

FACULTY: DAPHNE LOWELL & ALTON WASSON

CONTEMPLATIVE DANCE

YEAR-LONG PROGRAMS I & II

Six weekends of retreat, practice and study emphasizing the role of the witness. Limited to 12.

Dedicate a year to immerse yourself in Contemplative Dance/Authentic Movement. Investigate the multiple dimensions of embodiment with close faculty guidance and a community of peers. Examine in depth the dynamics of moving, witnessing, imagining and remembering.

The programs are based on movement practice closely examined and fully experienced over the course of each year. Participants explore a different theme each weekend to view the process from new perspectives, and they pursue connections/projects to help integrate their discoveries into their work and lives. The programs are designed to support the development of each person's resources and ways of working, and to deepen their understanding of the multiple dimensions of the practice.

Each weekend includes: guided movement meditations/warm-ups, Authentic Movement sessions, practice and guidance in the witnessing relationship, exploration of the weekend's theme, dialogue about the assigned readings, work with the imagination in other media, time outdoors, reports from participants about their connections to work and life, as well as silence and time to eat and laugh together.

Take Year I & II in sequence, or take Year I now and complete Year II some later year. For those who complete Year I and II we offer ongoing support, mentorship, supervision and training in a variety of forms.

Outcomes

The Year-Long Programs weave several threads throughout the year. They offer in-depth training and examined practice in the processes of moving and witnessing, with special attention paid to witnessing. They provide a place for one's personal practice to deepen, and they look at the practice through the lens of a different theme each weekend. Participants find the programs deeply stimulating on a personal level – physically, psychologically, spiritually, creatively. They also find all sorts of ingenious ways to bring aspects of the practice – awareness of body, movement, imagination, contemplation, ritual, nature, witnessing, dancing – into their professional work. They bring it into their classrooms, clinics, consulting rooms, hospitals, studios, nursing homes and places of worship. They also develop ways to continue to practice with others back home, usually by finding a peer to move with or teaching a friend/creating a small peer group.

Some participants, depending on their previous experience, leave the programs ready to facilitate others in this approach to movement. We encourage participants to take responsibility for discerning their own readiness to do this. In our experience, preparation to facilitate others requires: sufficient experience moving and witnessing over time; a conscious engagement with issues and variations in the practice; and a readiness to take on other people. Usually people need several years before they are ready to facilitate others, or lead groups. We designed the Year-Long Programs to help with this preparation, and we offer on-going mentorship to those who complete the programs.

Connections/Projects

We invite participants to find ways to connect their discoveries during the weekends with their work and lives back home. This process is unique to each individual's interests and goals. Some make a commitment to themselves to maintain a practice: journaling, spending time outdoors, finding quiet time for contemplation, braving some new activity. Others choose to track a question or theme over the year. For some the connections are something tangible they create: a collection of poetry or drawings, a new design for their sacred dance or yoga classes. We also suggest things to do between weekends. Each weekend we set aside time for people to share these connections with the group.

We will talk with you about your interests and goals, about what brings you to the program, during the initial interview. Usually these influence the connections you explore between the weekends. These connections evolve organically over the year, shifting as new insights, new interests, new priorities become apparent. It's good to let them percolate. And, you do not need to know what you will do before we talk!

Certificate of Completion

Upon completion of each year we give each participant a letter stating that he/she completed the program. It describes the course of study: the hours spent on various activities, the weekend topics, a bibliography and videography. People pursuing degree programs have successfully used this letter as a way to report back to their institutions, documenting their work with us. We are very interested in helping individuals who wish to use the programs for these kinds of applications to design their years with us to meet those goals. We also offer Continuing Education Units through the National Association of Social Workers. We have found that several professional organizations other than this one respect these NASW CEUs. Please check with your professional organization.

140 units for the six YLP I weekends, 140 units for the six YLP II weekends, plus 37 units for the prerequisite Week I, and 37 units for Week II.*

* However, please note. "These states do not accept National CE Approval Programs and require individual program/provider application processes: California 916.445.4933, Michigan 517.335.0918, North Carolina 336.625.1679, Ohio 612.466.0912, West Virginia 304.558.8816" (NASW Approval)

Credentials

The Year-Long Programs do not lead to a credential or a formal certification. First, there is no recognized credential in Authentic Movement/Contemplative Dance in this country. More importantly, however, we prefer an individualized approach rather than the one-size-fits-all nature of a credential. People come to the programs with different goals, from different backgrounds, with different amounts of previous experience in this practice, and we welcome this rich diversity. They also leave with unique sets of experience, skills, knowledge and goals. Instead of a credential, which implies that all finish the programs in the same place, we work with individual participants throughout the year to help them identify ways to apply what they are learning and experiencing in the programs to their lives and work back home.

Additionally, we are sensitive to the power dynamics inherent in any credential. We work throughout the year to empower participants to knowledgeably and responsibly discern what they are ready to do with the practice. We also share our insight and experience on this, and we offer our guidance and support to help individual participants achieve their goals. As part of the program we all discuss what prepares one to take on different roles— peer movement partner, peer group member, facilitator. We also explore ways to take principles of the practice into all kinds of professional and personal contexts. At the end of the year each participant talks about what they feel prepared to do next: What are their areas of confidence? Their growing edges? What are their next steps? To quote Jung, we work to help each person find her/his own way to “live it.”

The Application Process

Sufficient enrollment will be determined based on applications received by September 1st.

Contact us to talk about your interest in the program. Call or email us.

Send us:

- The Application Form (see link on website)
- An Autobiographical Statement describing key themes in your personal history and your work.
- A recent resume describing your professional work
- A \$300 Tuition Deposit by check or through PayPal at:
<http://contemplativedance.org/onlinepayments.htm>

After we receive these materials we will arrange a time to speak with you.

Financial Aid and Payment Plans

We offer financial aid in the form of scholarships, work-study positions, and payment plans. Please inquire. See our website (or email us) for information on the application process.

The Interview

We have an interview with each applicant to get to know each other, to answer questions about the program, to check on the prerequisites/determine readiness and appropriateness for the program, and to begin the process of personalizing the program to address the individual's goals. These meetings are informal and are held in person. (If necessary, we can do them by phone if we already know each other.) These give us a chance to prepare for the year together with some clarity of purpose, and they inevitably stimulate ideas about connections, goals, and topics of particular interest. We'll meet again with each participant at the end of each year to reflect back together, and to discuss next steps.

Setting: Genesis Spiritual Life Center in Westfield, MA

Set on 19 acres of beautiful lawns, woods and gardens, Genesis offers a warm, quiet, private and deeply spirited environment in which to work, rest and play. We meet in Genesis' renovated 1889 Carriage House Carriage House for our sessions. This building also contains a reading loft and a meditation room that are available to us. Clean and quiet single bedrooms are located in an adjacent building, where we meet for our meals in a private dining room.

YEAR-LONG PROGRAM I

Enhance your practice. Learn ways of supporting others in theirs. Discover ways to integrate elements of CD/AM (such as: witnessing, listening, active imagination, and the dynamics of projection) into your life and professional work. Prepare to participate in and create peer groups. Begin study toward facilitating individuals and groups. Explore a new theme each weekend.

Six Weekends at Genesis Spiritual Life Center, and Week II at Hampshire College, Amherst, MA. In addition, each participant will receive a private session with each faculty member once during the year.

Weekend Themes: The Wisdom of the Body, Active Imagination and Creativity, World Dance and Ritual, Shadow, Rites of Passage, Inner and Outer Ecology

Continuing Education Credits: 140

Prerequisites for participation in Year I: (*Year II requires completion of Year I.*)

1. Completion of our Week I or the equivalent.
2. Knowledge and experience of psychological dynamics; study, training, personal experience in psychotherapy, reading, other workshops. We feel it is important for all participants to have some degree of knowledge about this area. We include consideration of psychological dynamics in the programs, but feel people should also have other study/experience in it.
3. We designed the programs for professional individuals, especially those interested in bringing their discoveries from the year into their work and lives. Our participants are mature, and come with training/examined practice in their particular fields. They have engaged with the world and have life experience.
4. We require each participant to be able and willing to manage her/his inner material. This work can be quite stimulating, or challenging, to one's soul/psyche/body (which is one reason people practice it!), but this will not be a therapy group per se. Personal issues might well arise, and we will as a group create a safe space for each person's work to evolve, but we will not be your therapists. Our main focus will be on the witnessing and responding processes. We encourage participants to arrange for whatever supports they might need outside of the programs.
5. Commitment to the entire program.

We offer financial aid in the form of scholarships, work-study positions, and payment plans. Please inquire.

Visit our website for Year I dates and prices at www.contemplativedance.org/yearone.htm

YEAR-LONG PROGRAM II

Work at a more advanced level, while maintaining the “beginner’s mind” so essential to this process. Examine important issues, such as: power dynamics, diverse modes of perception, and working in various contexts/ environments. Design your year to meet individual goals. Bring a quandary or a question. Experiment with the practice and explore new applications.

Six Weekends at Genesis Spiritual Life Center, (Friday 3:00-Sunday 1:30). Each weekend includes: guided movement meditations/warm-ups, Authentic Movement sessions, practice and guidance in the witnessing relationship, exploration of the weekend’s theme, dialogue about the assigned readings, work with the imagination in other media, time outdoors, reports from participants about their connections to work and life, as well as silence and time to eat and laugh together.

Weekend Themes: The Chest of Drawers; Dreams; Transference and Power; The Senses, Sensuality and Sexuality; Body and World; Life Stages and Endings

Continuing Education Credits: 140

Prerequisites: Completion of Year I, and commitment to the entire program.

Visit our website for Year II dates and prices at www.contemplativedance.org/yeartwo.htm

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