

## THE THREE ASPECTS OF DANCING

1. **Dancing as a Sport**
2. **Dancing as an Art Form**
3. **Dancing as a Social Grace**

The surge of dance competition shows and the ever evolving skills of dance competitors is making the perception of dancing to be a sport (Currently being considered for Olympic competitions). There is no doubt dancing at the competitive level requires the physical endurance and skills of a consummated athlete.

However, dancing has two other aspects worth remembering: Dancing as an art form, and dancing as a social grace.

As an art form, dancing puts us in touch with our most intimate self. Not unlike a painter or a poet, it allows us to express our emotions and helps us celebrate our joys. There is truly magic in dancing.

As a social grace, dancing allows us to share our joy with others. It allows us to celebrate our cultural heritage as well as to experience the joys of other cultures through their dances.

Tips for developing the three aspects of dancing.

**Developing your dance skills.** Select your teacher with care. The best teachers put emphasis on the quality of movement rather than quantity of steps. They are also encouraging and make the learning fun. Build a good foundation from the start and you can take your dancing to amazing heights. A good teacher is essential.

**Developing your artistic side to dance.** Have solo dance time. Take time to dance by yourself, when nobody is around. Put on music that inspires you and let yourself go, dance to your heart's content. Also, take time to experience stillness; slow down your movements and feel each action being under your control - "it is in a moment of stillness that the dance begins".

**Developing your social dance grace.** This aspect of dancing has the most range of exploration. Here, we are not only dealing with our own dance skills and emotions, we are actually interconnected with the dance skills and emotional expressions of other people.

To get the most out of the social aspect of dancing, it's helpful to remember that dancing socially is about celebration. You need a willingness to experience the joy of other cultures through their dances. You need courage and persistence if you're a beginner dancer; you need patience and kindness if you're an advanced dancer.

Becoming aware of these three aspects of dancing allows us to make the most of our dance experience. While working towards our goal of improving our skills and dance performance, let the music touch your soul, let dancing be a personal celebration, and share that celebration with others when social dancing.

Happy Dancing,  
Blanche & Emilio