

Dancing to the Rhythms of the Cosmos

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Abstract

Have fun with us and the five phases of movement as we adapt ancient eastern and contemporary western dance forms to move your microcosm to the rhythms of the macrocosm. Identified energy blocks in the five elements, chakras and gates will open and limitations will be freed.

Description

Using the five phases of movement of energy found in simple dance forms from both ancient eastern dances and contemporary western dances, we can change the flow of energy in the body. We can increase our exchange of breath; coordinate our brain and body synchronicity; increase energy, strength, flexibility and wellbeing; and we can open the pathways of energy to flow freely through the body. Once energy blockages in the five elements, meridians, chakras and aura have been identified through muscle testing, specific dance programs can be selected to balance the body and integrate the movement patterns to allow the energy to move freely through the identified areas. *Dancing to the Rhythms of the Cosmos* is a very powerful way to move energies to overcome limitations.

Understanding the Need for Movement

Dance and movement in energy work offers incredible benefits to participants that go beyond the regular shifting that can occur with manual techniques. Moving the core of the body causes a shift in messages that cross the dimensions of the body to reach the extremities, while creating an information loop to the brain. Shifts in the body that have occurred as a result of other energy techniques will be able to root themselves and create a lasting line of message pathways that the body can rely on for future advancement.

This brain-body connection, along with the movement dimension, creates a whole new way for the body to adapt to new patterns and ideas, as well as to find a way to have these new ideas feel comfortable within the body. If there were any blockages or stuck transitional elements involved in a balance, the movement patterns help to rid the body of this inconsistency and move the body into a state of balance and cohesiveness. All the dimensions in the body respond to the movement patterns as they cross the midline and connect the bottom, middle and top of the body together, as well as with the brain pathways of communication.

The Body

Changes that participants will notice with *Dancing to the Rhythms of the Cosmos* will be felt physically as the cardiovascular system harmonizes and the lymphatic flow improves. The body will develop an investment in a willingness to live, security will be felt through the systems, trust will engage; the metabolism will find a sense of self-preservation through its strengthening, sexuality will be enhanced, sensuality will be enjoyed, fertility will become achievable and creativity will be opened. The body's basic reflexes will be engaged. At the most basic level there will be a grounding that will occur to help the body feel connected to the earth and to itself as a whole. Stability will be achieved through the repetition of the movements and the comfort level of the body to perform the movements. The limbs will become centered on the body and the movement patterns through different levels of space will help the body to orient to this center. As well, gravity will be felt and it will be understood as a force to be worked with, rather than a force that takes over.

The Mind

Many times individuals believe that if they are thinking about changes than they will have the willpower to make those changes successful. But what they have not considered is the involvement of the whole body in the process of learning and achieving. The mind has willpower, but it is given strength when the body connects with the mind. It is also easy to think that action can be taken, and it is another thing to engage the body in the action to make it happen. Personality, self-control, and communication are all tied in to how the body is able to express the thoughts of the mind. Love, empathy, truth, inspiration and inner peace are all a result of the mind's connection to the body, the ability to express the mind through the body and the result of the ultimate connection that is built through movement.

The Spirit

Our mind is a complex place to build thoughts and ideas. The body is the vessel that allows us to act on those intellectual developments. But, it is the spirit that wills us to become something more of ourselves than presently exists, and motivates us to dig a little deeper and grow a little stronger. Once the body opens up to the potential in movement, the opportunity to share with others, and the ability to express oneself through the movement, a new level of enlightenment is achieved. Individuals often experience a new level of self-realization whereby a new recognition of the true purpose of life can be opened, where human experience can integrate and be sustained, where bliss can be openly and comfortably achieved. The spirit can find a shift of perception and fantasy, and a whole new level of enlightenment can be achieved.

Dancing to the Rhythms of the Cosmos creates an internal energy shift through the meridian flows and the chakra flows. As we work on the heart chakra and the aura we are able to make a connection with the microcosm to the macrocosm for an experience that brings everything full circle and all-encompass-

sing between our body, mind, and spirit and our connection with the universe.

How Dance and Movement to Shift the Chakras and Auras Came to Be

First studying as a medical professional, Dr. Rashida spent many years working with patients as a physician. Feeling unfulfilled and limited as a medical professional, she believed that the universe had something in store for her that was more rewarding. Touch for Health graced her life in the spring of 2003 as a blessing from the Grandmaster. There was no looking back from there as she continued educating herself and gathering information from ancient energy sciences and techniques. Using her in-depth knowledge as a physician she is now able to integrate the traditional teachings of her native India with medicine and healing modalities. Her latest work combines some of the teachings of Carla Hanaford, incorporating how the stimulation of vision and hearing interconnects with the expressiveness of kinesthetic manipulation and foot coordination. Combining this inspiration with some of her childhood memories of dances from India, *Dancing to the Rhythms of the Cosmos* began. Quoting Carla Hanaford, "Connection with the full 'vibrational' presence of heart and mind allows us to live with more coherence, joy, adventure, play and creativity."

Chakras

Chakras are the centers of awareness and psychic energy in the human body. Even though there are 88,000 chakras of primary and secondary significance in the body, we will be focusing on the 7 primary chakras to achieve realignment and rebalancing of the body, mind and spirit through movement and dance.

- Locations in the Body - Seven primary chakras or energy stations are situated along the spine from coccyx to top of the head.
- Influence on the Body - Each chakra influences certain organs and is associated with a specific hormone.

- Theme - Each chakra's theme depends on the function and influence of the particular chakra energy on organs and hormones.
- Number of Petals - Chakras are symbolized as lotuses through which the energy rises up from darkness into light. Each chakra has a specific number of petals.
- Character - Personalities and characters are identified in people with specific chakra dominance.
- Strengths and Challenges - Chakra strengths and challenges are perceived as the energies flow with ease and at times are blocked in the individual chakras.
- Signs and Symptoms of Blockages of Chakras - Ailments could be in the lower body or in the immune system and sexual and reproductive system; or regulating body temperature or health of heart, lungs or cardiovascular system; or communication skills; or clear vision and other health issues.

Aura

The human aura is described as a subtle body of light that surrounds a human being from head to toe. The layers of the aura relay information between the body through its seven chakra energy centers to the external environment. Through these auric layers the microcosm interacts with the macrocosm.

- Layers of Aura - There are seven auric layers. The aura's energy field extends depending upon the overall health and well-being of an individual. The energies present in each layer communicate with adjacent layers, and then processes the information from the universe into the physical body and vice versa.
- Functions - Each layer of the aura relates to the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual conditions of an individual. Energetic vibrations of a person's thoughts, feelings, state of health, awareness, and past experiences are stored in the different auric layers and are processed to keep the person in perfect health.

Meridians and Elements

The five elements in the Chinese meridian system are Fire, Earth, Metal, Water and Wood. These elements find their representation in the five seasons as well as they do in the human energetic body. As these elements are interconnected with one another and support one another in nature, they do the same within the human body.

- Number of Meridians and Elements - There are 14 Basic Meridians, 8 Extraordinary Meridians, and 5 Elements. The elements in nature support each other to have smooth flow of universal energy, and likewise the different organs and systems in the body support each other in a smooth flow of internal energy.
- Color - Each element is represented by a specific color, and color is one of the ways to use the five elements principle to bring harmony to the body.
- Sound - Vibrations created in the body by sound waves balance our energies at the cellular level. Over 80% of our body consists of water and the ripples and patterns created by sound can raise or lower the frequency in the body to promote healing or disease.
- Character - Personality characteristics are identified in people with specific element dominance.
- Strengths and Challenges - The presence of strengths and challenges in the element or meridian energy flow can produce changes in body, mind, and spirit.
- Signs and Symptoms of Blockages of Meridians - Emotional outbursts, physical weakness in specific muscles, lack of confidence in ability, feeling of unease about situations, illness, lower energy level, depression, lethargy, sleep disturbances, lack of flexibility in muscles or cramping are all possibilities of malady in the meridians and elements flow.

The Five Phases or Stages of Movement

Using the five phases or stages of movement found in simple dance forms from both ancient eastern

dances and contemporary western dances, we can change the flow of energy in the body. This can be done in two ways. There is an overall experience of a complete work – with several different choreographic ideas all culminating in one finishing piece, or there can be an exposure to each part as you pass through one piece of music with one collective choreography.

1. Dormant Stage - The dormant stage is where the body is at rest and prior to any movement for health sake. This dormant stage can include walking for daily activities, domestic chores, work or interacting with family. It includes the day to day movement patterns that are used just to conduct regular activities like cooking, driving, working, reading, interacting with friends. Most of these activities do not engage the manipulation of the shoulder and hip seams of the body whereby messages travel up and down the body to reflect the status of the health of all of the systems. These activities usually do not cross the midline of the body and engage a pattern of hemisphere interactions. Most daily activities are controlled by the dominant side of the brain with little interaction between the hemispheres to engage full comprehension of learning within the brain and the body. These specific daily activities are required to accomplish daily living necessities, but they are not engaged in for the purpose of healing or aligning the energies in the body, or for building coordination between the brain and the body.

2. Experimental Stage - This stage of movement involves understanding where movement is not working well for the mind, the body or the connection between the two. Using muscle testing, blockages of energy can be determined and a priority required by the body for correction. Using a checklist for possible correction opportunities, muscle testing can determine if one specific movement is required, or if a series of movements can be coordinated for the correction. The correction may involve the chakras, auras, elements, and / or meridians, as they are related to the movement choices.

3. Orientation Stage - Using a warm-up sequence that includes Hydration, Breathing Techniques and a specific Foot Rub, the body will be ready to engage in dance and movement. Omitting this vital aspect of the phases can result in a body that is not grounded, lacking in stability and balance; an inability to be centered in the movements and a tendency to move against gravity rather than with it. Once the body repeatedly recognizes these initial details, it will easily engage in activities with a minimum amount of effort to prepare. Some programs may require the body to add flexibility exercises here or after completion as well. This can be muscle tested to determine what is necessary for the body to work optimally.

4. Completion Stage - Once the body has been muscle tested to determine the areas of need, the priority of movement required, and the sequence of movements that the body wants to experience, the whole movement package can be delivered. This sequence of movements may be one song with many elements included that will move the priority indicated, or the experience may be a series of dances choreographed to assist each aspect in culminating a whole experience for the body. Once completed, the body can be muscle tested to determine what, if any, of the movements will need to be repeated and if they should be assigned as homework. Individuals who are utilizing this work will have specific outlines to follow for themselves. Groups of people will have a collective choreography to experience with many elements pertaining to the group. The homework assignment for each person may only utilize a portion of the whole experience, but it will be a part that pertains to them specifically.

5. Liberation Stage - This celebration dance may be performed as a collective group, or may be one selection chosen for an individual to bring the whole body's learning together and process it as a complete package. For groups, this may be performed as a circle dance. The circle dance may produce more profound shifting if it includes a song to sing that will help with vocalizing and opening any emotional

blockages and allowing for a fulfillment of the body to change the vibrational element within.

Foundations to Movement

Before engaging in a dance with the universe, it is important the body and mind are first integrated. Western warm-ups would include some small movements, perhaps some initial stretches, and a little bit of water to get the blood pumping in a “warming up effect.” There is no integration of brain and body, nor is there a fluidity of expression that engages the body to work as a unified being. *Dancing to the Rhythm of the Cosmos* changes the way your body will initiate movement, coordinate and perform with strength and flexibility, and produce an experience that moves you from the microcosm of your being to the macrocosm of the universe.

There are **Three Foundations of Movement** that should be remembered every day: Water, Breathing, and The Foot Rub.

Water

Before engaging in any activity it is essential that the brain and body are hydrated. Adequate water in the body allows for the cells to work efficiently, and helps to send messages across nerve endings. For coordination of movement, the brain and the body need to send information quickly and water is essential for this communication. If the body is dehydrated, the organs will be the first to receive fresh water, then the muscles and lastly the brain. Performance is compromised if the body is in stress due to a lack of water.

Fresh, clean water should be taken into the mouth, swished around and then swallowed. This technique allows the receptors in the mouth to receive the information that the body is receiving water, and the body is able to respond to send the water where it is needed the most. It is important that individuals do not wait to drink water until just before they start moving. It is important that the body is always hy-

drated and that water will be available for the muscles at this time of exertion, rather than to the organs that are lacking water. Water is best drunk at room temperature for maximum absorption in the quickest amount of time. Throughout the day the body requires approximately six-to-eight cups for regular movement, and for more movement and exertion, it is recommended to add two-to-four cups more.

Breathing

Breathing is absolutely vital for *Dancing to the Rhythms of the Cosmos*. Most people breathe with a shallow breath from the top of the chest cavity. They breathe because the body takes care of it for them, and as long as the pathway seems clear, breath is not given much further consideration. According to Chunyi Lin, a Qi Gong master and energy worker, 40% of a person’s air stays stagnant in the lungs and is never exchanged. Within this air can be toxins, heavy energy, virus, fungus, emotional blocks and more. This air can contaminate the other 60% that may be exchanged throughout activity in the day. We need to feed our body with each breath that comes into our lungs. We need to breathe deeply and fully to exchange all the air in our lungs so that no stagnant air can remain to toxify our systems. There are many different breathing techniques that people have developed over the centuries. What they all have in common is the ability to exchange air fully. Most important is that we take the time to breathe deeply for 15 minutes each day. Optimally, Chunyi Lin expresses this as less than six deep breaths per minute for the fifteen minutes. To determine if you are breathing deeply on a regular basis, notice your breath. Pay attention to how your chest cavity feels. Notice if the top of the chest rises and falls, if the diaphragm moves out and in or up and down, if the stomach moves out and in. Do the shoulders rise with the breath? Is the neck held with tension while you breathe? Is your jaw clenched? Is your mouth open or closed? Do you breathe through your nostrils? Are both nostrils taking in air equally? Does the air seem to whistle or have congestion associated with it? Once you have noticed your

breathing, tap with one hand from the shoulder to the wrist of the other arm for about 5 seconds down each arm. The arm should be extended with the palm facing up. Breathe in and notice any changes. Just this little energy shift can change the way you are bringing oxygen into your body. As well, this change in energy can be felt throughout your body with a deeper level of concentration and awareness.

In Kenneth S. Cohen's book, *The Way of Qigong: The Art and Science of Chinese Energy Healing*, he warns his readers that "... efficient, healthy respiration is not the same as deep breathing," (p. 111). He makes special note of the need for **quality** of breath, rather than **quantity**. Air needs to be exchanged with "... ease, grace, and efficiency," rather than with a "... rapid expansion and contraction" of the lung cavity. If the air exchange is fast and forceful, the body reacts by constricting blood vessels. In return, oxygen can become glued to the hemoglobin molecules and restricted from being released to the adjoining cells.

Avid sports enthusiasts may feel that they are breathing deeply and exchanging a maximum amount of oxygen with the cells, but this may not truly be the case. With a focus on breathing in a relaxed manner, the body can have a more productive exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide that provides more nourishment for the body than extreme exercise. This is not to say that one should not engage in physically demanding exercise. This is important on many levels. It is to say that one should make sure that they take the time to really breathe with integrity for the health and healing components found in each breath. Warm up and cool down opportunities can provide such moments for the individual during a training session.

The Foot Rub and How It Came to Be

Michelle began her career in Touch for Health in September 2002 when her dancing body was in such pain that she could no longer walk and was only able

to move a few meters at a time. She was teaching dancing from a stool with assistants to demonstrate for her. Michelle was in her mid-30s. A year previous to this state, a modern dancer and teacher from New York, Lynn Simonson, was presenting at a workshop and was discussing the privileges of all the injuries she had received over the years, and how at the age of 60 she had a body that was free of that pain due to her work with TFH. Michelle jotted those three words down, *Touch for Health*, and then began searching for more info. In the fall of 2002 Michelle met instructor and practitioner Greg Webb of Calgary and began working with him and learning TFH.

Because of Michelle's needs as a dancer to have feet that could work pain free, she focused some of her healing techniques on the processes that freed the emotional pockets of pain in her feet. Gaits were the first techniques to be utilized and "The Foot Rub" was born. Using the initial ideas introduced in the TFH textbook for rubbing the Gaits, Michelle spent many more years listening to others and learning their techniques, as well as applying other ideas to the feet. "The Basic Foot Rub" and "The Long Rub" were born of experience obtained from her dance students and their noticing of what was important to them and where the greatest gains could be made. Before any movement activities begin, it is essential to the body, mind and spirit to prepare the body with the techniques shared below.

The Basic Foot Rub

Our feet begin and end the day for us as we go about our daily routines. They are our stability, our balance, our grounding, our centering, and our sensors for assisting the rest of the body with how to move effectively and safely. On a physical level the soles of our feet send messages throughout our body to indicate how we are moving, what muscles are required for the movement, and how to adjust to maintain our equilibrium. Our brain and our body respond accordingly to the information, and patterns of movement are established. TFH considers that there

needs to be a synergistic and antagonistic synchronization of muscles for normal coordination of muscles. There also needs to be an emotional readiness in the body to move as required, as well as a desire by the brain to carry out a set of movements. It is a whole integrated approach by the body, through the feet, with the brain that determines the success of movement for an individual and the experience that movement will produce. Non-integrated movement may be indicated by a feeling of tiredness, a stumble, a sore ankle, a cramp in the lower back, a weakness in the legs, or a disconnection of thought and movement. As well, a resting body may not be ready to adjust from that state to a moving state, or a fight / flight status of back brain instinctual movement.

Noticing

What does the body feel like, look like, respond like? Observe yourself walking across the floor and notice how the body feels with each stride. Does the foot roll in a specific direction? Does the body shift from side to side while walking? Are the footsteps heavy, light, long in stride or short? Do the arms swing equally on both sides? Is the foot stepped on completely and evenly? Standing in first position with heels together and toes turned to the corners, do the feet rise to the ball (of the foot) with ease? Do the ankles stay straight or roll out? Standing in parallel first position, do the ankles stay together to rise to the ball of the foot? Muscle testing can be used to show the change in energy associated with different movements, and where weakness is indicated. Observe also the alignment of the body while standing: ankles, knees, shoulders, ears, eyes even from right to left; chin straight and head in alignment with spine; ear, shoulder, hip, ankle are in a straight line down the side.

Muscle Testing

If muscle testing is possible, check each of the points on the foot listed below to determine which point needs to be rubbed. As well, muscle check each of the other corrections listed to see what the body is

requiring. For those who do not know how to muscle test, just follow the rub through. Any points that are not integrated will be integrated, and those points already on board will get a little extra boost.

Working with Children

During the Basic Foot Rub, you can sing: “This is the way we rub our feet, rub our feet, rub our feet; this is the way we rub our feet before we dance (play, run, ride, score, jump, swim) today. This is the way we shake our feet, shake our feet, shake our feet; this is the way we shake our feet before we dance today. This is the way we pull our toes, pull our toes, pull our toes; this is the way we pull our toes before we dance today. This is the way we hug our feet, hug our feet, hug our feet; this is the way we hug our feet before we dance today. This is the way we strengthen our feet, strengthen our feet, strengthen our feet; this is the way we strengthen our feet before we dance today.”

During the Toe Pull you can sing: “This little piggy went to market, this little piggy stayed home, this little piggy had roast beef, this little piggy had none, this little piggy went wee wee wee all the way home.” We can also sing: “Stacey went to dance class, to dance a pirouette, she tried to do a jete, and she learned to spot her head, and then Stacey went squeak squeak squeak squeak all the way home.” (Stacey is a little mouse that dances from the book and CD, *Stacey on the Keyboard*, written by Michelle.)

To Correct

For Children: With foot placed on the floor, rub down between the bones of the foot with one hand. Do only one foot at a time so the brain and the body have a chance to connect with one side of the body only through that foot and its corresponding brain hemisphere.

For Adults: If flexibility allows, place the finger tips between the bones of the foot and put the thumb be-

low the ball of the foot and into the arch of the underside of the foot.

- Rub all points between the bones of the foot with firm pressure. Between the big toe and second toe is the Front Gait, between the second and third toe is the Lateral Gait, between the fourth and fifth toe is the Contralateral Gait. The counter pressure applied with the thumb into the bottom of the foot is stimulating abduction of the muscles and the end of the Kidney Meridian (K1). Note: If there is an emotion holding in the foot, and there is a sore spot, hold the spot and then rub it until the pain subsides.
- Rub the points along the sides of the foot. Behind the big toe towards the foot is the Rear Gait. Behind the little toe towards the foot is stimulation for the adduction muscles.
- Shake up the ball of the foot by twisting the bones back and forth. Stiffness through this part of the foot can be indicative of dis-ease that may occur in other parts of the body. Shoes that constrain the foot during movement can reduce the amount of flexibility available for this part of the foot, and can cause the body to create compensating patterns of movement to accomplish required tasks. Patterns established as a result of improper footwear can create imbalances through other parts of the body.
- Pull out each toe and circle it around several times ("This Little Piggy"). By opening the space between the bones, the joint is able to fill with space and fluid to help rejuvenate tissue. Repeated hard impact on the ball of the foot and toes can result in these joints being jammed, thus decreasing blood flow and healing circulation to the toes.
- Squeeze the foot all over and around the ankle and give it some *love*. This wakes up the sensors all over the foot and allows corresponding points in the body to also awaken for further information. Including the ankle allows the muscles, tendons, ligaments and fascia that wrap over the joint to come alive and become a part of the process for strengthening.

- Lengthen to Strengthen: Place finger tips together in the middle of the top of the foot and pull the fingers the length of the muscle fibers out to the toe and ankle in opposite directions. Repeat on the bottom of the foot. This can also be done over the ankles, all the way around. This is especially helpful for those people who have weak ankles or have had a rolling injury to their ankles previously.

To Complete the Process

Put one hand on the forehead and one hand on the back of the head. Breathe deeply and allow the energy to shift from the root chakra to the crown chakra. This will lengthen the amount of time the adjustment will hold.

Applications

There is a direct connection from the foot to the multitude of networks with the body, mind, and spirit. The Foot Rub, done fully and completely, can remove the blockages that produce the outlined symptoms set out in the following examples as well as many other blockages.

- Sports: Pressure receptors in the foot are linked to the mind and processing information. Clearing the foot centers before a workout increases memory capacity, and completing the workout with a rub locks in the information covered and assists with memory storage.
- ADD and other learning blocks: The receptors in the foot assist with processing information and establishing pathways of communication between hemispheres.
- Coordination problems in the feet and the body.
- Changing life direction, or being held back from stepping into something new or difficult by fear.
- Trouble walking, difficulty balancing, transferring weight, stepping completely on the foot, or feeling grounded.
- Arms that don't swing much, fluidity of movement, open and wide stride.

- Foot cramps, lack of muscle usage in all of the toes, height for springing or jumping activities.

Give Yourself a Little More

Tap Kidney 1 – Find the center spot just below the ball of the foot, either tap this spot 100 times for an increase in energy, or rub the spot for 30 seconds. Do not do this before bedtime as it will energize the body, rather than relax the body. In China, Qi Gong practitioners use this technique before they begin their day, as it is one method to fire up all the systems in the body.

Pull out Foot Sensors (“Toothpaste Squeeze”) - Placing hands in the center of the foot, squeeze and pull out towards the toes focusing on a different toe with each pull. This technique awakens the gaits, muscle fibers and tendons. It also sends messages to other parts of the body. Try to keep the pressure even around the foot.

Between Pinky and Fourth Toe Bones, rub just behind the toes. This aids in releasing the hip muscles to allow for more freedom of movement when swinging the leg or doing stretching movements.

“Roll Up” – Create the “roll” by pulling the fourth and pinky toes up towards the top of the foot by placing pressure into the first knuckles of these toes and stretching the toes. Stimulation of the first knuckle and the toes helps release the muscles within the hip joints. This technique can be repeated down the outside of the foot, as well as over the ball of the foot. This awakens the sensors in both these areas to send messages back to the brain.

Heel Pull - Placing finger tips into the heel, pull the fingers down the heel to the back of the foot and up the back of the heel. This one is hard to do on your own foot. If you have a partner, have them position themselves near to the knee and reach down to the foot for the best leverage. Repeat this pull several times across different parts of the heel.

Shake the Foot and “Ankle Cracker” - Lifting the foot from the floor, shake it so it moves on its own. People who like to control situations have a tough time letting the foot relax enough to move freely. This is a very good exercise for them. Or, if you have a partner who can hold on to the foot at the ankle, they can shake the whole foot from the ankle joint. This exercise provides a release of tension for those people who have never thought of relaxing the foot before. Then, hold on tight around the ankle and provide resistance while the foot is rotated in both directions. This helps to awaken the muscles, tendons, ligaments and fascia that cross over the muscle joint and insert into the foot and into the bottom of the leg. A new sense of awareness comes with this technique.

Squeeze Toes - Hold hands over the toes and give a gentle squeeze. Open the toes of the foot and try to release the hand squeeze with the toes. This can be very difficult for many people as the muscles fibers in all of the toes do not usually work equally. In fact, there may be toes that have no strength at all. This exercise will help to awaken all the muscles useful for the toes functioning.

Open Toes - With the toes spread apart, try to squeeze the hand over the toes and close them up. There will be an imbalance of strength for this one as well, and can be repeated to feel all the toes firing underneath the hands. Another exercise that works in a similar fashion is pretending to play the piano keys with the toes or picking up small objects like a marble with each toe and then dropping it. It is important to make sure that all toes have functioning muscles as they help with balance and coordination of movement. If there are any toes not working, they cannot contribute to the program required and an inefficient pattern of movement can establish itself in its place.

Push Toes Down - Placing hands on top of the foot, provide light pressure to the foot and have the toes resist moving down. The pressure can be gradually

increased as the foot strengthens and improves. Make sure that all of the toes are motivated to participate in this movement in coordination with the foot. Toes that remain isolated from the foot cannot help to create a strong movement pattern.

Push Toes Up - Placing hands on the bottom of the foot, provide light pressure to the foot and have the toes resist moving up. The pressure can be gradually increased as the foot strengthens and improves.

Side to Side - Placing hands on the foot, provide pressure to one side of the foot and resist with the foot, and then provide pressure to the other side of the foot. Again, pressure can be gradually increased as the foot strengthens and improves.

Babinsky Reflex (from Masgutova Method) – Place finger in side of arch of foot and pull fingers apart towards the heel and the big toe (lengthen to strengthen), push fingers in as reach edge of this space. Repeat moving inwards on the foot slightly, and then repeat moving in a little more towards the center of the arch of the foot. Pull back on the big toe and the ankle so they are fully flexed back, and hold this position for 30 seconds. The power that comes from the big toe as a result of the Babinsky Reflex is very important to strength and balance. For many people this reflex does not function optimally.

Achilles Tendon Stretch – Flex the whole foot back and the toes, then place fingers on either side of the tendon at the heel, pull down the length of the tendon towards the calf muscle.

Activities to Awaken the Chakras, Aura Energy, Elements and Meridians

- Tai Chi Ball (or Scarves) – Figure 8 energy alignment for the whole body
- Tai Chi Ruler – meridian pathways and aura opening
- Tai Chi Bubble Bath – Aura gathering, meridian opening, element involvement

- Scarf Dancing – Heaven chakra including the heart meridian
- “Criss Cross, Oh My Gosh” (for children) - realigns the meridians, which realigns the elements; cross crawls for brain integration as well (also found on YouTube with children’s performer Dan Devion)
- “Hickory Dickory Dock” (for children) - realigns the chakras from the earth to the heavens, as well as solidifies basic reflex patterns of the lower body: grounding, stability, gravity, centering and balance (also found on YouTube with children’s performer Dan Devion)
- “Scat Like That” (for children and adults) - Sound balancing with Chakra shifting
- “Peacocks and Eggs” (for children and adults) – realigns the meridians and the elements, engages the spine to stimulate all of the organ systems
- The Lion (for children and adults) – realigns the chakras from the heaven to the earth
- Jump Rhythm Jazz Project ABCs – Group Power with holding hands, throat chakra alignment through singing, as well as the other chakras through movement (from Billy Siegenfeld’s work)
- Inner Smile – opening elements and meridians to change the function of the organs
- Mudra Movements – balancing for all possibilities

Dances to Awaken the Chakras, Aura Energy, Elements and Meridians

- **Tap** – Fruit Salad (Earth Chakras), Hot Chocolate – Tap Warm-up
- **Jazz** – Dancing on Water
- **Cape Breton Square Set** – Basic reflex integration, group energy sharing and shifting, aura and chakra alignment
- **Hip Hop** – The Basketball Dance
- **Traditional Indian Dances** – Bharatanatyam, kuchipudi for chakra awakening and alignment; Garba for alignment in cosmic gathering

References

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Michelle and Rashida first met in 2005 at the International Touch for Health Conference in North Carolina. That momentous occasion, for all who were blessed to experience the work of the many great minds who gathered for this event, was also the beginning of an incredible relationship for two TFH enthusiasts. Michelle and Rashida formed an incredible energetic bond instantly. They would not see each other or communicate again until 2007 in Salt Lake City, Utah at another TFH convention. Once again their friendship blossomed with an energy that was empowering and eye opening. They knew that their individual work would eventually culminate in a collaborative effort, and they set their sights on being presenters for the TFH Industry. Michelle and Rashida came together again in 2010. This time, their independent work was now forming a bond that would link their two worlds in a never-before-seen project! *Dancing to the Rhythms of the Cosmos* was born out of Michelle's work as a dance teacher and studio owner for two decades; and Rashida's history of Indian traditions and her vast knowledge of the cosmos, mudras, chakras and aura energies. Their knowledge is in-depth, their enthusiasm is contagious and their passion for their work is an inspiration for others to chase their dreams.



Dr. Rashida Naraharasetti, MBBS, DO (MP) is an osteopath and TFH Instructor with a 25 year background in conventional medical practice and physiotherapy. She uses a blend of Vedic philosophy and a variety of ancient energy modalities to empower people to discover their own unique journey towards living a healthy life and manifesting their dreams and living to their fullest potential. She currently operates her own consulting business in Toronto, Canada.

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Michelle Greenwell (BA Psych, TFH Instructor, Tai Chi Instructor, consultant, author of children's books and CDs) is a dance and movement specialist who is passionate about helping others to move easily and pain free, while reaching their highest dreams and potential. Combining her vast knowledge (from TFH, Brain Gym, Masgutova Method, Dance History and Technique, Musical Knowledge, Tai Chi, Qi Gong, and personal experience - to name a few resources), Michelle has created a series of exercises to help people stay active and healthy through movement, while enjoying the pleasure of being motivated by music and singing along, for

great fun and emotional empowerment.

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