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**DANCING SAFE AT HOME**

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The National Athletic Trainers’ Association’s Council on Practice Advancement Performing Arts Committee is committed to providing dancers with resources to maintain optimal health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Dancers have great opportunities to continue their training safely. If you should need resources beyond what is listed, our committee’s athletic trainers are available to answer your questions and help guide you in the right direction.

Dancers are adaptable, resilient, compassionate, and creative. These attributes will help us all come together during this time and provide a healthy space to maintain a hopeful level of dance practice and strengthen personal and community growth.

**STAY MOVING, INVOLVED, AND CONNECTED TO YOUR ART**

There are numerous resources available online for dancers who would like to continue their dance training. We are listing several that we are aware of and have evaluated as high quality.

**DancingAloneTogether.org**

This site offers a listing of classes for dancers of all levels and genres taught by professionals. Many of these classes are offered free of charge or on a donate-what-you-can basis. Classes are offered through platforms such as Zoom, Instagram Live, and Facebook Live.

**Instagram Account: @FreeDanceTraining**

Similar to Dancing Alone Together, @FreeDanceTraining is an Instagram landing page for free dance classes of all genres, as well as access to specialized dance healthcare practitioners and strength and conditioning coaches. The platform hosts their own IG Live events, in addition to linking to individual IG Live classes/courses.

**Personalized Training**

If you are looking for a more intimate or one-on-one experience, *Dance Magazine* lists teachers offering online private lessons via video conferencing.[**https://www.dancemagazine.com/online-dance-classes-2645462403.html**](https://www.dancemagazine.com/online-dance-classes-2645462403.html)

**Your Favorite Ballet or Modern Company**

Many companies are offering classes each day on Instagram, Facebook, and through Zoom. In addition to dance classes, many companies are also providing classes from their company members who teach yoga, Pilates, Gyrotonics, and other movement classes. Visit their websites, Facebook, and Instagram pages to find schedules of when you can join them.

**FINDING A SAFE SPACE FOR DANCE**

It is important to have a safe space while you are dancing at home. Here are some things to think about while looking for a location to continue your dance practice.

**Flooring**

What you have beneath your feet is possibly the most important aspect of dancing at home. Be sure you can complete what is required of you in a class. This may include doing barre on a linoleum or wood floor to allow your feet to have some slide, but moving to a carpeted space for combinations in center or small jumps. If you do not have a carpeted space or sprung floor at home, you can try small jumps on an exercise mat that has been secured to the floor.

**Footwear**

Along with flooring, adjust your footwear as needed. Practicing ballet barefoot may be more appropriate for a slippery floor surface. If you are unable to jump on a sprung or cushioned surface, you may consider wearing sneakers to support your feet and reduce the forces through your legs.

**Barre**

It is best to use something that is stable or secured to a wall or floor when taking class at barre. There are multiple portable ballet barres available through sites such as Amazon, or you can build your own for a very reasonable cost using PVC pipe from a local home improvement or hardware store. Here is a video example: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ScnnDEgtRuM>. If you do not have a home barre, you still can do your barre work using a countertop or railing. If none of these are workable for you, you can use a chair that has been weighted down to offer stability.

**Surrounding Area**

Be sure the area you are going to use for your class is free of obstacles. You need room to bend, leap, and move across the floor. Clear an area of any furniture, throw rugs, or any elements that may interfere with your movement. If you are jumping, please check your ceiling height. Avoid jumping under light fixtures or ceiling fans.

**MAINTAINING MENTAL HEALTH**

As the COVID-19 pandemic progresses and our lives continue to drastically change, the fear of the unknown may greatly affect our mental well-being. Both mental and physical well-being go hand-in-hand in dance practice, and it is important to spend as much time on your mental wellness as you do on your physical.

**Stay Connected**

Remember, we are all in this together. Stay involved with your friends and fellow dancers via Zoom, Google Hangout, and other videoconference apps. Offer support to those who need it and receive support from friends who are able to offer it.

**Mindfulness Practices**

**Headspace:** Headspace is one of many apps that offer guided meditations, movement exercises, and mindfulness. Their “Weathering the Storm” collection is free during this COVID-19 outbreak.

**Woebot:** Woebot is a very clever phone app that allows you to text messages about how you are feeling and what you are thinking to the “Woebot.” The app then sends you appropriate responses and asks you questions about how you are feeling and what you are doing. It provides a very effective way—using technology we all use everyday—to outwardly express what is going well and what is not.

**Breathwork:** Try Box Breathing to pull you out of the “stress in the now”. The practice of box breathing is the equivalent count of inhale-hold-exhale-hold:

* 4 Counts Inhale
* 4 Counts Hold
* 4 Counts Exhale
* 4 Counts Hold

You can add or subtract to the counts as needed. Focusing on your breathing will directly lower your heartrate and focus your energy into the present moment.

**Minding the Gap:** <https://www.wearemindingthegap.org/>

Minding the Gap is an organization specializing in mental health for dancers. Their website offers helpful resources, including many specifically related to dance.

**Calm Your Fears**

Seek out non-biased information about the COVID-19 outbreak and guidance about moving forward. These can include:

* Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>)
* World Health Organization (<https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>)

**Seek Assistance**

There are several performing arts organizations that have developed great resources for artists affected by COVID-19, including information on unemployment, additional medical providers, and other support resources. These include:

* Dance/USA (<https://www.danceusa.org/resources-preparing-potential-impact-coronavirus>)
* International Association for Dance Medicine and Science (<https://www.iadms.org/page/coronavirus>)
* COVID-19 and Freelance Artists (<https://covid19freelanceartistresource.wordpress.com/>)
* Performing Arts Medical Association (<http://www.artsmed.org/>)

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