

Wellbeing Writing with Pearl Jordan



We spoke to Pearl Jordan, Founder of *The Rhythmic Remedy™ Technique*, and performance, health, and wellbeing specialist.

Pearl has more than three decades of experience in the performance industry as a dancer, teacher and choreographer and has trained in Homeopathy, Neuro-Linguistic Programming, Coaching and Meditation. She is also the co-founder and artistic director of a jazz dance company and Bullies Ballerinas. In this Wellbeing Writing article, we talk to Pearl about her philosophy to support dancers.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR A DANCER TO BE EMPOWERED?

To be an empowered dancer is to be an empowered human being. I know some might say, “Well, that’s a bit over the top!” But is it...? Empowerment, no matter what the context, leads to a positive sense of self, purpose, and confidence, all those high-energy states that dare us to show up authentically and unapologetically. Every moment of a dancer’s training is an opportunity for growth and self-leadership.

I believe dance training and the art of dance to be life skills. We are, after all, human beings having a dance experience - both entwined. Build one, build both. So to empower a dancer is to nurture the greatness of the artist and to help them to perform their unique best on the stage as well as on the stage of life.

In my opinion, this requires a holistic approach, inside-out, mental-emotional, physical, and spiritual - a network of parts requiring simultaneous care and attention. Look after those, recognise that need, and there you have your empowered dancer, ready to take centre stage and dance whilst everyone IS watching.

HOW CAN DANCE TEACHERS SUPPORT DANCERS IN FINDING THEIR INTERNAL DRIVE AND THEIR SENSE OF UNIQUENESS?

First, a dance teacher needs to remember that in the studio is a pool of individuals with unique needs. This can sometimes be forgotten and I have been on the receiving end of this 'need to mould' a dancer to suit a preconceived idea.

This is what I do. CONVERSATION. State it. Let the dancer know that you recognise them as individuals with individual needs. *"I C U" - I see you for who you are and recognise that you may need assistance in another form, and that's acceptable. Please help me to help you. Please let me know if there is anything I can say or do differently.*

To hear this from a teacher, what do you think this does for an individual? From experience, I watch students grow inches taller. Then I take them through a U.S.P sequence, not a unique selling point, but an exercise that allows them to create their Uniquely Special 'P', power, passion, whatever the word is that works for them. This kind of approach leads to ownership. A flame is lit, and an internal drive becomes ignited. It's all about empowerment and respect. The dancer needs to know in the first instance that the dancer counts. Create opportunities for that type of conversation and, ultimately, exploration through dance. There you will have it, permission to show up in their truth, an understanding that you wish to see 'who they are' and not somebody else's version. Have them dance from the gut fearlessly and celebrate those moments with applause.

And then there is also the BIG WHY? Why would you dance? Why are you here...? There is a process that I have created which involves questions, visualisations and meditation. - It helps a dancer to reconnect to their inspiration, the reasons they dance and how they would 'be' if they were not to dance.

This is a deep process, and it is having to explore and journey the absence of dance in their mind's eye, in this meditative way, that helps them to get to the real reason for dancing.

HOW CAN DANCERS KNOW IF THEY ARE 'ENOUGH'?

A dancer will, of course, look 'outside' to gain approval – whether it be through their teachers, choreographers, directors, parents, and indeed, often via social media. At some point, however, the dancer and human being will realise that the answer lies within. This is scary because we are not taught to look within as a bench marker.

Personal and professional development teaches you the art of looking inwards, connecting to the truth of who you are. It is also a spiritual journey, a 'bigger picture' journey that helps you to take responsibility for how you feel, act and so on. *The question of being 'enough' is a journey of self-realisation. 'I am enough, no matter what, and that is a fact.*

Yes, there are learnings and roles to play... These roles, and that includes the role of being a dancer, are enough to blur lines. We don't feel we are enough in one area and that spills into the next. BUT the trunk of a tree (you) still stands despite branches (roles) being cut. The tree knows it is enough with or without its branches, and we are the same. No matter what, if we believe we are enough, then we are enough. More simply said than done? Yes. This is deep stuff. And I love helping dancers to recognise their enoughness!

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HEALTHY COMPARISON AND COMPETITION?

When in competition mode, we are outside looking in. It's them against us. We activate 'fight' mode, and it can bring up feelings of anxiety and inadequacy. It's about 'me' and definitely not about 'we'. But, the thing is, there is no competition. Not outside of you, anyway. Your number one competitor is yourself. That's it. That's the mindset to have. The internal focus to create.

Comparison feels less 'aggressive' and more open.

A Pearl of Wisdom that I share with dancers, especially those about to audition, is: *'Allow yourself to be inspired by others, knowing that you too shall inspire!'*

How freeing is that? So instead of being in the competitive space of trembling and anxiety, looking outside of you, open yourself up to comparing in a more open, generous and inspirational way. Look within and trust that in that given moment, all you can do is bring the best of you. Have the confidence to know that based on your experience, training, and mood, however, your present presents itself today, it will be enough. There is the internal focus. Liberation. Free to be with yourself and enjoy the expression of you unbounded.

To learn more about Pearl's work, [visit her website here.](#)