*

Andy,

Thank you so much for your patience at the swing dance. Sharing the info today was very helpful. May you continue all your activities. You are a very kind and knowledgeable person. All the best to you. Sincerely

~ Mary Ann, social dancer

\* \* \*

Hiya Andy,

That was a pretty good turnout Saturday night, thanks to you and Ann for making it work.

~ Metin, social dancer

\* \* \*

Cool, I will see if she will let me in this week. I like your approach to other teachers.

~ Michael, contra dancer

## What Others Have To Say

\* \* \*

Hi Andrew,

Thank you for sending me the newsletters. I really appreciated the list of line dances you have been doing with the links to videos. It has been a few years for me to restart dancing. I found most of your dances are new to me. It is exciting to learn new dances in your class at the senior center. Happy holiday and Happy New Year,

~ Mitch, line dancer

\* \* \*

I went to [another dance class] last night. I will go this month, but please hurry and come back. I like the way you teach it better. I am finding their method very difficult. I have been spoiled by Andy! We did salsa last night which was okay, but I stayed for the 2 step advanced lesson and even though you had taught us this particular move, I struggled to follow their method. They spend a lot of time teaching the follower steps and you have to visualize being led. I found that difficult. Oh well good practice. Have a wonderful time and bring back a lifetime of memories!

[sometime later] As usual a great class. I like the combination of the 4 different dances as the footwork changes it forces me to rely on my lead and focus on learning to follow. I will practice bringing my feet together! Can't practice the hand and frame without a partner! Have a great week and I will see you next Monday. I may try to go to waltz on Sunday if I get back in town on Saturday. See ya!

~ Oel Wingo, social dancer

## Appendix

\* \* \*

I am thankful that I signed up for your class last fall. The music and dances are great. It is fun to meet new people and to develop friendships with people who continue to come because of a common love for the dances. I found it more difficult than I expected since each song has a different dance. However your patience and encouragement have been amazing.

In addition to all of this, I have been helped physically more than I dreamed possible. My doctor approved me taking the class in spite of the diagnosis of degenerative disk disease. What he does not know yet is the fact that I am no longer taking the prescription strength Ibuprofen that I had taken four years prior to starting to dance. Of course, he was prescribing a medication to protect my digestive system. I have stopped it too. Since I had tried to stop the Ibuprofen before without success, I know that it was dancing that made the difference.

One night a week and some practice between classes helped improve my posture and motivated me to do other exercises as well. I am definitely in better health now than I was last September. Thanks for the part that you played in that change. I hope that you will continue to teach dance for years to come. Thanks,

~ Pat, Israeli dancer

## What Others Have To Say

\* \* \*

Dear Andy,

I have so enjoyed the Line Dancing Class and am so disappointed that I am unable to sign up for the March Session. I will miss three of the four sessions in March so it makes no sense for me to sign up. I will also be out of town the first two weeks in April. It has been such fun-- I have really enjoyed it and hope to rejoin sometime in the future. Happy Dancing,

~ Peggy, line dancer

\* \* \*

Hi Andy!

Annette and I had a great time, as usual, dancing with you last night. And I have to say, I really admire your patience! It cannot be easy to stay so calm and collected when some are (rudely) questioning what you are trying to teach. Good job!

~ Randy, English country dance instructor

## Appendix

\* \* \*

Yep, your methods definitely work! It was fun to feel like I was actually dancing (vs. just being dragged around the dance floor). Maybe it takes a little more concentration to follow, but it beats having to learn the whole dance first. Lots more fun your way. (And hey, if you can teach me, you can teach anyone!)

Do not let me forget - I have another question for you about spinning in the circle dances - how not to get dizzy? See you!

Ricki

[next email]

I went to the last hour of the Bolton Center dance - the spins worked great! I could tell my partners were much more comfortable. Definitely worth the time to learn it. Thanks!

~ Ricki, contra, folk, and social dancer

\* \* \*

You are a generous gifted dancer that shares his skills and graces with partners of all levels. Hugs,

~ Rosanna, Argentine tango dancer

## What Others Have To Say

\* \* \*

Thanks Andy,

I attended the class Thursday evening, and was relieved that you are taking it so slow! I really appreciated your comments about how long it takes to develop the muscle memory! My previous attempts to learn to dance with a partner were just an embarrassing failure. But I have seen folks having so much fun dancing that I wanted to try again when I heard about this class. So here is hoping!

~ Ruby, beginning social dancer

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

Thank you so much for making our event even more special. You really got people up and moving and the "spectators" enjoyed watching! I had fun myself! You were great to work with and I hope you will join us for many future events.

~ Sharon, President of the Jewish Council of North Central Florida 2014

\* \* \*

Andy,

Even more important, I want to thank you for your motivating and supportive teaching. You are great!!

~ Ted, social dancer

## Appendix

\* \* \*

Hi Andy,

Thanks for all your efforts, past and present, to keep dance alive in Gainesville!!

~ Theresa, Argentine tango, swing, and social dancer

\* \* \*

Hi Andrew,

Your site is good! You are brilliant and tough to keep all dancing despite Covid! Thank you for your skills. Your Pal,

~ Tom, social dancer

\* \* \*

Dear Andrew,

What an enjoyable night of dancing on Sunday! A little bit of everything: oldies, newer dances, couples, and something new. All in a relaxed, friendly atmosphere. You are so good at managing the group and accommodating everyone who shows up.

~ Veronica, Israeli dance instructor and English country dance caller