Chapter One

Fundamental Aspects
Introduction

This paper provides a written record of a practical, phenomenological, qualitative, dance and healing research project. The researcher's ideas coalesce from three schools of thought. They are health sciences, dance art and faith. Body sciences and homeopathic theory inform the practice of exploratory contemporary dance improvisation. Wholistic (objective 2 p.15) and ethical methods of research practice are applied to the study of a range of dance and health concerns. (Appendix Five – Dance and Healing UWS HERC Protocol No. HE01/021).

Prefatory Remarks

Two inter-current streams of research practice are reported in this paper. One stream is the process of observation of dance and healing phenomena from the researcher's point of view. The other stream covers the substance of dance and healing research practices through human interaction in community relationship.

Formation of the Contents

The form of the paper is in six chapters. Chapter one gathers fundamental aspects of the project together and chapter two sets out frameworks to support practical research action and the researcher's investigative process of reflective observation.

Exploratory dance processes are observed, considered and recorded in the format of thirteen thematic studies contained by chapter three. The fourth chapter encapsulates four relevant Dance and Healing research discoveries. Ongoing observations, surrender, time sense, atmosphere and gifts prove to be core elements of discoveries in the correlation of contemporary dance improvisation and healing dynamics. The conclusions in chapter five articulate outcomes to the aims and objectives from chapter one with additional concluding and conjectural remarks. Bibliography and a short glossary are included.

Some Restrictions on Primary Data

Human ethics research protocols of confidentiality restrict general access to some primary data. Therefore privacy for participants is maintained. However where a participant gives written consent some primary data may be viewed on request by direct communication with the researcher and if the participant gives permission each and every time (Protocol No. HE01/021).

Protocols and Participants

In writing about research procedures the researcher refers to persons who actively dance in dance explorations, dance creation processes and dance performances by the word participants. The term participants include all men and women who perform the dance work in this project. Participants may be trained professional dancers, choreographers,
teachers, students, actors, artists and therapists involved with dance. The term participant also refers to persons who have no dance training and for whom this research project may be a first practical experience of dance.

**Attitudes and Responsibilities**

The research is conducted with approval of UWS Human Ethics Review Committee including protocols for projects involving human participants. An attitude of respect toward each participant as a unique individual (Benson 1996 p.8) is engendered. Independent thinking and informed choice are encouraged. Personal responsibility with regards to matters of health and dance is preferred. Sheila Peace in collaboration with Shakespeare, Atkinson and French confirms the researcher’s approach with regards to both participation and faith.

> To try out a research method and see if it works, then participation can become an act of faith. Greater involvement in the research process should ensure that all participants feel that they own part of the outcome.

*Reflecting on Research Practice* (1993 p.33)

This study centers on people who are students and or staff in tertiary institutions where the researcher is currently employed as a dance lecturer. Christian faith is the common factor for most of the people who participate or observe the dance work.

Participants range in ages between nineteen and sixty years. However the project does include observers and participants from the wider community. Therefore a variety of faiths are represented. Professions include drama, dance and movement therapy, clowning, poetry, literature, music, voice, graphic art, commercial photography, law and homoeopathy. *Appendix One* is a chronology of research performances and presentations that may be useful in gaining an overview of how participants and observers are actively involved in the project over the time frame of three years.

**Faith and Prayer**

Faith emerges as an integral part of the research process for both the researcher and participants. Faith in action by way of prayer from a church community forms a support network for the researcher and the project. Learning and personal development are enhanced by a prayer field that gives validation to participants’ and observers’ healing experiences.

Through prayer participants and observers alike demonstrate a collective interest and involvement such that new and deeper levels of thinking, creative expression and exploration are generated. Heart felt interest is expressed and recorded in photographs, participant journal writings and formal written responses (*see appendices*). Faith affirmed through prayer proves significant in this study. The part that a life of faith can play in the health of a participant is acknowledged.
Community Support
A sense of community involvement is vital in developing this research. Social support, fellowship and the feeling of belonging are a restorative factor in health research (Benson 1996 p.179). Appropriate meeting places, dance spaces, time management, technical equipment, individual needs, boundaries and methods of practice are all negotiated between the researcher and people involved whenever appropriate. The considerable volume of exploratory dance work bears testament to a high level of voluntary commitment as seen in the energetic participation of individuals and groups.

Contemporary Dance Practice
Exploratory contemporary improvisation is the single dance genre selected by the researcher for this research study because it is primarily a creative dance practice of here and now. Training, traditions and preconceived or set creative forms need not be applied to this style of dance. The dance material may originate from abstract, mundane and occupational movement or from any source that participants care to nominate. Participants of all ages and backgrounds may explore, create and perform dance improvisation in a manner relevant to themselves and the exploration at the time of the dance session.

Process and Practice of Observation
The researcher sustains methods of investigation engaging in processes of observation during practical workshop sessions. Practical, exploratory, creative, workshop style dance sessions provide for continuity of practice in observation. Performances, presentations and collaborations in the broader community provide more expansive contexts for observatory research practice.

Contemporary dance improvisation challenges the researcher’s abilities in observation because of the unpredictability of this genre. Initially three particular elements are most relevant to observation in this dance and healing study. They are contemporary dance improvisation, psycho-physiological connections and creative processes. Observation informs the researcher’s core ideas with regard to the three elements. Validation of core ideas is sought after via discussion with participants and other observers and audiences after workshop sessions, public performances, community presentations and reading.

Practical dance explorations arising from workshop style sessions continue for the duration of the researcher’s candidature. Thus observation, interpretation and documentation of phenomena are continuously under review. As more dance and healing connections are made the practical workshop sessions show many fluctuations in dance content and participant involvement. Adjustments and reordering of practical procedures is achieved via negotiations between the researcher and participants, colleagues and employers.
Throughout the time of candidature research emphasis remains on the practice of active investigative observation of dance and healing phenomena for the purpose of learning, discovery and dissemination of new knowledge.

**Research Tensions**

In the heart and mind of the researcher the cumbersome nature of administrative operations in conjunction with dance research is given a second place. Emphasis is directed towards discovery and communication about healing dance phenomena as the researcher's priority. The tension between required formalities and phenomenology is tempered by the researcher's faith that all things will work together for good. Faith as written about in this paper is informed by Biblical teachings specifically Romans chapter eight verse twenty-eight. These three, formality phenomenology and faith make a cord of three strands that holds this paper together.
Aims and Objectives

The aims of this research are to explore the process of healing in dance creation and dance performance.

These aims are to be achieved by the following objectives.

1. To bring together learning, research and community in an innovative, productive and experiential form.

2. To engage in wholistic research practice. The researcher seeks to make connections between a participant’s inner world (Logan 1998 p.1) inclusive of mind, body, soul and spirit as an individual person and in relationship with community. That is to perceive the inter-relatedness of all aspects of a person.

3. To devise, direct, facilitate, compose and present a practical dance project specific to the exploration of healing phenomenon in dance.

4. To search closely and carefully for processes of healing within contemporary dance improvisation.

5. To observe and write about the mentoring and discipleship of subtle, spoken, spacial, musical embodied textual forms of healing dance so commonly experienced yet rarely documented.

6. To investigate and by a course of inquiry identify a range of ideas that informs the pathways of healing through contemporary dance and in turn form new paradigms for further research.
The Researcher’s Job Description

In simple terms the researcher

- devises and completes a pilot study for the research work as part of a qualifying program for postgraduate studies.

- is accepted as a postgraduate research student Masters Arts (Honours)–Contemporary Arts University of Western Sydney.

- negotiates for available dance space and time for practical research sessions

- applies for and receives Human Research Ethics approval

- applies ethical research practices throughout

- recruits participants to work individually and in groups

- sets in motion a number of practical workshop style sessions

- observes dance explorations generated in research sessions

- observes the condition of participants in the research environment

- searches out and examines relevant areas of literature

- observes the out workings of research activity via participants interactions in the wider dance community

- interprets and documents dance activity and healing phenomenon

- seeks out verification of delivery, observation and interpretative methods

- collects and collates responses from some participants and observers when formal consent is given

- collects data, reflects, writes up and reports on all of the above
Hypothesis

Dance consciously or unconsciously can by its very process from idea or feeling, through movement to performance work and beyond, form a catalyst for healing. The researcher defines healing as a regenerative, transforming, restorative and creative process towards being well. The process of healing may be natural, spontaneous or supernatural and include the whole person and their situation in life.

Contemporary dance improvisation is the medium for healing explorations. The researcher defines contemporary dance improvisation as a genre relevant to the here and now without prescribed creative restrictions, forms, contexts or techniques. Or in the words of a participant when writing about contemporary dance improvisation:

Contemporary improvisation does not demand what you can do but to move in a way that is you and to explore from that point.

(Appendix Four – Participants’ Responses answer to Question 4 – code 18. C)

For both observer and participant internal and external awareness of the more subtle expressions of what is central to the inner state created by disease can become heightened through dance. This awareness opens the way for healing and the human being as a whole can permeate, transform, relinquish or at very least transcend the conditions of disease.

In keeping with the researcher’s professional practice of classical homoeopathic medicine disease is seen as a disturbance that affects the whole being and not something local. This disturbance neither originates nor is local to the mind or the body alone. It is at a level deeper than both and embodied prayer can give access to the deeper level. Homoeopathy is wholistic in the treatment of diseases and utilizes a reflective pathway to healing.

The reflective theoretical methods of homoeopathy draw parallel with methods of reflective practice in contemporary dance improvisation. The disease may be revealed in the process of dance creation. Prayer can encompass the dance and healing journey, inform reflective thought and the development of theoretical concepts.

Dance may be seen as metaphor in motion (Frank cited in Friedler and Glazer 1997 p.239). The embodied language of metaphor in dance creates an objective field of experience useful in the observation and experience of healing processes. The researcher utilizes the objective observational practices of Homoeopathy in correlation with observations of the explorations in dance improvisation. Objectivity creates a distance that has an empowering effect for participant and observer. This objective field of experience may also be created and supported by prayer.
Chapter Two

Frameworks of the Study
Context

Early Connections
Some of the earliest connections between dance and health are to be found in the pure and ancient forms of tribal and sacred dance such as the Increase Ceremonies still performed today by aborigines of the Aranda tribe of central Australia (Dean 1967 p.36). To commune through dance with the nature of being with one’s self in relationship (Hackney 1998 p.14) with others in the social and physical environment is a fundamental unity of wholeness in mind, body, soul and spirit (Anderson 1997 p.247) (De Sola 2001 v75 i12 p.62).

Methods of Handing on
Methods of handing on an integral approach to well being innate to primitive dance (Friedler and Glazer 1997 p.269) are emerging in contemporary dance. Dance is again a medium for good medicine. Today the healing properties of dance so commonly experienced by those who love to dance operate within a variety of frameworks. Dancers, teachers and choreographers often hand on concepts, theories and findings specific to healing and dance unconsciously (Friedler and Glazer 1997 p.2). The mentoring and discipleship of healing dance knowledge moves through subtle, spoken, spatial, musical and embodied textual forms (Albright 1997 p.152), sometimes undeclared and rarely written down.

Formalisation in this aspect of dance seems to be overlooked. Research and literature in dance medicine and dance therapy are slow to establish in Australia compared with America (J. Exiner and D. Kelynach 1994) and the United Kingdom (H. Payne 1992). These concerns reflect the researcher’s interest in generating activity into dance and healing practices, literature and education.

If contemporary dance is often a catalyst for reading, uncovering or contacting awareness from within when and how does the contemporary form become a medium for healing? What working conditions are prevalent when healing is in motion? Does the process of dance creation hold a vital key to enable access to the movement of healing? Perhaps healing potential is part of a dancer’s make up? The researcher will seek to address these questions and to identify the medicinal action of dance by methods of exploration, observation and reciprocal interaction.

Preference for Wholistic Practice
Creative processes activated in dance and healing require research methods that are phenomenological (Thomas 1995 p.170) and qualitative (Hanstein cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.142). Therefore the practice is wholistic, participatory and people centered (De Sola 2001 v75 i12 p.62). Consideration is given to acknowledge the inner world of a person and to make sense of the inter-relatedness of all aspects of that person with regard to
their life in the world around them (Logan 1998 p.2). Interpretive skills are required in order to read the figurative expressions of wholistic dance phenomena (Lavender 1996 p.82).

Exploratory work seeks to address the mind, body, soul and spirit of dance participants via integrative methods. That is to accept the interdependent nature of all aspects of the person and facilitate the metabolism of experiences in order to achieve integration (H'Doubler 1957 p.62). In this instance wholistic dance practice strives to perceive the multidimensional whole person as part of a bigger picture and simultaneously direct sufficient attention to the inclusion of small and individual details (Logan 1998 p.2). The capacity to hold and communicate polarities and ambiguity is a restorative strength within dance art practice. Wholeness at once transcends and holds all things together within the movement of opposites (Dalley 1987 p.168).

Contemporary dance improvisation with free association, imagery and the unconscious, stillness and spirituality inform pathways of healing relevant to the study. The theoretical framework is an interweaving of the art of contemporary dance and wholistic medical science conducted within a community of Christian faith. The directions of healing, reading of signs (Vithoulkas 1981 p.91) and interpretation of experiences are observed and recorded in correlation with the ethics, principles and practices of the researcher's chosen professions, dance art and homoeopathic medicine.
Exploratory Contemporary Dance Improvisation as a Medium for Healing

Aesthetics
Within contemporary dance styles it is possible to improvise across a range of aesthetic pathways. Moving through minimal, sculptural, abstract, narrative, meditative and biographical improvisation the research encompasses a broad range of dance qualities. A distinguishing feature of exploratory contemporary dance improvisation is that it does not to draw from traditional forms with regard to vocabulary, structure or content. Dance activity in this research however does have a single and identifiably consistent aesthetic quality of reflective awareness (Rockwell cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.194) (Allbright 1997 p.5).

Inner Reality
The researcher observes the participants being drawn (Dossey 1993 cites Jung p.70) inward as they improvise and explore in dance. An atmosphere comes around the participants when the focus of their attention becomes inward bound. The atmosphere is one of thoughtfulness and a depth of process comparative with other more sedentary activities such as meditation, reading, studying or contemplation. The differences here are that the participants are moving in the dance space whilst reading from a text that is embodied. Participants are expressing inner dialogues from a creative process that is generated from within each individual dancer.
Dance improvisations inclusive of a vast array of different kinds of movement are performed before the researcher. However attention to dance material that contains reflective embodied expressions of a participant's inner reality (Tufnell & Crickmay 1993 p.48) is most interesting because inner reality is a key to the investigation of healing processes.

**Intimate Connections**

Contemporary improvised dance as a medium for healing work is the researcher's preferred option because the form easily engages all senses in reflective and meditative states of being in the moment of each movement. The whole person is engaged as the sensual and spiritual become non-dualistic (Schroeder 1995 Ch.2) in meditative dance. The non-dual phenomenon is a contact of body with soul where they set one another dancing in harmonious motion.

Harmony and wholism are noted as significant factors in the process of healing. Hugo Rahner describes non-dualism as an experience most intimate in nature (Ignatius the Theologian 1968 p.182) where the connection between body and soul could be described as something that occurs by way of an affect they have on the delicate membrane that lies between them.

Contemporary dance improvisation performed in this project may appear boring, random, indefinable or even chaotic compared with more conventional modes of dance. Without tradition, form, style, technique, ritual and theatricality the dance improvisation in the exploratory sessions of this project is a bare art form. Pressures to conform to a particular pattern of movements or come up to an expected standard are not imposed by the researcher, the participants or this contemporary dance style. Each individual participant is given space to dance spontaneously in untrained ways (Turner cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.109). When released from conventional dance frameworks and encouraged to explore the dance material that emerges from within improvisation sets in motion a most intimate communication (Moreland 1999 p.13).

The improvising participant can be in a state of communion within the act of dance creation. Inner landscapes and connections with reflective and meditative states of being expressed in these improvisations can engage all senses and absorb the participant completely in the
creative process of dance making. The search for healing phenomena appears to influence participants towards the more reflective and meditative aspects of exploratory contemporary dance improvisation.

**Specific Correlations**

Dance is often a catalyst for reading, uncovering or contacting an inner awareness, it is specifically so in this study. The process of contemporary dance improvisation in this research is a phenomenon of the moment. In correlation with healing the spontaneity of improvised dance may seem even more ephemeral, transcendent, subtle and evaporative than it already is. The subtleties of healing and improvisation however are sustainable and measurable and in effect could prove vital links between the two.

The improvisations may be captivating and atmospheric to observe however time in the sessions is not given to prepare specific dance material with an audience in mind. If on occasion the participants perform in a way that is entertaining it is more likely to be because they are absorbed in the process of exploration rather than because they are performing a prepared or theatrical style of dance. Centeredness and an exploratory, inward focus from each participant are characteristics of this contemporary improvisational dance work.

Very few theatrical elements such as those seen in commercial and theatrical dance performance are relevant to the study. The participants are not drilled; trained or rehearsed. The dance work is simply exploration (Rockwell cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.194). In terms of context the reflective style of dance improvisation in this project is more a medium of performance art rather than dance as entertainment or show business. This distinction is intended to help identify and clarify the characteristic style of dance relevant to this research. *(Appendix Four – Participants' Responses answers to question four)*
Boundaries of the Study

Participation
This research is people centered and all participants are volunteers. The range of exploration is bounded by the abilities, needs, requests and availability of each volunteer participant within the time frame of the researcher's candidature. The particular dance focus and health status of each participant produces a wide range of possibilities, some limitations and infinite variation.

Harmonious Method
The intention is to draw together the subtle threads of healing experience in the performance of dance improvisation. Therefore the method is one that evolves rather than one that is set in place. Boundaries are not imposed upon the participants. A harmonious resonance (Vithoulkas 1998 p.93) is sought after whereby people, places and times can come into balance. Explorations tend to move at a pace and with the degree of involvement a participant can allow. Progress appears to be a gradual procedure however intermittent bursts of activity bubble up and surprise every one from time to time.

Subtle yet solid borders are defined in the researcher's selection of wholistic principles. Homoeopathic thought designs an approach towards each participant as an individual. An attitude of respect reduces possible conflicts or digressions in regard to matters of faith and cultural diversity.

Elements to Compare and Contrast
The style of exploration delves into matters of faith, belief, and personal awareness, spiritual and social concerns in a reflective and meditative manner. These elements allow for small ventures into comparison and differentiation. The combination in design of respect for each individual and for community interactions also facilitates sufficient depth and breadth of enquiry for the researcher.

Because participants are between the ages of sixteen and sixty years, with many different disease conditions, diverse cultural influences and dance backgrounds broad scopes for variation are possible. As a result contrasting elements in individual and group dynamics impact on the investigation and enrich the quality of active participation and interaction.

Limiting Time and Space
The time frame for the over all project is three years part time study. In terms of daily practice boundaries of time and space are by necessity rather fluid. Fluctuations in participant interest and energy within a project such as this are perhaps inevitable. The voluntary nature of
participation and the floating world of dance call for flexibility. Thus attitudes to time management require ongoing adjustment on the part of the researcher.

Practical dance research sessions are between one and two hours in duration and occur on average once or twice per week. This time frame is chosen so as to avoid undue stress or fatigue on participants. And this boundary remains firm throughout the project.

Allowing time to elapse between sessions for the processing of experiences is thought to be beneficial in some cases. Alternatively continuity of practice is established through weekly sessions in a series of up to fourteen weeks. Continuity is a considerable advantage for development of group dynamics, creative processes and participant confidence in dance exploration.

Priority is always given to allow time and space for the unexpected to happen. Therefore the fundamental details of setting up and setting in motions the constructs of the study are adaptable rather than stringent. Opening out the boundaries allows for a greater range of possibilities in exploration, observation, recording, writing and discovery.

**Formal Boundaries**

Participants are given formal invitations. Written and verbal information, consent forms and response forms are made available with invitations (Appendix Three). The recording of this study is mainly note taking, reading and reflection and writing up. A few video recordings show segments of the dance work and give some indication of quality and quantity of dance activity. Two audiotapes include conversations between participants and the researcher. A number of photographs and art works generated by participants are included as resources for the study.

**Margins of Focus**

Whilst practical dance action has primacy the researcher does not try to make things happen. Exploration with an aim to discover is accentuated in both observation and dance action. As a consequence of this active, exploratory approach the researcher interprets what the participants appear to experience. Readings are sought out for validation of interpretations and discoveries before and during observation and writing up processes. The essential framework of wholistic practice is a mainstay and acts as a springboard into the unknown and underpins each discovery.

**Broader Considerations**

This research paper is neither final nor definitive. Rather it is an assimilation of ideas and interpretations to be considered and added to. More exact ways of observing and evaluating the healing processes of dance are waiting to be uncovered. The more details elicited the more confusion and overlapping of details will occur (Sherr 1994 p.3).
Dance and Healing

It is beyond the scope of this study to focus more precisely upon specific points or propose systematic ground rules and a sound basis. To fully utilize the healing potential in dance a vast amount of research is still to be done. The healing properties of dance are a positive force waiting to be tapped. This research in physical practice and within this paper is a direct attempt to tap that force and instigate future work toward the formalisation of dance and healing practices.
Research Sessions

Session Formats
Dance sessions, workshops, classes and rehearsals are generally delivered through fairly predictable formats. An easily recognisable format in dance circles is one that commences with warm-up exercises followed by the main work of the day and linking into full physical exertion. Usually there is a time of wind down after full exertion and then closure of one kind or another.

By comparison dance sessions in this instance have neither precise formats nor set conventions as such. The researcher has a conscious preference for a mode of work that enables structural arrangements to form afresh whenever possible.

When viewed objectively recurrent and seasonal themes surface in the practical working sessions and follow up conversations. In addition coherent and retrievable improvisational sequences are also seen to develop if participants dance in the project for extended periods. In hindsight and from the researcher’s perspective ways of setting a session in motion and the direction of that session is seen to take on a degree of form relative to particular group dynamics of participants in a session or a cluster of sessions.

Inclusive Participation
Initially the perceived needs of the participants are solicited and used to shape an entry point into the improvisation work. For example the way the participants are in themselves on the day of the session (Schneer 1994 p.72). If there are sore muscles, relaxation and stretching moves are improvised to bring relief. If participants arrive with injuries, emotional problems, resistant moods or recent trauma all are embraced and acknowledged and incorporated into the overall dance improvisation process.

From beginnings such as these a spirit of inclusion, exploration, play and innovation develops. Nevertheless the researcher may intervene in order to avoid unnecessary repetition or digression. Also the direction of dance making is monitored so as to prevent introduction of any unethical practices.

When a session is showing signs of fragmentation or digression and participants are resistant to or unfocused on the exploratory or creative process they may be brought into the research focus with improvisation that utilizes proprioceptive mechanisms (Todd 1959 p.39). The researcher introduces an idea or a theme for improvisation that will gather participant’s attention towards self-observation and knowing exactly how, when and where their body is in the movement (Hackney 1998 p.4). Also when improvisation allows for self-expression the session is seen to align towards the research focus again.
From moment to moment due consideration is given to responses and requests from participants in terms of exertion level, pace and scope of inquiry. Thus the content from session to session shows many variables.

**Taking the Pressure Off**

No pressure to perform what so ever is brought to bear on any participant throughout the entire process (*Appendix Five – Protocol No. HEO1/021*). When deemed necessary an option may be given to simply take time out and observe other participants dancing. This option is experienced as a comfort or inspiration to those who enjoy time out to watch. Others tend to experience an increase of their frustration levels. Encouragement is afforded and value given to spontaneous verbal responses, innovation and initiative from all dance participants. The researcher directs proceedings so as to incorporate all of the above.
Creative Processes

Creative processes operating throughout the research are evoked from the life processes of the participants (Schneer 1994 p.102). The researcher takes into account life experiences and the way those experiences are viewed by the participants. This inclusive method of dance creation involves the participant as a whole person. The interweaving of content, color and texture of daily life (Schneer 1994 p.25 and p.114) with the linear creative processes of dance improvisation ensures corporeal contemporary practice. The dance is created by participants who have an opportunity to fully inhabit their bodies in an artistic expression of what life is for them (Hackney 1998 p.214) (Cunningham 1998 p.128).

When life processes inform improvisation the emergent patterns become coherent, easily translatable and reproducible if and when required. Continuity in the cross-flow of references from the lives of participants to dance making and back again enables participants and researcher to see patterns of movement emerge in the dance space (Tuffnell & Crickmay 1993 p.130). The movements are expressions or extensions of experiences from the conscious or unconscious world of the participant. Some are the patterns of habit (Hackney 1998 p.13); some are drawn from memories and feelings. Other patterns appear to be repeated over and over until the participant finds a sense of relief, release or relaxation.

Creative processes generated from life processes give entry to and correlate with healing processes. These creative and healing dance process are directly accessed through the medium of self-reflective (Schneer 1994 p.22) and exploratory, prayerful and meditative dance improvisation.
The Challenge in the Mystery of Healing

Meeting the Challenge in the Mystery of Healing

What is healing? Initially the researcher meets the challenge in the mystery of healing with a search in definitions of healing. It seems that many authors ask this question and rather than labour with this point the researcher chooses to settle for the following.

Pythagoras said that the most divine art was

that of healing. And if the healing art is most divine, it must occupy itself with the soul as well as with the body; for no creature can be sound so long as the higher part in it is sickly.

Appollonius of Tyana
(cited by Larry Dossey, M.D. 1993 Healing Words p.197)

Five key elements cited by Dossey are in accordance with this project. The divine, healing, art, body and soul are all crucial stand-points for both Pythagoras and this research. Recognition of the hierarchy in healing towards the highest part of the human organism is also in correlation with the researcher's current understanding. Also as the project is established and practice evolves the mystery of healing is seen as quite capable of defining itself.
(Researcher's definition of healing is shown under Creative Places p.49)

Is the Art of Dance Good for Health?

Ted Shawn husband and dance partner of Ruth St. Dennis believes that dance can heal. Dorothy Buck in her book The Dance Of Life quotes Ted Shawn as saying

I believe that dance has the power to heal mentally and physically. I believe that true education in the art of dance, is is education of the whole man

(Buck 1987 p.3)

Similarly the researcher believes that the energetic, creative, expressive and artistic elements of dance art today are essentially pro-life. In addition social culture in the dance industry expects and requires a professional dancer to be sound in mind, body and communal interactions (Friedlander and Gazer 1997 p.185). The very state of the art demands high levels of health from today's dance performers (Wooliams 1978 p.116).

Professional Dance Expectations

High health and performance expectations create all kinds of pressures on every professional dancer. To keep up with expectations and performance demands dancers may develop patterns
of behavior that lead to the suppression of the symptoms of illness. Compensatory behavior, denial and other coping mechanisms (McCabe 1997 p.292) can disguise a true picture of health. Consequently suppression of symptoms can mask a dancer’s real health status. Today’s professional theatrical environments of highly refined dance training and performance exemplify this point more than ever before (Woolliams 1978 p.118).

The Value of Appearances in Social Culture
Generally speaking a state of health displays qualities such as vibrant energy, glowing complexion and clear thinking (Livingston 1991 p.14). On the surface the characteristics of health are easily recognizable features and common in everyday life. In the simplest of terms a sense of feeling better and being well again after a time illness is hardly a mystery because we know when we feel well (McCabe 1997 p.115).

Disease is often seen to run a course or alternatively time is said to heal all wounds and health can simply return. Of course the signs of health are common knowledge however the actual process from sickness to health is less obvious and often unidentifiable. In life when the signs and symptoms of illness lead to terrible suffering and all manner of treatment and medication fails to bring about a cure the mystery of healing is very deep indeed (Vithoulkas 1998 p.249). In the face of human suffering how can an art form such as dance be considered as an option for healing?

Mysterious Soul Life
When dealing directly with symptoms of sickness and disease a creative and artistic dance framework can effect improvement of a scale and type that may be surprising compared with conventional medical models. Connections between healing and dance indicate a range of awesome possibilities. One important aspect concerns that which is termed “the mysterious nature of the soul” (I. Gawler 1997 p.199).

The work of uncovering healing dance reveals a process of literal complexity for the researcher. Disease is the covering in conjunction with a social culture of denial and unknowing. This disease covering produces an unconscious, shadowy soul life resulting in division and loss of balance within an individual (Twentyman 1989 p.299). The intimate nature and complex subtleties of disease contribute to the mystery of healing (I. Gawler 1984 p.181).

Matters of the Spirit
The soul can find renewal and fullness when dance is created and performed in the Spirit (Benson 1996 p.216) (Observation Nine – Choice and Thoughts). The Spirit referred to here may be the Spirit known as Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost is described in many Christian scriptures. The Holy Spirit is recorded as a Spirit with gifts of healing (Holy Bible NIV 1Corinthians: 12 1984).
The spirit (Kreemer 1987 p.74) in dance can creatively address difficulties in life and bring about a sense of balance and health. If the Spirit or spirit in dance is vital to healing processes the mystery has yet another dimension. Human spirit, soul (Humphrey 1959 p.169), the spirit in dance and the Holy Spirit are topics infrequently under discussion in mainstream dance as compared with aspects such as technique, body image, nutrition, composition and performance.

With the inclusion of matters spiritual the researcher is not likely to be able to tie the healing properties of dance up in a neat, articulate intellectual package (Peck 1993 p.81). Who among us can do such a thing? The Holy Spirit, the spirit in dance and indeed spirit as in Freud’s terminology die Seele, the soul is much more than cognition (Seligman 1994 p.245).

In the fact of daily physical dance practice spiritual dimensions of this research are absolutely good in nature and expression. The improvisation work is seen to touch on Holy Spirit, human spirit, dance in the spirit and dance moved by the Holy Spirit. Spiritual aspects are more often subtler than words spoken or written and perhaps far more mysterious to the researcher than the mystery of healing. However matters of spirit are systematically addressed in this project because they are vital and intrinsic to wholistic practice (Observation Nine – Choice and Thoughts).

With contemporary dance improvisation as a medium for medicine the signs and processes of healing may be less obvious than other healing modalities. In addition the healing properties of dance are perhaps active only under certain circumstances and even then may not be that easy to interpret? What is clear to the researcher is that healing dance has many layers and the shroud of mystery is partly because of the covered state within a participant’s soul (Dossey 1993 p.81) and partly due to the power of the spiritual dynamics that are called into play when healing is in motion and dance creation is in action.

Creative Places

In this paper the researcher defines healing as a regenerative, transforming, restorative and creative process. From this definition the factor of an active creative process is absolutely fundamental. Perhaps dance creation is a process running in parallel with the creative process of healing?

The potential for this research to succeed could hang on ways to access the movement and direction of healing via processes of dance creation. Also when creative practice is fueled with spiritual qualities such as faith, hope and love (Dossey 1993 chapter 6) the possibility for a healing outcome gathers in momentum.

The ageless faith, hope and love (Holy Bible NIV 1984 1Cor:13) could be the life-sustaining foods vital for soul health. If dance creation and healing come from the same creative place
and that place is in and of the Spirit and that Spirit is the Holy Spirit the researcher supposes dance as being a competent medium for healing?

The Directions of Healing
The process of dance creation in contemporary dance improvisation moves from within to without. When a healing process moves in the same direction from the inside out perhaps the two can move in synchrony. Accompanied by signs of unity and harmony (Peck 1993 p.233) healing and creative dance processes moving from within the dancer to without may be acceptable evidence (Van Gelder 1985 p.91). Therefore is it necessary for the participant (in this research practice) dance creation and the direction of healing to move in one accord in order to sustain a curative process?

Defining Possibilities
Homoeopathic physician Constantine Herring (McCabe 1997 p.67) defines a law of cure that is perhaps useful as a guideline for this research. Herring's Law upholds a tripod of indications as to the direction healing can take in a person who is recovering from disease.

First, a healing process can move from within to without. That is to say disease symptoms will leave the human organism from the most essential and deepest, internal organs first and progress outwards to more superficial and external organs. Second, the signs of healing may commence from above and move in a downward direction as disease regresses from the head towards the toes. Third, the healing may move in a reverse order in symptoms of the onset of disease.

Application of Herring's three basic directives could enable the researcher to more readily observe and map the movement and direction of healing in dance. The graphic evidence of a map (see Appendix Ten) to show the way is a possible tool for demystification. However complications may arise if a participant is host to more than one disease. Another relevant deliberation is for any participant who may carry residual trauma or negative side effects from medication. Disease influences can be multi layered and reinforced by a lifetime of negative experience and range in intensity from subtle disturbances to gross pathology (Sankaran 1991 p.44).

Therefore the dance and healing journey of a participant may not conform to basic directions of Herring's Law. The healing process may be in a pattern that crosses over and or mutates. Also research conditions that effect healing for one individual may not work with another participant or another disease for that matter.

Confusion over entirely relevant matters such as the above can easily add to the mysterious nature of healing. The direction of healing may possibly be too broad a topic to contain within the parameters of this project therefore a fundamental view is sought by the researcher? A
fundamental view can to cap any potential confusion and sustain the research focus towards observation of the healing properties of dance.

In addition an overly analytical and cautious approach into solving the mystery of healing particularly in association with dance could produce a maze of complexity and detail far beyond the scope of this project. The researcher is keen to sustain an emphasis on observation, investigation and interpretation of practical dance improvisation as this genre relates to healing. The emphasis towards open observation of exploratory dance art may be lost in overly analytical approaches to the articulation of healing directions.

An early decision is made to sustain an emphasis towards the creative and artistic elements of this research practice in respect to the mystery of healing and dance. Creative and artistic elements are again the selected preference in order to reign in investigations and maintain a manageable framework for the process of observation.

**Dancing in the Light**

Spontaneity, vitality and the lighter sides of life are markedly obvious in the practical components of the research. The participants have a good time. As in any successful healing medium play, laughter, fun and a sense of humour are essential elements. So too it seems when dance is the medicine. Many sessions are taken over by an effortless light heartedness amongst the participants. What a welcome relief this is for a somewhat overly earnest researcher.

In the recording of this project few references to laughter and happiness are made mainly because the ideas that laughter is the best medicine seem so glaringly obvious to the researcher.
Also ideas about laughter and happiness are not in the researcher's mind in the preparatory phases of the project. Never the less the researcher enjoys explorations most of the time simply because the sheer enjoyment expressed by participants is highly infectious. The words of Hippocrates influence the researcher's line of thought as cited from Healing Essence.

What you should put first in all the practice of our art is how to make the patient well; and if he can be made well in many ways one should choose the least troublesome

(Gaynor 1995 p.vii cites Hippocrates)

Boundaries for the Researcher

To facilitate healing with the medicinal qualities of dance the researcher assumes a role somewhat similar to a midwife (Dalley 1987 p.159). The aim is to guide and assist participants towards healing via creative dance processes that are primarily rights of passage. The structure of the project creates the supportive environment where healing can happen and the researcher works both empathetically and objectively to facilitate dance and healing. This role requires a leap of faith and stretches all the researcher's personal boundaries (Benson 1996 p.217).

Selective Focus

Surely healing is a timeless subject of infinite possibilities and mystery. Manner of belief is a proving ground for healing in many cultures and medical systems across current and historical times. As in any research practice where healing is a core theme the workings of nature’s law of cure, placebo effect (Sherr 1994 p.37) and nocebo effect may have considerable impact (Benson 1996 p.35). Phenomena of this kind are acknowledged at this point as they carry a touch of mystery and perhaps all three are a part of what occurs in this project. The research focus is not however attentive in the areas of nature cure, placebo and nocebo.

Mission

The search for healing properties in dance provokes an air of mystery, as do matters of the soul and Spirit. The researcher aspires to see participants well and fully alive in the act of dance and the work is fueled by a sense of a mission. Inner strength is gathered from the participant's Christian faith in the love of God. The power of the love of God is their hope and all boundaries expand in the spiritual sense because of this. Therefore the researcher embarks on this research with hope (Gaynor 1956 p.168) and in a spirit of mission and ready to adjust boundaries in the quest for dance and healing phenomena.
Chapter Three

Observations of Dance Explorations
Introduction

Observation of dance improvisations is the researcher’s principal activity in searching for the correlation of dance and healing phenomena. The method of observation is congruent with classical Homoeopathic practice. That is to say freedom from prejudice, sound senses and fidelity in tracing the picture of what is seen (Hahnemann 1988, aphorism 83) all play a part in the style observation. To observe what is going on and what participants are doing in any given moment without preconceived notions or judgment, to witness without analysis and to be completely focused (Shankaran 1991 p.196).

The researcher aims towards a perception of the states, feelings and expressions of participants as they improvise. At all times maintaining a wholistic view inclusive of body, mind, soul and spirit of the dance action as it happens. Therefore the researcher nurtures an attitude of perceptual openness towards the improvisations and considers this point essential in development of observation skills. Needless to say critical assumptions are best set aside (Lavender 1996 p.132).

The research is a reflective practice and involves the researcher in some struggles. One struggle is perpetuated in a process of formulating ways to interpret, write about and consolidates what is seen. The sense of a struggle arises because the medium of improvisational dance performance is an ever changing and ever moving point of reference. Boundaries shift quickly from one moment to the next and contexts, description, analysis and meaning are under continual review in an openness to explore and discover (Lavender 1996 p.82). In addition observation ranges across formal and informal situations so as to include as many variables as practicable.

Practical dance workshop sessions, rehearsals and performances are the frameworks for the healing medium of contemporary dance improvisation. Participants are mainly students and staff from two different tertiary institutions where the researcher is employed. The institutions operate as extensions of the Christian church namely Christian City Church and Wesley Mission. Influences from these two communities of faith are tangible spiritual, practical and professional supports for the researcher.

What follows now is an anthology of observations brought together in a series of thirteen themes.
Observation One –

Relaxation Facilitates Improvisation

The topic of relaxation is a pivotal support for practical explorations into Dance and Healing (Benson 1998 p.133). By methods of equating relaxation with health and appropriate action (I. Gawler 1984 p.41) the researcher consolidates wholistic principles and brings together a variety of dance research practices. Relaxation facilitates Dance and Healing explorations.

Pain Free Relaxation
Relaxation techniques can lead a participant to move and dance in ways that are free from anxiety, stress and pain (Fitt 1982 p.294). A participant who has not had the experience of performing well in a state of pain free relaxation questions if such conditions are really possible? Many people with dance experience have an idea that if there is no pain or tension, stress or struggle there is nothing to gain.

Pain Free Dance
The researcher gradually introduces the benefits of relaxation via a wide range of improvisational dance practices. This means that participants are given ample opportunity to experience pain free dance. A research participant is enabled to experience relaxation physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually and socially. Thereby participants may experience for themselves pain free dance and draw their own conclusions about relaxation.

Three Avenues of Relaxation
After a time of settling into the research protocols and practices and when initial negotiations are complete between participants and researcher three avenues of relaxation are selected for application during exploratory sessions. Simple techniques to relax body, mind and emotions are introduced first. Relaxation to bring about altered states of being comes next. The third approach applies relaxation as an entry point to creative improvisational processes.

Relaxation Techniques
The positioning of simple relaxation techniques early within a session time is an effective placement for such practices. Tensions and stresses can be dealt with in approximately the first twenty minutes of a session. Relaxation techniques fit easily into the introductory warm up or at times when participants show signs of tension overload or fatigue. Initial restful positions and easy movements are given a relaxation focus by application of autosuggestion, mental and emotional imagery, breathing, and body awareness.
**Benefits of Deepening Relaxation**

Participants are seen to adjust and adapt postural placement and alignment of the body in motion as relaxation deepens through practice. When bodies and minds are loose and free then artistic, creative and exploratory pursuits are quick to follow (Turner cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.101). Characteristic patterns of in built tension naturally vary from one individual to another and are similarly released in unique variation. An experience of relaxation and ease in dance improvisation gives physical relief to both a raw beginner with many physical and creative inhibitions and a professional dancer who may have a lifetime of set tension patterns and dance concepts (Sandler cited in Friedler and Glazer 1997 p.201).

**Appropriate Actions**

Through repetition of a collection of suitable movements, shapes and postures relaxation can become easily accessible. The researcher draws from a number of small rituals (Bartenieff 1980 p.149) commonly used for the relief of tension and stress to form a combination of themes for exploratory purposes.

**Selection of Common Rituals for Improvisational Themes**

The motion of a mother as she rocks her baby to sooth, comfort and calm the infant ready for sleep demonstrates how the movement of rocking can be beneficial. When bodies become stiff and cramped the desire to stretch and change position is irresistible. Stretching and shifting body weight from one position to another are familiar ways to relieve tension and fatigue. Tired aching legs are propped up on a chair in order to find some measure of relief. In bed the body turns and rolls over to make a more comfortable position for restful sleep. In times of stress or when life is very busy an escape into the imagination and dream of a holiday can bring the mind to a state of relaxation.

The researcher brings together a selection of moves from observing activities such as those listed above. The combination may include rolling, rocking, swaying, swinging, floating, propping, stretching and stopping. A range of combinations are shown in more detail in the following pages.

As participants become involved in exploring the movements and postures a loose structure gradually forms. Ways to join and flow the simple movements one into the other are spontaneously accessed as relaxation takes over. Phrases, sequences and sections link and transpose into thematic studies and dance dialogues.

**Transitions from Movement Rituals into Dance**

Beginning from an easy to grasp combination the participants are seen to make the transition from movement into contemporary dance improvisation (Thomas 1995 p.29) with an absolute minimum of tension or stress. The creative process simply clicks in and the inner world of the participant is soothed and settled in an orderly way by a relaxation experience drawn from common rituals in association with relaxation.
Total Involvement

To maximize creative flow and avoid any sense of programming the more traditional modes of instruction, teaching programs and training are not followed in the application of relaxation (Rockwell cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.192). The researcher does not give instructions with regard to set order, how much repetition or a designated point for conclusion.

More importantly focus is not actually directed towards the release of tension and stress (Gaynor 1956 p.57). Notably the purpose of promoting ease and relaxation may not necessarily be declared. Contrary attitudes and a resistance to relaxation are common when participants are physically tense, over stimulated or bearing compensation for disturbance on a deeper level. However when relaxation is introduced indirectly opposition is minimized, tensions and over stimulation loosen (Observation Eleven – Choice And Imagery).

Attention and time are given to allow for total involvement in the experience of each movement. As a result participants enjoy exploring the collection of simple, familiar movements just to see where they may be taken and what might happen. When emphasis is given to exploration and awareness rather than instruction an atmosphere of harmony (Grieg 1994 p.xiii) is easily produced.

Key to Correlation of Processes

As a result of this unimposing approach some unplanned yet invaluable aspects of relaxation surface and augment dance creation processes in the improvisations. At the outset the movement vocabulary is almost second nature for the participants and therefore simple to grasp. The seemingly simple collection of movements actually links into a vast creative field for dance making. Relaxation becomes a starting place or a key into the correlation of dance and healing processes.

Physiological Shifts

Participants are refreshed and fascinated by dance material originating in these moves. The researcher observes the physiological shifts towards ease and enjoyment and allows space for methods of self-referencing, autosuggestion and creative imagery to take over and shift the dance moves into dance creation (Observation Ten – Conscious And Unconscious Imagery And Choice).

The dance movements generated from this particular exploratory practice are rich with innovation, play and freedom. The researcher observes a suspension of usual physical reference points and nervous habits (Hackney 1998 p.207). Group unity is easily developed as relaxation brings a common ground to participants of all capabilities. Participants can experience healing properties in dance when improvisations embody a state of relaxation.
Simple themes
Based on small rituals of relaxation
Outlines for a series of movement improvisations

The following studies are now included as an illustration of the application of relaxation with improvisation utilizing a number of basic positions and simple movements. Thematic word studies give an indication of ways to introduce relaxation to improvisors through suggestion and guidance with words spoken by the researcher (Schneer 1994 p.102).

---

Prop

Lie down and prop the feet on a chair or legs up on a wall
And slowly sway the head a little from side to side

Sit with one leg stretched out to the side
And prop the head up on the hands elbows on the floor

Stand on one leg and prop the other foot up on it
And simply stand there

Standing with one leg on the barre or a chair
And soften the body deeply in the hip joints

Lean two dancers, one on the other
And be a prop for one another – in couples or in a group

Prop one another up back to back / side to side / shoulder to shoulder
Shift from one propped up position to another or settle for a while
Be inventive and try a new position any position
Stop for a while
Halt
Stay still and wait
Give yourself a break
Pause and draw breath
Simply dwell in the moment
Linger just where you are
Settle down and rest or
Hang around and dream
Hang just one part of the body over the barre and lean on the barre
Or completely flop

Sway as though in a gentle breeze
Aware of gravity
Sway this way and that
Sway and float as seaweed moves with the waters of the ocean
Sway the way branches of a tree sway in a breeze
Sway in tune with the movement of the body

Swing
From one side to the other
Swing the arms and let the body follow through completely
Rising and falling in an arc
Slower to rise
Falling quickly
Heavy towards the bottom and light at the peak
Light and heavy and light
Play with weight and suspension
The movement has a particular momentum
Feel the impetus of swing and the shape of the arc
One swing leads in to another
There is a rhythm
Bones
Swinging bones
Singing bones
Playing with the rhythm
Play in the swing of things
Swing and groove
Funny bones

Rock
From one foot to the other feel heaviness in one foot
and then the other
Rock from side to side or forward and back
Sense the place of lightness half way between one foot
and the other
Move one part of the body in a rocking motion then another
Rock several body parts at once
Rock the whole body
Make different shapes that rock on different levels
Sense the affect of gravity
Rock continually one way and then another
Gradually slow down
Allow the body weight to change
As the movement to changes

Rock
As if you are in a boat with water all around

Rock
As if you are a babe in arms

Rock
As if you are resting in a rocking chair
Settle in and rest awhile
Feel the weight of rocking motion
Sense the momentum
Rock back and forth, rock to and fro, to and fro
Float
Lightly and easily
Experience weightlessness
Dance on the air
Drift
Drift and float down
Easily buoyant
Floating down on to the floor
Floating into stillness
Now the breath floats in and out as the whole body settles
Allow changes to be made as the body becomes still
Then slowly begin to roll

Roll
Slowly as close to the floor as possible
Roll over and over and over
From one side to the other side
Starting with the head
All the way down through to the toes
Roll over
Then start with the toes and roll over
Moving all the way up to the head
In a most comfortable easy way
Freely and easily move through each roll
Allow the bones to roll the whole body over
Over and over
Rolling and unrolling
Letting the changes happen
Perhaps the hips will initiate the roll
New movements and familiar movements blending in and

Changing over to s...tre.....tch
A stretch begins to grow
Listening to the body as it opens out into the stretch
Following the stretch all the way
Waiting for the full extent of a stretch that lasts and lasts
Relaxing into the stretch
Relaxing and finding the full length of the stretch
One stretch leading to another
And then another
Any stretch or all kinds of stretches or just one very slow stretch

The Researcher Observes Results from Deeper Levels of Relaxation
Participants discover an alteration in mood and the formation of thought patterns when relaxation progresses to deeper levels. Lifetime fears and phobias are transcended through altered states of relaxation experienced in dance improvisation. The atmosphere of relaxation presents as a seemingly safe place where resistance, tension and fixity are less dominant features. Participants are able to relax on all levels of being and enter into the free place of dance improvisation in a non-judgmental and uncritical atmosphere of relaxation.

Inclusion of relaxation as an entry point and connection between dance and healing is readily observable. Participants’ bodies are softer and hence more pliable. Physical freedom and flexibility increase. Inhibition and reservations are minimized when the mind of an individual takes on a softer focus and become more creative. Emotional anxiety is minimized in a state of relaxation and a sense of play and adventure stimulates creativity for participants. Also there is a letting go from anxieties about body shape that leads to an easier use of dance space.
PARTICIPANT COMMENT

Journal entry 14th March 2001 – participant code 17. C

Relaxation and improvisation is free. It is fun and exciting because of all the new areas to explore. I have never done any of the content before. I learned a lot about myself, what my limits and strength are. Improvisation sessions provide a very safe atmosphere for exploration of dance. Today was the first day that I mentally got over my fear of going from a standing position and dropping to the floor. The big thing was that I made a start by thinking that I can do it.

Deeper Levels of Awareness

Science defines relaxation as a learned skill inclusive of deep rest and an absence of neuromuscular activity. Science also claims that tension is produced from within the human organism. Therefore tensions that are created within and by a person are under the control of that same person (Sobel and Hornbacher 1973 p.116).

When dance improvisation material is generated from within a participant who has an opportunity to apply relaxation techniques or who enters the dance improvisation from a spontaneously occurring state of relaxation there is easy management of dance tensions. Also that participant shows preference for more relaxed styles in choosing dance movements.

Overall a refined degree of control and a healthy management of tensions is seen in participants as they gain access to deeper levels of awareness. In combination with relaxation deeper levels of awareness take participants into reflective and meditative states in improvisation. Meditative aspects of contemporary dance improvisation are experiences that may be accessed in several ways. The researcher selects one method and that is relaxation in conjunction with a study of slow motion. The dance work that is created in slow motion improvisation often spontaneously accesses meditative states.

Continuity in Slow Motion

Slow motion allows participants to refine awareness of physical action and highlights the inner workings of psyche and soma in the act of improvisation. The participants are enabled to relax and fully inhabit their bodies in each moment of every movement (Cheney cited in Friedler and Glazer 1997 p.84) within slow motion dance.

Meditative Moments

The relaxation response (Benson 1996 p.134) is easily triggered within slow motion. At a certain point in time slow motion becomes mesmeric and both participants and observers can make a shift into an altered states of relaxation. The participants find a place where at last there enough time and no need to conceive rhythmical patterns or make a display of technique. There is an intersection of the present with the eternal in slow motion meditative dance. Bound by slow motion improvised dance is safe and well ordered, manageable and
measured. The participants are seen to take great pleasure in a rediscovery of the body in slow motion with space and time.

Coming Home

The following page is a considered response based on observation of slow motion from the researcher. The response is an illustrated word study to give a glimpse into the exploration of slow motion as an improvisational dance practice. As dance practice moves in the meditative awareness of slow motion participants speak about a feeling of coming home or they may say that they have a light bulb experience. Body chemistry is altered and the mix of motion and artistic expression is balanced in slow motion improvised dance.
STUDY

IN SLOW MOTION

LOOKING IN
EYES CLOSE
SENSE THE CONTINUOUS MOTION
MUSCLES FOLLOW BONES
FROM ONE PART OF THE BODY TO ANOTHER
INWARDLY SEEING
TOTALLY AWARE OF EACH PART AND EVERY MOTION
ANOTHER WAY RISES
ALWAYS CONNECTING
MOVE FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER
CONTINUALLY MOVING ON AND ON
AWARE OF BREATH AND EVEN THE SMALLEST MOVE
DISCOVERY OF NEW MOVEMENT
VERY SLOW NEVER STILL
MOVEMENT MERGES INTO DANCE
DANCE WITHOUT CESSATION
DANCING EVERY SENSE ALIVE
TOTAL INVOLVEMENT IN MOVEMENT MEDITATION
PATHWAYS OVER CROSS
EYES OPEN AND THE GAZE IS SOFT
SEAMLESS TRANSITIONS
SHAPES FORM AND LEVELS SHIFT
SLOW DANCERS MOVING SLOWLY TO
DANCE

IN SLOW MOTION
PARTICIPANTS COMMENT

Journal entry 27th August 2002 – participant code 21 C.

The dancing for improvisation is fabulous. It is so interesting how people can constantly improvise and become in unison with each other especially in slow-motion and to see talent everywhere... is amazing. Sometimes when I improvise I feel I actually find more interesting steps than when I just sit around and think about it! I learned a lot from this... an excellent experience in my life. ... Fantastic!

Journal entry 30 August 2002 – participant code 4 C.

I found that moving in a diagonal across the room in slow motion one after the other was very powerful. I felt the presence of God and also felt as though I helped to encourage one of the other dancers. I had these words come into my head. Ask, see, honour, serve, want, thrive and die for. Slow motion with the breath was also very powerful. I loved being able to let myself go. We also moved in slow motion using sounds and it was amazing!!!

Journal entry August 2002 – participant code 20. C

It is amazing how three very different people can move as one in slow motion improvisation.

Journal entry August 2002 – participant code 19. C

It was amazing to watch all the slow motion pieces – Beautiful! Some groups were incredible. ... Amazing that you can create a group dance just on the spot. ... That is beautiful and exciting to watch. That must be the Holy Spirit!! The solo dancers were also good. Everybody's dance is so personal and unique. Just like God made us to be.
Observation Two –
Embodied Dance Language

Every art form can be seen to take a position in social culture and communicate across a certain range. Whilst aural and written languages are our most common means of communication the arts continually inform and enrich society via a vast array of identifiable texts. Within the world of art body language, graphics, symbolism, signing, sounds and music communicate in particular textual forms. The spectrum is multi layered and each art form may enable several levels of communication (Hansstein cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.140). Embodied languages of dance are mostly seen to honour silent communications (Schnee 1994 p.ix).

The embodied languages of dance (Allbright 1997 p.5) communicate the tapestry of life through ritual, ceremonial, choreographic texts and many more (Winears 1990 p.68) (Thomas 1995, Chapter 1). The subject of embodied language is broad and mostly outside the boundaries of this project. Nevertheless one vital feature within range is the notion of embodiment. Methods of observation in reading messages and meanings embodied by participants in dance improvisation are absolutely essential to this research. The researcher is dependent upon reading the texts of embodied languages of dance improvisation in collecting the most valued and primary level of data in this project (Observation Seven – Homeostasis and Kinaesthetic Sense).

The Embodied Languages of Contemporary Dance Improvisation

To explore the healing properties of dance the researcher chooses the medium of contemporary dance improvisation. The unique characteristic in the language of exploratory contemporary dance improvisation (Grieg 1994 p.3) is found in communications that reach beyond the range of mimicked language. Imitation is not the given norm and a formal glossary of terms cannot be found for exploratory contemporary improvisation. Compared with other dance forms such as classical ballet, modern or jazz and ballroom dance exploratory contemporary dance improvisation has no set terminology or emulative vocabulary.

The lexicon of exploratory contemporary dance improvisation is unique to each individual because no two people experience life in exactly the same way. Each exploratory improvisation speaks physically about what life experiences mean for the participant who is dancing (Creative Process). Dance improvisations may appear similar at times but the researcher does not see any that are identical. Therefore the researcher sees each participant as unique and the language of each participant’s improvisational dance creation as an expression of that uniqueness and a source of ever fresh in built wisdom (Cheney cited in Friedler and Glazer 1997 p.94).
Human movement flows through each participant’s uniquely formed body into dance improvisation. The patterns of each participant’s fingerprints are unique. Similarly the patterns of embodied communications find a unique blueprint in dance improvisation. There may be not so much as one spoken word, yet so much is said.

**Inner Life**

Because embodied languages in improvised dance do not have the particular literal complexity of spoken or written language the visual impact of dance material can move outside any conscious use of conventional, literary boundaries. Free from those rules akin to literature dance improvisation creatively embodies languages coming from somewhere deeper (Thomas 1995 cites Williams p.168).

Therefore the embodied languages of dance improvisations are seen to by pass the rigor of a doubting intellect. Whilst in a state of absorption in the act of improvisation the participant’s intellect is more towards a state of suspended disbelief (Schneer 1994 p.109). Perhaps another part of the mind becomes operable? Dance improvisation describes and conveys not only a participant’s outer life but also more importantly that participant’s inner life (Ullman 1992 p.19). Between this inner life and contact with the healing force there may be healing for both participant and observer (Hanstein cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.139)?

Dancer, Paula Douthett (Inspire Journal 2000 p.16) describes accessing emotions and speaking out of the depths. So too in exploratory sessions the dance material is seen to speak out of emotional depths. The language is of the whole person from the inside to the outside and can take in a full emotional range. From a place of internal states in the core of participant communication moves through the body in an essence of being (Todd 1959 p.281) to a place far beyond the level of usual linguistic constructs. (Blom and Chaplin 1942 p.126)

**Prayer Levels**

Further more when an atmosphere of prayer is prevalent as it is in this research project the language of dance improvisation reaches another level. The uplifting language of embodied prayer (Schroeder 1995) allows for a complete connection to be made so that participants and the essence of dance become vessels for the power of healing.

The foundation of this healing perspective holds a key to spirituality (Peck 1993 p.233). In short the deeper feelings about God and the greater truths that are perhaps beyond the usual language of words are observed as within reach in prayerful dance. Participants are seen at times to embody the signs and wonders of miraculous and heavenly languages. The researcher observes dance languages like no other and discovers a connection between the ancient languages of prayer and the embodied languages of dance. *(Chapter 4, Discovery Three)*
Artistic Expression in Embodied Improvisation Language

Dance improvisation is at times a language expressed through embodied metaphor or poetry in motion. An improvising participant can embody a song or even engulf the researcher in a symphony of movement. The physical activity of dance improvisation can paint a picture on the canvas of the dancing space and touch the researcher, an observer or another participant in places where spoken words and music never go (Blom and Chaplin 1942 p.125). The participants speak, sing and whisper clearly into and across the dance space (Hanstein cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.141) in the embodied languages of dance improvisation.

In creative art forms such as painting, sculpture and music the heart and soul of a person may be moved or touched as in no other way and this can also be the case in dance (Cunningham 1998 p.128). In exploratory improvisation sessions the researcher and participants touch on unique communications in the exchange of embodied language. From mundane to extraordinary the texts of dance improvisations are made authentic in the dancing motions of moving bodies (Observation Ten – Conscious And Unconscious Imagery And Choice).

PARTICIPANT COMMENT

Journal entry 3rd September 2003 – participant code 2. C

It was my turn to move and initially I experienced terror. Then something happened, something took over. I truly was not moving I was watching myself move. I stripped myself of negativity, this grief. I felt tender toward this negativity, soft about it knowing that it brings me light, without the darkness there would be no light. (The Alchemy of Agony) I was deeply moved by this experience so much so that I needed to support myself on the ballet barre on the side of the room.

At the session end I chose to sit in the center of the room rather than to dance. I did this not for myself. On a conscious level I did it for my dying cousin. Yet it was where I needed to be. Perhaps the grief I had just danced was all poured out in the physical movements because now I felt safe and held as the others improvised. Perhaps it was collective grief? It was an overwhelming experience. Lightness followed.
Observation Three –

Spiritual Considerations

The Dance of Freedom

Spiritual considerations come to mind when freedom takes the dancing space and effortlessly dismantles the stresses and strains of technical, artistic and physical accomplishment. The dances of freedom in this project are of a genre other than one acquired through the physical effort of dedicated training in a specific dance technique.

Within frameworks governed by style and technique a trained and accomplished dancer is capable of demonstrating flexibility, balance, virtuosity and artistry. Techniques that condition a dancer over many years of training in highly refined and specific movement vocabularies and clearly identifiable styles such as classical ballet develop a conditional freedom for that dancer (Hackney 1998 p.207).

The freedom witnessed in this research is a release from tradition and training, conditioning and habitual patterns. The participants are exploring in a transformational space and their dance vocabularies are light, easy, melodic and supported by the safety of the research environment.

The participants are moving in the creative and atmospheric conditions of a presence that is simple, free and wonderful. Healing happens in free dance of this nature. Participants dance without pain and the dances are full of amazing movement that emerges effortlessly without strain or stress.

Is this free and healing dance happening in the spacious place referred to in verse nineteen of the eighteenth Psalm of David in the Holy Bible NIV 1984?

But the Lord was my support.
He brought me out into a spacious place
He rescued me because he delighted in me

Is a dance of freedom in this research the same as dance in the Spirit? Paul’s second letter to the Corinthians, chapter three, verse seventeen provides an answer for the researcher. “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” (Holy Bible NIV 1984). How does the Spirit of the Lord come into the research sessions and how does the Spirit of the Lord bring about the dance of freedom and healing?
Impartation

When the researcher witnesses and experiences an impartation of spiritual healing in dance research sessions there is release for the whole person from everything that binds and hinders. Physical tensions and life long patterns of habitual postures and movement are released from participants' bodies. Mindsets and attitudes that previously prevented a person from exploration and creativity are no longer active in that participant (Appendix Four – Participants' Responses).

Freedom is a clearly visible and tangible factor of the dances that are performed in a movement of the Holy Spirit. The participants and the researcher observe the transformations and attempt to convey their experiences. The participants write, draw and speak their responses. The researcher writes a considered response to observations of dance in the Spirit via the following poem.

The charcoal sketch is by another one of the participants who is an artist – participant code J. 31
**Inner Space**

Across the silence  
Without a trace  
The Spirit falls and  
Soul is reshaped  
As if from nowhere  
Coming Home  
Holy Spirit  
Shapes  
Winged being  
Ascending light  

Poetic patterns of hope emerge  
Tangible  
Beautiful  
Freedom is in the air  
Holy Spirit  
Takes melodic form  
Manifests  
Dance and  
Soars the body in  
Space  
Dance  
Releases the  
Whole body  
Singing  
Songs of freedom  
A Dancer holds the tune  
Dancing free  
In the Spirit
PARTICIPANTS COMMENT

Journal entry 23 July 2002 – participant code 7. C

We then went on to dance in the Spirit. This was an amazing experience. I felt such freedom. I allowed my body to move with the Spirit. I was able to really let go and just move. I didn’t have to think which step to do next: I was able to just keep going. I really felt the presence of a God and was filled with such a joy. Really free! Praise You, Father.


Today I closed my eyes and danced with the Spirit inside of me and it was so freeing. I felt incredibly present, alive and especially peaceful. Like there was just the Spirit and myself and although I was aware of the music and the other people in the room they were a long way away. This was like dancing with love and light pouring into and out of my heart. A very moving experience today. I had the best class. Free! Free! Free! God and I danced together. So grateful I am to have this. I love God and God loves me just as I am.


As I danced spontaneously in the Spirit the love of God poured into me. Yet I knew there was hurt and pain I had been ignoring for so long because I wouldn’t let it go. It was a reminder to me from God that in order to give up everything I had to give up that pain in my life to Him so that He can heal me and bless me. His love for me was falling down like rain and all I had to do was release my pain and accept His rain.
Observation Four –
Inner Stillness

Keys to the Spiritual Path
Generally speaking spiritual teachings give a seeker of truth certain keys to the spiritual path. These keys have various names such as stillness (Psalm 46:10), peace, faith, hope, love, revelation and connection. Could access be found into the field of healing dance by application of these keys (Gaynor 1995 p.222) in practical improvisation sessions?

Commonly known spiritual practices and pathways such as prayer, reflection, meditation, praise, worship and pilgrimage may be found with these keys (King 1995) (I. Gawler 1997) (Sanford 1972) (Mother Teresa 1991).

Questions
Perhaps spiritual healing comes from a place of stillness (Dossey 1993 p.87) within the participant? Does spiritual healing then lead to physical and emotional health? If this is so, could such a source of healing always be present and available for a dancer via stillness? Within the context of research sessions the researcher watches out for answers to these questions.

The notion of stillness, (Moreland 1999 p.13) (Cunningham 1998 p.18), an inner stillness may be a welcome relief to the physically driven and often exhausted participant who is training constantly to develop techniques and performance works outside the research sessions. Equally refreshing can be the notion of stillness to the participant troubled in mind or physical sickness and injury. Crossing cultural and religious borders by way of the intelligent simplicity of stillness or inner peace seems too good to be true.

T. S. Elliot in Burnt Norton lines 66 and 67 writes, “Except for the point, the still point, there would be no dance, and there is only the dance.” The discovery of a still point in a turning world is also acknowledged by author Philip Yancey in an image of Christ as the one still point in all (1995 p.14). The tried and true spiritual practice of stillness (Dossey 1993 p.87) is obviously in vivid contrast with dance business. Therefore the researcher can conceive stillness as an ideal place to begin investigations into matters spiritual in conjunction with healing and dance.

More Questions
Is the stillness associated with dance and healing in the participant’s mind? When the participant’s awareness of all that is within and without becomes finely tuned perhaps a centered inner stillness occurs? May be the place where passive observation is initiated is a
place of stillness? Perhaps stillness occurs when passive observation merges into simply being (Todd 1959 p.281) in the moment? Is the stillness of time or space (Cunningham 1998 p.18)? Could stillness be a way for the participant to come to knowledge of God? The Holy Bible NIV 1984 Psalm 46:10 reads "Be still and know that I am God".

The participants’ approaches towards stillness of the mind may range across analysis, passivity, yielding, impartiality or the practice of simply being still and relaxing physically into the moment (Gawler 1987).

Therefore it seems reasonable to suppose that what occurs for a participant before and after an experience of stillness in dance improvisation sessions will be useful in understanding the relationship between dance, healing and stillness. Careful observation may reveal pathways to and from stillness and inform answers to the many questions arising out of this topic.

**Stillness of the Mind**

Amongst the participants reflective concentration and inner observation are seen to be prerequisites in revealing the stillness of the mind. It is worth stating that in this study the mind of a participant appears to be softly focused, calm, quiet and not at all empty. The participants experience a stillness of mind that may be likened to a calm sea. The participant dances and creates the improvisation in a supportive fluid environment without mental resistance. Admittedly the participants are people of faith and faith is known to make quiet the mind like no other form of belief (Benson 1996 p.203).

**Stillness of Being and Authentic Movement**

The researcher perceives the participants to be passively attentive as though watching from within. The participants appear to be silently seeing all that is to be seen prior to the stillness of being in the moment. This experience is soon followed by varying degrees of wonderment, intuition, fulfillment or insight (Fraleigh 1987 p.26).

Stillness in this context appears to be a place of origin and authenticity. The still place from where authentic dance springs forth is a womb like environment fluid and supportive in nature. Inner stillness comes to the participant through soft concentration, self-observation and absorption. These three form a triangular base to support the improvisation process. It is of some importance to note that stillness presents as an outcome for the participant rather than a goal or intention and authentic movements or authentic dance are byproducts.

**Other World**

Stillness of being spontaneously occurs in this study in various ways. The researcher observes a certain steadiness as participants become aware of the inner world of dance. The steadiness is a defining moment with a calm decisive quality evident in the dance movement. There is an obvious point of connection being made. The connection is clearly meaningful and absorbs
the participant completely in the dance creation process. Perhaps the inner stillness evident here is the connection referred to by J. D. Blackmer (1931 p.26).

Quiet is needed to bring one’s scattered thoughts to a still, introverted point of focus, to make a connection with the other world.

_The Silent Observer_ (1987), Dance and Transformation

**Another Dimension**

Stillness of being in contemporary dance improvisation has yet another dimension. There is the very real sense of another. That is to say both participants and observers are seen to experience the presence of something greater (Dossey 1993 p.87). Is this the presence of God? The presence of God could account for the sense of eternity, timelessness and time travel (Morris 1986 p.122). All ordinary sense of time is lost in a research session where stillness is part of the experience. The affect of stillness impacts on all those present in the session. The participants appear to be completely at ease and seem reluctant to leave when it is way past the time to go.

Most importantly a tangible atmosphere surrounds the participants, affects the researcher’s observation and transforms the dance space into a place of infinite possibilities. The researcher is at one with the process in this atmosphere from stillness. Respect and awe for the order of all things great and small describes phenomena of dance improvisation in this atmosphere.

The following illustrations and words attempt to convey the relationship between stillness and improvisation. The words are a considered response after reflection on notes taken during research sessions. Illustration is by one participant.
DANCERS MOVE INTO STILLNESS

Listening to the body
WAITING FOR STILLNESS TO COME
BEING STILL
EYES SETTLE IN
BODY SETTLES DOWN
BREATH MOVES OUT AND IN
BODIES BECOME QUIETER
INNER EYE LOOKS IN

WATCHING AS STILLNESS MOVES INTO BEING
WITH GOD
BREATHING
WITH GOD
KNOWING WEIGHTLESSNESS
BONELESSNESS
WITHOUT A BOUNDARY

DANCE BEGINS FROM WITHIN
DANCING FROM STILLNESS
DANCERS FOLLOW
WATCHING THE DANCE WITH INNER QUIET
FROM A STILL PLACE THE SPIRIT MOVES
DANCING FREE
DANCING UP A STORM
AND SEEING FROM THE EYE OF THE STORM
MIND IS A WAVE LESS OCEAN WITHOUT A RIPPLE
KNOWING
GOD
WALKS
ON
WATER
Observation Five –

Dance Electricity

Plugged in
Dance improvisation performed in the Spirit has a most compelling quality that could be identified as psychoneuro-immunological (Dacher 1996 p.3) dance activity. The term psychoneuro-immunology refers to a bringing together in the study of behavior, the brain and our natural defense system (immune system). The compelling quality has electricity (Cheney cited in Friedler and Glazer 1997 p.84), perhaps an electrostatic field or a kinesphere is generated (E. Franklin 1996 p.57) when telesomatic improvisation is in action (Dossey cites Paracelsus p.50). It is most definitely plugged in, turned on and charged up. Plugged into what source the researcher may well ask?

Consideration of dance electricity brings to mind an electrical field around the human body captured in the colourful aura like images of Kirlian photography. In addition medical science for example uses magnetic resonance imaging through a MRI scanner (Tortora and Anagnostakos 1987 p.25). Examples from established technology employs magnetism and physical imaging in three-dimensional colour. MRI scanning to reveals bio-chemical density, energy (voltage) and provides an analogy for more skeptical minds.

Currents
There are electrical currents operating within the dance activity of this study and these currents bring healing to the participants. The field of action is at times hypnotic and at times magnetic for participants and observers alike. The researcher seeks verification of this type of phenomenon. During the study confirmation comes from casual observers and formal audiences. Spontaneous comments include the use of terms and expressions such as transported, mesmerised, and drawing into a presence, atmospheric, prayer field, speechless and compelling (Hanstein cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.139).
Connection

It is possible that the compelling quality of contemporary dance improvisation could be due to its tangible space for individuality. Now participants with dance abilities ranging from untrained to highly skilled may create dance in their particular body language. There is the distinct possibility of being independent, individual and unique whilst at the same time totally connected (Hackney 1998 p.28). What ever the inner source of improvised dance may be the participants make contact with a creatively charged place.

Within the context of the workshop sessions and performances of this research there are times when the participants literally shine. Faces become radiant and participants' dancing bodies improvise with a glow about them (Schneer 1994 p.56). Healing happens in events when participants shine as they improvise and perform enlightened contemporary dance.
Observation Six –

Spirit Of Prayer

Life Matters

From the earliest stages of the research a spirit of prayer is made manifest. There is a covering of prayer over the whole project from practical administrative details through to dance improvisation sessions and performances. On going practical and aesthetic benefits are seen to arise from moving with the spirit of prayer.

The effect of prayer on the project is positive. In the first instance voluntary offers of prayer support come from colleagues and friends. These early expressions of community support, interest and encouragement lead to dance studio space being made available for research sessions. Also participants to dance in the project are forthcoming in answer to prayer.

One year after commencing a pilot study for this project the researcher accepts offers of employment from two Christian tertiary arts institutions, Wesley Institute and School of Creative Arts. Prayer, praise and worship are integral to the daily schedules of these two establishments. The majority of participants in the research are drawn from a selection of students and staff and prayer is very much a part of every day life for these participants. Therefore from the time of accepting the offers of employment forward to the conclusion of the project influence from the power of prayer has a positive effect on the research.

Tradition

Many cultural rituals and religious traditions include movements of the body in prayer. Both movement and stillness are seen when people come into a place of prayer. To kneel, bow the head, join the palms of the hands, stand, raise the arms high and look up, open arms wide and spin, make the sign of the cross and bow down, walk and fall, and lie prostrate are all postures or gestures customary in acts of prayer. Occasionally common prayer gestures and postures appear spontaneously in improvisation sessions.

Spirit of Prayer

The dance and movement seen for the duration of the research is noticeably free from any recognisable prayer conventions, religious forms or traditions. Rather the improvisations demonstrate a dynamic creative freedom and prayerful reverence for the spirit of things. The improvisations look remarkably different because the movements are spontaneous, creative and they are in dance form.

When the participants improvise as a group they are influenced by one another to move in ways other than their own unique style. An observable blending and exchange of motifs and
patterns or the dance material may move in an almost unison form that is not the work of any one particular participant. Boundaries and borders between participants are blurred under the influence of prayer.

**Atmosphere**

Throughout the study, time, space and interest are given to develop attitudes of acceptance and a sense of relaxation (Observation One – Relaxation Facilitates Improvisation) within session times. It is thought that this cultivation grows an atmosphere of harmony and gentleness. What becomes more and more evident as the study unfolds is that this atmosphere makes apparent a stillness (Observation Four – Inner Stillness) of prayer both silent and voiced.

Prayer actually comes about often unannounced and without the trappings of ritual. Prayer and prayer dancing operates as a central, supporting medium and a protective covering for the participants. Feelings of safety, certainty and hope within the dance activity seem to come about as a consequence of the spirit of prayer.

In this environment of prayer the potential for dance as a medium for healing becomes a tangible element of creative processes. Anxieties and tensions are reduced to a minimum, participants are observed transcending the limitations of more conventional communication. They find creative ways to be together in dance and find renewal through experiences of comfort, release and peace.

**Embodied Prayer**

Embodied prayer improvisation takes many forms, from the prophetic (Rutherford 2003 p.2), intercessory and contemplative to spoken and meditative (Schroeder 1995). One dancer or a group of participants together may at times voice spontaneous prayer songs whilst improvising. The dance material of prayer has a flow on effect (Ullman 1992 p.19) (Csikszentmihalyi 1997). It is creative and offers thanksgiving, surrender (Gaynor 1995 p.222), adoration and worship. The phenomenon of improvised anointed prayer dancing brings transformation through emotional breakthrough and supernatural healing (Hypothesis).

**Miracles in Dance Improvisation**

The physical and dynamic range of embodied prayer improvisation is a wholistic expression that ignites healing through creative processes. Herein the field of miracles becomes probable (Graham 1991 p.5) to the participants and the movement of supernatural healing is clearly visible to the researcher. Improvisations to celebrate miracles of participants' healings both past and present are produced in research sessions.

The researcher seeks verification for miraculous phenomena in the Holy Bible NIV 1984. There is a King Hezekiah who prays to God when he is very ill and close to death (2 Kings 20:2). God answers Hezekiah's prayer saying that he will be healed. The biblical story reveals
that God is true to his word when Hezekiah is healed. Therefore the researcher supposes that a prayer request embodied in improvisation and offered to God can be a dance that brings the miracle of healing from God.

In prayer dance improvisation a participant connects to a sacred space and time inside that he or she may find inexplicable and miraculous. Never the less, let us assume that communication with God through a sacred space of embodied prayer is possible. Is the sacred space of prayer akin to the participant’s own creative place? And is this creative process of dance improvisation miraculous when the creator God is present?

Is the inexplicable for participants perhaps another mystery to bear and one more fragment of the great mysterion (Rohr 1999)? How can the correlation of dance and healing in connection with the divine through embodied prayer be grasped by thought? Perhaps a struggle to interpret such phenomena is imposed because of the limitations that words place on the researcher who is in heart a dancer.

**Momentum**

The research sessions show prayer to have a gathering force. As more participants and observers experience benefits from research practices an easy sense of unity and community develops (De Sola 2001, v75 112 p.62). Momentum from the spirit of prayer increases when a cluster of research sessions draws towards conclusion. Perhaps the gathering momentum of prayer is in the researcher’s imagination.

Yet, if the dancing space and dancing time are otherworldly, there is nothing out of this world about the matter of the dancer – his or her body. Everything is the matter! This stuff, these bones, “this too, too solid flesh” are truly down to earth and mundane, quite the opposite of the sacred space in time in which the dancer, trained or untrained will move. Here the polarities of this and the other world mingle, indeed are muddled.

*(Acrobats of the Gods, Dance and Transformation by Joan Dexter Blackmer 1931 p.26)*

**Moving With Momentum**

Following the sense of an increase in momentum and the uncertainty of transition the researcher is drawn (Dossey 1993 cites Jung p.70) into the spirit of prayer. The researcher is moving with a momentum from the spirit of prayer and walks around the participants as they improvise *(Discovery Three – Prayer And Configuration)*. With a change of position from passive observer to active prayer walker the perspective of observation is altered.

Now rather than sitting quietly by the side and keenly watching dance work the researcher is moving in the dance space and intrinsic to the action via prayer, walking and watching.
Unexpectedly dance improvisation in the spirit of prayer is transformed. Participant's creative expressions shift to another level in response to the action of the researcher walking around the room praying. This walking prayer acts as a catalyst (Hypothesis) within the group of improvisers.

**PARTICIPANT COMMENT**


**Prayer Dance**

Loved it, just danced. Felt free and less exposed today and able to go with the flow. Yet in all probability more exposed because a visitor watched and for some reason this changed my attitude. We had some great free inner dancing. I felt healthier. What has changed in me? What has moved? I prayed a lot before class this week and a friend prayed with me. I asked God for his help, his guidance in my heart and to soften me in patience and well it is happening. My boundaries were stronger and I felt more freedom from unhappiness in these moments.
Observation Seven –

Homoeostasis and Kinaesthetic Sense

For most of us the interplay between environmental factors and our personal condition is a delicate balancing act that frequently falls off center (Tortora and Anagnostakos 1987 p.18). Physiological homeostatic processes of feedback and regulation function within our bodies to maintain a dynamic equilibrium of internal environments (Weston 1989 p.21).

Dynamic Equilibrium

The internal homeostatic processes in all systems of the body provide indicators of wellness levels and maybe monitored and adjusted (Dacher 1996 p.15) by a participant who is sufficiently aware in this dynamic balancing act. The internal physiological homeostatic devices oppose the forces of internal and external stress and are a striking feature of all organisms.

Dynamic Equilibrium in Dance

Most obvious for any participant who requires warm flexible muscles, cardio-respiratory fitness and abilities to turn, leap and change weight effortlessly are the mechanisms of circulation, respiration, balance and relaxation. Levels of external stress such as heat, cold and loud noises and levels of internal stress such as pain, anxiety or unpleasant thoughts can be monitored and regulated by the participant who is sufficiently aware (Tortora and Anagnostakos 1987 p.19). A healthy awareness of the onset of external and internal stressors and an awareness of internal regulating mechanisms are developed in participants as a result of exploratory improvisations.

Into Balance

The research process seeks to facilitate dance activity where the interplay between a participant’s inner and outer environments (Rockwell cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.194) is balanced in favor of health. A healthy state of mental balance is achievable for participants when they become absorbed in the physical action of dance (Feldenkrais 1979 p.33). Exploratory contemporary dance improvisation performed in a harmonious environment (Peck 1993 p.233) initiates and develops a degree of mental and physical absorption from participants. Together these elements of harmony, absorption and favor towards health bring the participants towards a state of inner balance.
Physical Signs
The researcher notes observable signs of interplay between the inner worlds of participants and the environment. The physical feat of dancing well connected to the floor, free, easy, in full awareness of one’s body, the space and in time with the music are signs of success in this area.

Participants become physically unblocked when their minds are in a state of balance (Tufnell & Crickmay 1993 p.48). Mental balance enables messages to move directly from the brain out through the limbs and beyond. Bodies are seen to find freedom of movement when the messages coming from within are from a state of mental and emotional balance.

Kinaesthetic Sense
The researcher builds upon improvisational explorations where the focus on mental balance is achieved via activation of the kinaesthetic sense (Flt 1988 p.266). Explorations that feature postural awareness, movement transitions, weight transference and resistance to spatial contacts in relation to their bodies are for the most part effective towards this end.

The participants are quick to become attuned to their kinaesthetic sense and an ability to apply a working knowledge of that sense whilst dancing is soon built up through these activities. This focus on kinaesthetic sense in turn generates original dance material wherein relevant signs of health may be easily read. Emotional and mental balance becomes more easily achievable by application of kinaesthetic sense.

Positive signs are noted as participants’ bodies become more relaxed, flexible and responsive. Concentration, facial pallor and expressions may also be seen to change for the better. In addition more sustainable dance energy is easily generated from the condition of inner equilibrium when the kinaesthetic sense is fully activated.

Findings on Balance
In the wider world of dance an accomplished professional performer can take and sustain physical balance in any shape, position or level appropriate to a given dance work. A sense of inner balance, wellness and the accomplishment of being on balance in the act of dance performance all call for the highly developed skills and innate resources of the trained and talented dancer.

When dance improvisation in this project is created from a state of inner equilibrium both the true novice and the experienced dancer alike are enabled to perform the physical act of being on balance more readily.

Further more when participants perform from a state of inner balance and in balance with their environment an observer has more scope to read, understand and translate the languages of dance (Observation Two – Embodied Language). The dance, the participants and observers
become open to clear lines of communication and therefore also available to the healing force.

The conclusion is that balance in the sense of homeostatic balance is observable in improvisations as an element of the process of healing. Physiological signs indicate when a participant is moving along in the direction of healing (The Challenge in the Mystery of Healing p.28). A participant's capacity to be well is also indicated by observable physiological signs.

Application and development of the use of the kinaesthetic sense are seen as beneficial on both the health and dance ability of participants. All stages of dance expertise from beginner through to experienced professional benefit from development of their kinaesthetic sense.
Observation Eight –

Transference Phenomenon and Contact Sequence

Cures are brought about by numerous divergent methods. One avenue considered as curative by many authors is the phenomenon of transference (M. Feldenkrais 1979 p.2). The healing properties of dance improvisation are transferable across the ether and via physical contact between participants.

Care and Safety Considerations

In research sessions a healthy balance of transference is embodied and initial surface appearances are sustained (Landy 1986 p.160). Creative dance art practices generally speaking are alive with transference phenomena literally and metaphorically. This means that implications with regard to roles and realities are fluid rather than fixed. The potential for transference to be a mixture of healthy and unhealthy communications and translations is considered relevant. Therefore this project encapsulates dance art practices where the phenomenon of transference is active in dance creation in favour of health.

In a formal written sense the roles of participants and researcher are clearly defined prior to practice and governed by formal human research ethics protocols. Exploratory sessions are conducted within occupational health and safety standard requirements and caring Christian environments are established in the host institutions. Safe dance practice (Geeves 1997) is always a consideration and principles and practices of the researcher’s professions of dance and health care are maintained. Therefore phenomena of transference are observed in a safe, creative and orderly fashion.

Proprioception and Transference

When dance making processes and participants’ projections interweave the intermingling of who is who and what is what (Ryan 1987 cites W. Yeats p.5) re-creates through embodied symbolic forms. Dance improvisation that embodies symbolic forms (Thomas 1995 p.174) from one participant can make a favorable impression on another participant’s health or on the health of an observer through transference. A key feature for this transference to occur is the participant’s use of their proprioceptive abilities (Hackney 1988 p.186).

The researcher proposes that this is because highly expressive proprioceptive ability (Todd 1959 p.39) generates clear and free states of being (Todd 1959 p.281) in a participant. In addition an able bodied, healthy participant with an intention towards healing for others is likely to transfer healing to another participant or to an observer (Dossey 1993 p.80).
Ease of Communication

Observation and interpretation of a dance performance where the participants move freely from an inner knowing of where and how the whole body is in space and time is easy work (Cunningham 1998 p.18). The researcher or another observer may easily reach a refined quality of attention and clearly interpret the language of dance under such conditions (Schneer 1994 p.110). Dance performed by participants who are moving clearly and freely puts those who observe at ease. When the observer is at ease the participant draws the attention of that observer towards and into meaningful connection. This results in a more direct form of communication. Clarity is essential in this exchange or transference. The researcher is always on the alert for any movement or expression and in fact any change that may indicate a healing direction or the beginning of a healing process.

Defining Characteristics in Transference

Identifiable characteristics of a clear free state in a dance participant are steady concentration, peace, expansion and transcendence. Physical, mental and spiritual realms of healing and transformation. Safe dance and injury prevention are possible outcomes for the participant.

Artistic expression and a discovery of physical freedom can give rise to wonderment for participants and observers. This is to say transference of a clear free state is capable of moving across from the participant to touch an observer or another participant and alter the inner state of that observer or participant in a healthy and inspirational way.

Contact Improvisation and Transference

From time to time the research sessions include a loosely pre-structured improvisation sequence. The form of the sequence is a progressive series of four contact improvisations. Contact improvisations in this sequence are included with the aim of further exploring the transference phenomena. The sequence is relatively simple utilizing imagery (Gaynor 1995 p.222) and trust work. A pathway for healing transference becomes available in contact improvisation when the element of trust and the application of healing imagery are intrinsic to the creative dance process.

Reproducibility to Seek Out Reproducible Outcomes

The researcher also tests and observes this contact sequence with a wide range of participants in many different situations from group warm ups and workshops to choreographed performance works. The number of participants at any one time may vary from as few as two and up to as many as two hundred.

Obviously contact improvisation engages the sense of touch. The potential to heal via transference is more immediate, more tangible with human touch and the laying on of hands (Holy Bible NIV 1984 Luke 4:40 and Act 8:17) (Vithoulkas 1998 p.90) (Hahnemann 1988 Aphorism 288 p.309). The intention towards healing and the atmosphere surrounding
research participants again prove to be influential factors (Dossey 1993 p.80). (*Observations One, Two, Four, Six and Nine* and *Discoveries Two and Four* all refer to the effects of atmosphere.)

**Signs to Look for in Correlating Dance and Healing**

Without exception visible physical signs such as surrender (Gaynor 1956 p.222) and relaxation indicate degrees of receptivity and involvement. Participants also display euphoric states and speak afterwards with insight into difficulties in their lives. Participants volunteer to share their experiences of physical and emotional release, peace and healing.

The steps of the contact improvisation sequence are outlined in the following pages.
Three Blessings – Contact Sequence

Arrangement
All participants stand facing the center of the room in two concentric circles. For this first phase of the sequence participants work in pairs. One of the pair is from the outside circle and stands closely behind the other one of the pair who is in the inside circle.

Leadership
From a position as one of the outer circle the researcher initiates the process and leads the group throughout. The researcher demonstrates and explains the role of giving by working with one participant who is known as a receiver. The entire group is invited to follow along simultaneously with the demonstration and background musical accompaniment is provided.

Role Playing – There are two roles givers and receivers

1. The participants and the researcher standing in the outside circle play the role of the givers and bestow blessings on the participants who stand directly in front of them as part of the inner circle.

2. The participants of the inner circle play the role of the receivers and receive the blessings standing with feet slightly apart, usually with eyes closed, the whole body in an easy upright position arms relaxed by the sides.
**First Phase – approximately 3 minutes duration**

This phase of the sequence introduces three different contact movement experiences namely light relaxing touch; firm grounding touch and a release by complete pass.

**First – Light relaxing touch** – Contact through a gentle fingertip sun-shower of raindrops from the head all the way down to the toes

1. The giver positions their hands with palms softly together directly above the head of the receiver.

2. The giver opens both hands over the receiver’s head and lightly touches the receiver’s head with light soft fingertips moving as gently as light rain. The raindrops cover the receiver from the head to the neck, then across the right shoulder, down the right arm to include the right hand.

3. The raindrop movements continue upwards and across to cover the left shoulder, down the left arm and the left hand.

4. Next the raindrops cover the entire back and the back of the legs. The feet are the last to receive the raindrops.

**Second – Firm grounding** of the heel bones spreading down into feet and toes.

1. The giver shapes one hand around the back of each heel bone of the receiver squeezing several times with a gentle and firm downward pressure

2. The giver smooths the feet of the receiver with several strokes of the hands over the upper surface of the feet connecting the feet to the floor gently with a firm smooth downward pressure

**Third – Release** through one tension release pass from above downwards

1. The giver reaches up above the head of the receiver with the palms of the hands together. Both the giver and receiver inhale deeply.

2. Both exhale softly and slowly as the giver slowly and smoothly passes both hands from the head down to the toes in one continuous movement
Second Phase – approximately 2 minutes duration
This phase of the sequence includes contact and trust in weight bearing in four parts.

Arrangement changes
The givers move inwards to stand beside the one who is receiving from them and the two circles become one. Everyone begins the second phase standing one beside the other in one circle facing the center of the room. The participants all continue to work with the same partner.

Coming beside and taking the weight and swaying
1. The giver places the arm closest to the receiver around their waist or shoulders depending on body heights.

2. The receiver leans on the giver and rests their head on the giver’s shoulder. The giver may support the receiver’s head if needs be with their other free hand.

3. Both soften and bend their knees a little as the giver sets up and leads a gentle side to side swaying dance movement

4. The giver ceases the swaying movement and returns the receiver to an independent upright position and slowly releases the weight back to the receiver and ceases physical contact.

5. The giver returns to the original position standing behind the receiver
**Third Phase – approximately 3 minutes**

This phase includes three parts, contact by touch leading, shadow dancing and duo improvisation

**Arrangement**

The giver usually works behind the receiver. However approximately halfway through this phase the receiver may more often than not set out to dance quite freely in the space. Therefore the giver may have some difficulty in following closely all the time and may simply let the receiver dance solo anywhere in the space without any further physical contact.

1. The giver lightly touches the hips and or back of the ribs and or shoulders of the receiver who sways gently from side to side moving in direct response to the touch
2. The touch of the giver gradually develops hips, ribs or shoulder sways of the receiver into full free swinging motion of the whole body
3. By the application of lightly touch leading the giver initiates the receiver into what becomes a duo Improvisation. The duo improvisation can take both giver and receiver anywhere in the room. The duo may be in any style of free dance unique for each participant.

**Time to Talk**

The receiver and the giver chat briefly about their experiences.

**Transition**

The receiver and the giver exchange roles. Then the whole process is repeated.

**Conclusion**

The repeat of the sequence concludes with another chat time after the run through of the whole sequence.
RESEARCHER'S COMMENT

Inserted below is a voluntarily response written by a participant who is an artist who attends one research session only. The session on this particular occasion comprises a group of five participants who are artists and five participants who are a mixture of second and third year tertiary dance students.

PARTICIPANT RESPONSE

Written response in a letter dated 20th May 2002
participant code J.30

My Experience of Dance and Healing. For me healing means being perfectly well.

Just before I shut my eyes I saw the dancers coming behind us. I saw two dancers whom I knew, yet I had a strange feeling that all those dancers were not like human beings. Suddenly they seemed to be unspeaking heavenly creatures getting into their position to serve us. I felt excitement and anticipation.

The dancer behind me just put her hands around my shoulders and so gently slightly rocked with me. Then she led me through a few movements like rolling my arm sockets or stretching the neck. Because the dancer’s hands were on me I felt such a closeness, comfort and warmth. I also felt more and more relaxed because someone was so close behind me.

It was such a lovely feeling. I wanted to see how the others were enjoying themselves, so I opened my eyes to spy. Then suddenly I thought to myself all the others are married or engaged or have a boyfriend but I have been separated for ten years and I felt God specially reminding me that the Holy Spirit is the closest thing to me. He is under my skin. He can be always close to me if I let him. I felt peace and wanted to have this closeness with the Holy Spirit daily by just remembering what the dancer did with me.

I felt a smile on my face and thought if a dancer can bring the closeness of the Holy Spirit to me by holding and moving with me then a painter with a brush can do the same thing to bring the closeness of the Holy Spirit to the viewers.

Later the dancers danced while Psalm 139 was read. They all danced completely individually. I felt God was saying to me “You are ok as you are” such an acceptance and an approval came to us all from God as I watched the dancers move in their own style and their own rhythm. I realized that the ultimate well being is to be with the Holy Spirit.

It was a totally new experience for me. My daughter did ballet and I was more familiar with dancing than the average person. I never thought what I experienced was possible. Today I was not watching ballet but dancing with the dancer.
Observation Nine –
Choice and Thoughts

Harmony and Choice
An experience of simultaneous inner and outer harmony brings forth dance improvisations where by a fleeting thought, a flash of intuition or a moment of peace may bring a participant into a personal realization of the harmony and health connection (I. Gawler 1987 p.110). When a participant gains a practical working knowledge of how to sustain inner harmony (Grieg 1994 p.xiii) and maintain harmonious working conditions these inclusions can position a dancer within the realms of healing possibility. The participant can then choose to dance in a state of harmonious connection.

Soul Work in the Spirit
The inclusion of soul dance work (Gaynor 1956 p.221) and dance that is in the Spirit in conjunction with already established dance practices consolidates the wholistic framework of this research. Such inclusions enable the cultivation of harmonious working conditions (Buzan 1990 p.12) and facilitate harmonious states of being. Harmony allows for a natural pathway to health (I. Gawler 1984 p.55).

Dance improvisation with soul work refers to the inclusion of those parts of the participant that are deeper than cold cognition (Seligman 1994 p.245). The very heart of the person, qualities of character and spirit, core beliefs and the essential nature of each participant are included in the exploratory process. Therefore the soul of the participant is actively engaged in dance and observed by the researcher within the content of improvisational dance (Thomas 1995 cites Williams p.168).

An atmosphere wherein the presence of God or the Holy Spirit is experienced and acknowledged is a key factor in revealing to the participant the very nature of their soul. The harmony from such a presence is enlightening for the participants.

Thought Patterns
Dance practices that embrace soul and spirit within a wholistic framework foster elevated levels of an individual’s personal awareness. The participant who performs dance improvisation with heightened levels of awareness is well positioned for healing because that participant can see thoughts, internal dialogues, imagery and attitudes clearly and objectively (Todd 1959 p.281). Spiritual atmosphere, heightened awareness and internal objectivity enable the participant to discriminate between productive and unproductive thoughts and fixed ideas. Objectivity and clarity whilst dancing make the choice to develop healthier patterns of thinking an attainable choice for participants.
In addition a decision to change is accompanied by a resilient frame of mind. As changes are made new ideas and new patterns of thought cause hope to become operative. One possible outcome for the participant who experiences the side effects of thought reformation is a realization that healing can come from within and whilst dancing. The participant moves through an inner process of change that is initiated by way of an appropriate choice in the act of improvisational dance making.

Old patterns of thinking are reformed and the process out works to a re-patterning of movement pathways and shows increases in dance abilities in improvisation. The forces of harmony and the process of healing that moves from within the participant can lead to greater fulfillment (Fonteyn 1978 p.120) in artistic expression and indeed life.

Healing the Split

When a participant makes a choice for healing and inwardly moves to a position of responsibility (Carlson 1997 p.142) there is a renewed perspective as pathways of healing become apparent to that participant. Williams (1993 p.16) speaks of people who live as though they are victims and the way in which they are enabled to find new life. Through the activation of personal and conscious choice the movement of healing takes the participant away from victim hood to become an agent of their own life (Young - Eisendarath 1996 p.149). This sense of renewal in life is initiated in dance improvisations by conscious choice and empowered by an acknowledgement of personal responsibility.

Over the course of the project the researcher observes the participants making choices. As change occurs and the internal shifts find embodied dance expressions the improvisation work takes on lighter and easier qualities. The participant has the initiative and personal power to regroup and reform the patterns and processes of thought. The reformation finds outward coherence through dance creation. The participant more fully inhabits the physicality of their body and the space around them. As a consequence improvised dance composition has a visible integrity and the participant appears to take command and own the dancing and the space.

An activation of preconscious knowledge not accessible in linear intellectual inquiry is contacted in a participant’s willingness to perceive movement in improvisation and enrich bodily knowledge of the connection between thoughts (Hackney 1998 p.3). The chasm between the mind and the body, the conscious and the unconscious can be breached (Dalley 1987 p.171). The participant can make a choice (Ullman 1992 p.20) to let go or change disease habits and fixed patterns of thinking, moving and dancing.

Altered preferences give potential to a process of personal evolution and a healing of the split between body, soul and spirit. As health returns and hope rises there is a reinforcement of the participant’s inner strength. The power of personal choice infuses the dance improvisations and the researcher observes an uplifting and expansion of the dancer’s spirit.
Observation Ten
Conscious and Unconscious Imagery and Choice

Internal Pictures
An image in the brain comes to formation when a certain constellation of nerve cells becomes active. Internal imagery gives and reflects shape and texture into the symbolic physical expressions released in a participant's body (Franklin 1996 p.22) in dance improvisation. Form and content in the process of dance creation are influenced by the power of internal imagery (Buzan 1993 p.73).

Participants picture themselves and their situations from several perspectives. Internal pictures plus internal dialogues or self-talk form mental imagery. The pictures created in the mind build bridges between inner and outer reality (Dalley 1992 p.19). Images from both the conscious and unconscious mind can influence the content of the dance research work. Some images mediate between the conscious and unconscious mind and bring depth, subtlety or nuance into improvisational dance dialogues. Other images are instrumental in the development of physical dance techniques (Grieg 1994 p.14) and artistic expressions (Lewis 1984 p.54).

Creative Imagery

Recurrent themes to do with relaxation and harmony in association with dance and healing throughout this project are repeated here in connection with embodied imagery (Albright 1997 p.152). Research practice of systematic observation of embodied imagery brings the researcher into a deeper understanding of the integrative nature of the human organism's management of tension (Todd 1959 p.281).

Recall of Life Events
Neurosignatures are patterns of brain activation. The patterns are in storage and available to memory. To recall an image the brain reconstructs the patterns of activity from an original occurrence. The great storehouse of the brain holds all our life events and emotions (Benson
1996 p.80). Authentic dance arises out of unconsciously activated neurosignatures and contains the recall of original experiences. Muscle memory plays a part in the storage and release of these experiences (Benson 1996 p.80).

**Authentic Movement**

Contemporary dance improvisation in this project gives birth to authentic dance material (Turner cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.101) and recall and release from the weight and restrictions of past experiences. Free association movement is something Penny Lewis Bernstein describes as authentic movement in a way that parallels with dance movement created in this study (1981 p.3).

Free association, authentic movement from the primary process world of the unconscious provides not only images and verbal reflections but it can totally engage the person in re-experiencing the developmentally based environments that negatively influence natural development. These same types of movement experiences can allow the individual to explore the elements required for building strong foundations.

*(Theory and Methods in Dance – Movement Therapy 1981 p.3)*

**Choice and Imagery**

The participants discover and observe the influences from internal imagery upon their health and dance abilities (Grieg 1994 p.13) whilst in the act of dance making. The images that rise and form may be from long established patterns of the mind. Participants may realise their part in the patterning of imagery. Also previously unacknowledged images may be uncovered (Hackney 1998 p.15).

Alternatively the improvisation dance explorations investigate the effects of creative imagery aimed toward healing. The researcher may suggest or introduce healing imagery in direct and indirect ways (Observation One – Relaxation Facilitates Improvisation). Dance practice that investigates the power of imagery develops transformational awareness in the participant (Franklin 1996 p.19).

As a result of combining imagery work in dance explorations the researcher notes a key for change. This key involves the participants in intellectual processes of conscious decision-making and therefore a pro-active approach to dance and healing. Enthusiasm and inspiration are seen to accompany choices of this kind (Buzan, 1993 p.158 and p.159). When a participant’s intellectual will is consciously creative in healthy imagery formation and improvised dance exploration the power within embodied creative imagery awakens kinaesthetic intelligence (Observation Seven – Homeostasis And Kinaesthetic Sense).
The prospect of making a conscious choice to recreate internal imagery conducive to health and freedom is readily available to participants in this project. Conscious recreation of positive healing imagery can change past destructive or unhealthy patterns of unconscious thinking and transform the participants from the inside out in the creative process of dance improvisation (Grieg 1994 p.116). The direction of healing specific to this process is from the inside out. The pathway is from the deepest and most subtle organ of unconscious mind moving (McCabe 1997 p.67) outward through the body in an expression of dance creation (Chapter Two – The Challenge in The Mystery of Healing).

The Results of Embodied Imagery Explorations

The powerful, graphics of healthy internal pictures can change biology and pathology, thinking and communication, dance movement (Grieg 1994 p.14) and dance creation. Embodied imagery instigates dance research that is wholistic practice and consequently establishes wholistic health for participants.

Participants and observers appear to connect with the past, present and future (Benson 1996 p.80) when previously unacknowledged mental imagery is released in the embodied expression of dance improvisation (Albright 1997 p.151). Embodied images generate metaphorical dance messages of considerable import (Frank cited in Friedler and Glazer 1997 p.239). Participants and observers experience a particularly intimate communication. The relationship is one of communion. Spontaneous intimacy in the group activity of dance making in connection with healing processes is a result of communion. Communication of this nature is active in the many dance research sessions via a process of healthy exchange mediated by embodied imagery (Albright 1997 152).

Interpretation

Interpretations of the imagery coming from within each participant may resonate long after the dance improvisation session is over. Even if the actual dance steps seem to be lost (Moreland 1999 p.13) there is an afterglow of experience. In the afterglow the researcher witnesses the participants taking the time to reflect. As participants assimilate their experiences and come to a point of understanding the process takes time because the method is one of refinement. The participants are slow to leave the dance studio or theatre space where the session is conducted. Rather there is a tendency to linger and time obligations seem to be forgotten.

From an objective point of view the researcher partakes of the transformational process of embodied imagery. The researcher is absorbed into the participants’ stories simply by observing and gazing into the substance of dance improvisations. When the dancing is finished the researcher also experiences the afterglow and listens to and reflects with the participants. The researcher is aware of a reluctance to move on. The participants appear to be settling into a process that is leading to a moment of discovery (Discovery Two – Healing in Dance Time).
Decoding
Continuity of practice and familiarity with this form of exploratory contemporary dance reveals avenues where by dance material may be retrieved and replayed in another dance session. For participants and researcher certain elements become apparent and provide the scope for decoding and translation (Kremer 1987 p.76) of embodied dance imagery.

Four Elements
Elements include a tangible inner space (Pease 1976 p.50) where dance creation originates, an alteration of time sense, poetic form (Ullman 1992 p.21) and silent songs emerging. These four elements are significant in the improvisations when embodied imagery is instrumental to the healing quality of the dance.

With familiarity and analysis the physical metaphors and sculptures of a human being alive in the dancing moment of improvisation become readable and translatable. For the researcher and participants the dance phrases, motifs and themes transpire to give meaning and message (Hanstein cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.140).

One Example
A participant may spin and roll, twirl and circle the whole body with a seemingly inexhaustible momentum time and time again. This may be interpreted in a theme of winding or unwinding. The dance theme reoccurs in one session after another with the same participant. Thus the movements become familiar to the participant and the researcher. A sense of ease develops with progressive familiarity and removes clutter from the participant's mental space. At the point of ease in this process the workings of the mind become clear for the participant. The participant can recognize and own the mental images as they come into play and identify their origins and associations. With each exploration the participant's body releases more of the pattern.

Eventually the participant no longer appears to be driven by the movement. This is the stage when new and healthier images may be formed spontaneously, by suggestion and by conscious choice.

As if in a dreamtime the researcher may see a dream like quality as the participant becomes capable of observing the pattern. The research sessions become dreamlike and the dreams of healing and dance come true as the pattern runs its course to completion and the participant dances new patterns of movement originating from newly chosen images.
Another Illustration

A way to introduce imagery and dance improvisation that aims to develop a sense of being well is described on the following page. The example that follows is in a simple format and suitable for participants of all ages and from any dance background. Of course there are many simple ways to give an experience of the power of mental imagery to participants.

In the following guided imagery meditation core elements included are improvisation, relaxation, suggestion, surrender, choice, memory and position because they are effective in healing and dance.
A Guided Imagery Meditation

Incorporating relaxation, stillness, memory of health and dance (Benson 1996).

Find a comfortable position ...... may be lying down ...... Perhaps sitting is best for you ...... or standing ... you can choose what is comfortable for you ...... when you are comfortable become aware of your whole body ...... and ...... put yourself at ease ...... Can you make yourself as comfortable as possible? ...Perhaps close your eyes and simply rest for a moment ...... Now move to an even more comfortable position and rest again ..............

Gradually become aware of the movement of the breath ...... Concentrate very softly ...... Without tension in the mind, without any force ...... and relax any part of your body that seems to be holding tension ...... Let the feet ...... relax ...... let the legs relax ...... soften the muscles ...... and relax deeply into the bones of the pelvis ...... and the muscles of the abdomen ...... let go ...... and relax ...... Release any tensions in the back ...... and shoulders ...... relax and breathe easily ...soften the muscles of the chest area and shoulders ...... and neck ...... let go ...soften the muscles of the arms and hands ...... the rhythm of the breath can lead the way into complete relaxation ...... relax a little more with each breath ...... feel the tension drain away ...... Softening the facial muscles ...... the muscles around the eyes and the muscles of the mouth and throat ...... Breathe ...... and relax the whole head ...... let go ...... and just simply be ......

Aware of the stillness ...... the physical stillness of your body ...... and the sense of relaxation ...... there is the movement of the breath......the soft concentration ...... and the stillness ...... and the feeling of relaxation ... the stillness is there after the breath in ...... and before the breath out ...... and between the breath out .......... and the breath in .......... let go into that stillness between each breath ...... Now move one little finger just a little ...... and follow the sensation of the movement as it travels up the arm ...... and then when it is finished ...... there is the stillness again ...... let go into the stillness and relax ...... the stillness ...... expands ...... the breath is moving the body ...... the rest is ...... stillness ...... let go a little more into the stillness.

Now ............ Remember a time when you felt really well ...... or perhaps a time when you experienced healing after a sickness ...... think about the experience ...... or re-picture the situation you were in ...... when you felt well ...... go into detail and remember the way you felt well ...... Remember the feeling of being well ...... what it feels like ... and let that feeling spread through the whole body ...... the sense of well being ...... and a sense of being at ease ...... in every part of you ...... a feeling of wellness ...... If you have never really felt well or can’t remember a time of good health take a little longer and dream about what it could be like. Take the time to day dream to see and feel wellness all through your body.

Gradually wriggle your toes .......... open your eyes and ............ stretch ...... change positions or roll over and begin to move .......... Move with the feeling of being well ...... and continuing to allow the feeling of wellness to spread into all the deeper areas of the body.

Allow the movements to transpose into dance .......... and continue to dance with the awareness of wellness and feel that sense of wellness moving throughout the entire body ..........

Dance with that memory of wellness as part of every moment in an improvisation ...... Expand the feeling of wellness throughout the dance ...... and be well as you dance ...... Enjoy the memory and sense the feeling of dancing well more and more with each movement in your dancing ...... Create a well dance.
Observation Eleven – Beyond Words

Elusive Element
There is an element of dance improvisation where the activity from the unconscious mind becomes visible within the participants movements. When a trained eye perceives unconscious expressions in the shapes and dynamics of dance improvisations translation or interpretation is not always possible. When prompted to talk about their dance improvisation participants are capable of articulation and explanation in varying degrees yet some areas are never verbalised.

The researcher witnesses that the unconscious can release through embodied expressions a text that no one can interpret. In a situation of this nature the dance vocabulary completely eludes any real translation into words at all (Ullman 1992 p.21).

The participants and the researcher sense that perhaps it is better that this element beyond words is left without explanation or translation. There may be no words to grasp or words may cause trouble or the search for words may be a destructive process? In fact this is perhaps a situation with no need for words. Perhaps the improvisation beyond words is pure dance?

Elusive dance material is observed and validated by dance practitioners and authors Blom and Chaplin.

Often the knowledge contained in the system cannot be translated into words; in fact, words may cloud or warp the understanding, execution, or communication of that knowledge.

(The Moment of Movement 1988 p.14)

Elusive Emotion
Occasionally a release of pure emotion is witnessed as a flood of tears or laughter in the dance activity. The participants cannot articulate or describe why or what they are crying or laughing about (Friedler and Glazer 1997 p.85). A free release as unconscious emotion surfaces to be embodied in dance improvisation apparently needs no translation.

Supposition
The researcher supposes that perhaps the emotion finds a form of complete expression inclusive of a complete kind of understanding that does not require any further articulation. When the unconscious mind (Ullman 1992 p.19) finds satisfactory physical expression in dance the unconscious does not actually require entry or processing in the conscious mind of
the participant (Fitt 1988 p.266). Perhaps this element is rarely spoken of simply because conscious thought is by passed.

Indicative Qualities
The dance material beyond words may be a vent for past, untapped emotional responses, intellectual insights and instinctual drives (Albright 1997 p.151). Qualities of absorption, connection (Blom and Chaplin 1942 p.125 & 126) and rites of passage indicate the element beyond words.

The researcher can sense the participant’s free association with an inward direction (Gaynor 1956 p.59) and a particular way of being when this element is active and perceivable in the improvisation. The way of being is unencumbered and the participants trust the improvisational process (Schneer 1994 p.55) in an undeclared and carefree way.

The element beyond words in dance improvisation is a silent treasure for the researcher. Not a lot can be written about this quality and yet one must not simply leave an empty space on the paper because just as silence speaks similarly the element beyond words in dance improvisation also makes a communication.

PARTICIPANTS COMMENTS

Journal entry 20th July 2003 – participant code 2. C

Dancing the journey of our life I felt I needed triple the time, everyone moving too quickly, slow down, slow down. Falling into a grief stricken period, I realized how easy it was to express, but there was no feeling of HURT. There was no feeling of needing to verbalise anything. Feeling deeply nourished by this session.

Journal entry 20th August – participant code 7. C

Dancing in the spirit …… Nothing can describe it! I felt heavy and then released. I cannot seem to put words to this feeling in dance improvisation. Words would only degrade it! The Spirit has no limits!!!
Observation Twelve –

Creative Process and Aesthetic Distance

The mid-way point of aesthetic distance is a treasure chest in the therapeutic application of creative processes in dance (Chesner 1994 p.116). Creative and artistic qualities innate to dance improvisation activate the relative factor of aesthetic distance. The visual impact of here and now freshly created quality of contemporary improvisation engages participant and observers in a graphic and atmospheric experience by means of degrees of objectivity. Through dance improvisations that participants create aesthetic distance is a conduit for healing available to and for both participants and observers.

Transitional Space

Aesthetic distance provides a transitional space for participants and observers because the transitional space is a place to travel through that is somewhere inside, outside and between participants and observers. Liberation from disease and the freedom to be fully alive is an experience or at least a glimpsed experience in the balancing act of aesthetic distance. (Landy 1986 p.118)

Flow State and Aesthetic Distance

Contemporary dance improvisation gives way for synthesis and providence. When a participant’s heart and mind are on the same page original movement created and generated easily in the ever-changing ambience of the flow state (Csíkszentmihály 1997 p.27) gives an informed sense and the feeling of serenity. The different contents of individual experiences come into synchrony in the dancing space to activate ease (Rockwell cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.192) and healing. The sense of being alive in the moment and in tune with the motion allows (Cheney cited in Friedler and Glazer 1997 p.84) for spontaneity, play, aesthetic distance and intuition.

The Point of Liberation

R. Landy (1986 p.119) explains that the unconscious mind becomes accessible at the point of liberation. The moment of infinite possibilities releases playfulness and creativity through aesthetic distance. Potential for the new and unknown qualities of here, now and beyond are seen in symbolic dance forms generated from unconscious imagery.

The leap between the unknown world of the unconscious mind and more known conscious mind, the dream state and the waking state becomes negotiable and natural with this kind of dance activity. Mental images trace unconscious impressions and emerge in physical
expression (Blom & Chaplin 1988 p.17). The body transposes the information and composes a dance in graphic immediacy and in so doing seems to bypass the intellect.

It is as though the body has a mind of its own (Humphrey 1959, cites Doubler p.33) (Gaynor 1956 p.47). The participant or observer may connect fragments of experiences, physicalise dreams, make sense or understandings of tensions and gaps, pains and blocks or even just simply be (Monk 1990 p.303).

_Art Field_
Aesthetic distance is a dance improvisation art field where conventional intellectual patterns are transcended and conditional and conceptual boundaries cease to interrupt creative flow. In an air like space of aesthetic distance a participant’s inner position is afloat and the dance dialogue is explicit.

_Aesthetic Distance_
Dance improvisation articulates a language of movement via kinaesthetic intelligence and via creative process (Albright 1997 p.5) Healing finds a vehicle to move with and entwines the participant in the harmony of creative flow (Winearls 1990 p.58). The intermingling and co-existence of these two phenomena healing and creative process become apparent with aesthetic distance.
Observation Thirteen –

Dance in Time

Time And Dance Unfold
Core themes almost without exception in the corpus of literature on dance studies are of motion in time and space (Kremer 1987 p.76) (Ullman 1992 p.20) (Cunningham 1998 p.180). To illustrate, a property of dancing time is the progression forward from one second to the next. Improvised dance simply unfolds as time goes on (Pease 1966 p.28).

What is behind time generally is a reflection of our culture, an element of this work a day world and measurable in worldly terms in musical time and steps in motion. By the application of finer degrees in observation, dancing time is measured by additional means such as levels, direction changes, motifs, themes, inner rhythms (Humphrey 1959 p.105) dynamics and more.

The researcher sees in this series of qualitative sessions what seems to be directly related to time and space phenomenon denoted by Todd (1937 p.281), Blackmer (1931 p.26), Ullman (1992 p.20) and many other dance authors in their own writings. However some occurrences in this dance project are outside frameworks given by these authors and the researcher attempts to address these initially here in Observation Thirteen and more broadly in Chapter Four, Discovery Two – Healing In Dance Time.

Where Time has no Meaning
Once participants are into the deeper or higher experiences where time has no meaning or relevance they are dancing in a condition that is the opposite of distraction. Concentration is positioned in one open place and no longer making references to conditions such as keeping in time with music and making the movement conventionally effective (Woolliams 1978 p.122). The participants are engrossed in a state of concentration that is absorbed by creative flow.

The state of a participant’s being in the flow of dance creation gives relaxation from any usual sense of time. Now eternity takes to the floor and dances beyond conventional space of dance time. Engrossed in metaphysical experience in what can easily be termed eternal time participants are transported by subliminal dance dialogues without words.

Time Travel Phenomena
As dance material is self-resourced participants experience uniqueness, individuality and independence or is it freedom? (Tufnell and Crickmay 1993 cite Karczag p.48). The participants
become increasingly aware of the self-resourced inner processes when improvisation becomes familiar practice. Dancer and author Gay Morris describes this self representational quality as the poetic time travel of the individual. In dance, of course, the notion of literally freezing anything or anyone in time is illusory, limited to a momentary choreographic manoeuvre (...) the dancer moves outside language into a space that we enter only when we no longer are.

(Gay Morris *Moving Words* 1986 p.122 and p.123)

Consequently the concept of time travel lends support to the present view or position in this research work. And that view is seen when dance and healing processes come into synthesis time sense changes from worldly measurements and becomes elusive.

Time in this instance assumes a vastly more spacious role. The participants may be at one in musical time and also time-traveling through prophetic perceptions, historical references, transitional space and more. The participants and the observers can be in that place "where you are, when you don’t know where you are" (Tufnell and Crickmay 1993 cites Smith p.64).
Chapter Four

Discoveries
as a Result of Observation
Introduction

See I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up. Do you not perceive it?

(Holy Bible NIV 1984 Isaiah 43:19)

The hope of unearthing something new in the midst of practical dance action is core motivation in the conduct of this project. When on the surface very little progress is being made or nothing new appears to happen in research procedures perseverance is sustained by the prospect of discovery (Holy Bible NIV 1984 Hebrews 12:1) Deliberation on primary research criteria of learning, exploration and observation is always subject to the researcher’s expectation that something new will be found (Holy Bible NIV 1984 Romans 12:2).

Each of the Thirteen Observations in Chapter Three contains findings made along the way. In all project areas participants, observers and researcher make discoveries of personal or professional value. To include discoveries of this general kind is beyond the scope of this paper. General discoveries fuel individual and group interest and give momentum to exploratory dance improvisation processes.

Here in Chapter Four are four discoveries entitled Uncovering The Mystery of Healing, Healing in Dance Time, Prayer and Configuration and Other Gifts. Exploratory sessions including all the different groups of participants stretch across the period of three years and provide contexts for the discoveries. Phenomena from the discoveries effortlessly emerge from and merge into practical research sessions and they occur and reoccur from reproducible circumstances.

Discoveries are made when the researcher is observing practical dance work. Therefore the discoveries are written about from the researcher’s point of view. The findings are specific to the healing properties of contemporary dance improvisation within the context of this project.

These four discoveries of dance and healing phenomena make considerable impact on research processes, researcher and participants in terms of inspiration, transformation and healing.
Discovery One –

Uncovering the Mystery of Healing

Research Methods of Practice Bring Familiarity

The practice of continuously seeking out healing via close and objective study of dance improvisations gives the researcher ongoing contact with healing phenomena in association with faith. The mystery of healing in correlation with dance improvisation observed in exploratory sessions is demystified because the researcher becomes familiar with movements of healing.

Directions and patterns of healing represent again and again in contemporary dance improvisations. Observation One – Relaxation Facilitates Improvisation, Observation Three – Spiritual Considerations, Observation Nine – Choice And Thoughts and Observation Ten – Conscious And Unconscious Imagery And Choice record some of these patterns of healing. From the researcher’s perspective the element of mystery in association with dance and healing reduces as exploratory work establishes a visual field for the expression of healing directions.

Inside the Researcher’s Mind

In addition to the researcher’s outward focus upon investigation of dance and healing phenomena is an internal incremental process of transformation. As the practice of objective observation develops so too does an attitude of openness to discovery. Therefore open observation takes precedence over critical conditioned thinking in the researcher’s mind. During this internal process of exchange the researcher gradually yields internal conditioned responses in favour of learning new ways to see, think and write about the dance activity.

In a step-by-step exchange established thinking patterns are waived for new ways of thinking and a tension of effort in concentration develops. Interpretation and articulation of what actually is observed (Hanstein cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.145) sustains this tension further. Whilst tension between inner and outer processes is initially experienced as a struggle in the mind of the researcher the result is rewarding. The combination of expectation and a willingness to simply and openly observe improvisations reveals the nature of healing in dance. As a result the challenge and sense of mystery associated with healing ceases for the researcher.

First Stage in the Process of Familiarisation

To monitor the movements of healing in the initial stages of observing dance explorations the researcher draws from medical methods. Traceable movements and directions of healing
in dance are observed and recorded drawing on medical models such as correlations of symptom constellations and Herring’s Law of Cure (The Challenge In The Mystery Of Healing – Directions Of Healing). Testimonials or accounts given by participants who experience an increase in levels of wellness and restoration of health are applicable (Journal Extracts and Appendix Four – Participants’ Responses and Appendix Seven – Videos).

The methods first applied are similar to homeopathic case taking and depend upon the researcher’s training and professional experience. One difference from homeopathic practice is the role of participation in presentation and reading of symptoms. Specifically the researcher is taking the case of the participant in the performance of improvisational dance rather than sitting together in consultation. The researcher reads the general symptoms of the disease disturbance and any characteristics signs that may individuate the disease experience of a particular participant whilst that participant is actually performing dance improvisation. This means that embodied languages of dance improvisations are read, interpreted and recorded (Hypatheses and Observation Two – Embodied Language).

Thus reading a disease picture in a first improvisation session enables a documented reference point for making evaluation. Subsequent readings taken in follow up sessions are accumulated in order to compare and contrast evaluations of a participant’s patterns of progress towards health. Thereby researcher and participant can estimate if the participant is worse or better in both general and specific areas on a session by session basis and in the over all research time.

**Transition into the Second Stage**

After several months of applying methods of case taking the researcher judges the process as too individualizing and too cumbersome for a project of this size and duration. Documentation of paper cases is an approach considered by the researcher as useful to underpin practice and establish familiarity with dance and healing phenomena in the early stages.

**Second Stage in the Process of Familiarisation**

Concurrent with the disease approach the researcher also assesses obvious and general signs of health to gauge improvement or deterioration of participant’s health in successive sessions. Here again an expectation
and hope for healing, health and transformation in the creation of dance improvisation is applied (The Challenge In The Mystery Of Healing).

The movement of signs and symptoms away from disease processes towards healing directions (Chapter Two – Boundaries) in dance can be observed and documented specifically for an individual participant (Appendix Ten – Case Studies – restricted access primary data) and more generally with couples or groups of participants.

Stage Three in the Process of Familiarisation
To stay within boundaries the researcher hopes to find innovative methods homogeneous with contemporary creative dance arts practice in recording the movement of healing. With hope in mind the researcher yields to the practice and process of observation, interpretation and articulation of dance and healing phenomena through a series of thematic studies.

As already stated the methods of observation are essentially as objective (Hypothesis p.21) and unprejudiced as possible (Schneer 1994 p.56). The practice of objectivity is commented upon in Observation Nine – Choice and Thoughts and Observation Twelve – Creative Process and Aesthetic Distance. And for the duration of the project the researcher exercises all available resources and abilities in order to see, to read and re-read and translate the dance material in an unprejudiced fashion through a series of themes. Coincidental with this exercise is the already stated bias towards health outcomes for participants.

Physical, psychological and social signs and symptoms are evidence of healing to the researcher. These are seen in dance movement qualities and read from the content of messages and meanings of dance creation. The signs of mental balance are features specific to both dance and healing. These signs are recorded in Observation Seven – Homeostasis and Kinaesthetic Sense. Equally important in social contexts are styles of communication. Observation Ten – Embodied Imagery attempts to convey the workings of messages and meaning.
The Fourth Stage of Familiarisation

Tensions between inner and outer processes are minimized at this stage. The researcher is no longer straining to do the work (Observation Twelve – Creative Process and Aesthetic Distance p.139–14). There is no strain because observation becomes a natural part of the overall creative dance experience and causes tension within the researcher’s mind to reduce greatly in comparison with initial stages of the investigation. The researcher grows confident in the process by observing the health benefits for participants as they too become familiar with healing in exploratory improvisation practice.

The combinations of skills required are an extension of the researcher’s professional experience as a dancer, teacher, choreographer and homeopath. The factor of aesthetic distance is a strong supporting element in objectivity (Thomas 1995 p.170).

Woven into the transformational fabric of observation for the researcher or performance of healing dance improvisation for the participants is the subtle, yet powerfully active influence from faith. Thereby differentiation between pathways and directions of disease and healing become familiar and clearly recognisable for the researcher.

Place Where Healing and Dance Intersect

Participants express the changes in levels of health via movement language, dance dialogues and dance creation processes during improvisations. Also the participants consistently speak, write or draw creatively about their healing experiences. The integrative nature of dance improvisation as a wholistic arts practice is a self-referencing and inter-dependent process for the participants. The fact that the process of exploration absorbs the participants in improvisation is important in developing familiarity with healing patterns. The participants are not looking towards the researcher for help or developing dependence on the process.

Familiar places where healing and dance intersect are accessible via a range of key pathways. An indication of these may be seen throughout the thirteen observational themes that make up Chapter Three. Keys such as inner reality, spirituality and the nature of soul plus the power of choice, creative flow in association with time travel and configuration.
The depth and direction of healing dance appears to be distinctive for each individual participant. However particular participants are not singled out in the researcher’s observational writings rather general terms of reference are applied. In lieu of confidentiality specific references to an individual are avoided such distinctive qualities are used only to inform writing in Chapter Three. Also Appendix Four – Participants’ Responses – Introduction gives further validation of this point.

Conclusions to Uncovering the Mystery

Uncovering the mystery of healing reveals a definitive process of dance creation performed in atmospheres charged by spiritual movement. At the conclusion of practical explorations and at the time of writing this paper the challenge in the mystery of healing is no longer active for this researcher.

Underneath the mystery the researcher finds holy presence capable of bringing experiences of healing to many participants. The researcher discovers the holy presence to be the Holy Spirit alive and active in healing communities of Christian believers who dance.
Discovery Two – Healing in Dance Time

Perceptions of Time

Through observation of dance improvisation the researcher discovers phenomena to do with an alteration in perceptions of time in correlation with dance and healing. Obviously the close alliance of healing with dance can pose many puzzling questions none more so than those arising from an alteration in the sense of time. When healing is in progress in this project exploratory contemporary dance improvisation is often seen to move outside common and conventional references to time. In so doing the perception of unconventional time sparks off a line of investigation that leads to a discovery of healing in dance time.

Keeping Up Appearances in Time

Healing in dance time appears to be unrelated to concepts of time commonly applied within conventional dance contexts. To move in time with the music and in time with others within a dance (Woolliams 1978 p.122) and a scheduled time for class, rehearsal or performance articulates the typical application of time standards in common use for the researcher and participants.

Current social time constructs are formed around being busy, wasting time, arrival and departure times, timetables and calendars. Time categories in core culture and surface manifest culture in daily life are given pride of place in today’s a work a day world (Hall 1983 p.14). Habituated values and standards of time are cultured into participants, observers and the researcher a like. Yet something happens to change the understanding and value of time within the context of Dance and Healing?
The Signs of Time Change
The researcher takes note of and puzzles over alterations of time sense throughout the project. Reoccurring factors of change in perceptions of time can be seen in Chapter Three. To illustrate Observation One – Relaxation where slow motion and meditative dance are capable of incorporating an experience of eternity. Observation Four – Inner Stillness mentions time travel and poetic time travel. Four elements of improvisation appear in conjunction with an alteration in time sense plus a reference to dreamtime can be read from Observation Ten. Also time is actually the subject of Observation Thirteen – Dance In Time. Phenomena of time travel present repeatedly in research sessions and beg several questions (Dossey 1993 cites Davies p.119).

What becomes of time in healing dance?
If healing triggers off alterations in time sense how does that happen? What is happening to time when the participants are healing? Why are participants reluctant to leave the studio (Observation Four – Inner Stillness) at the end of a dance improvisation session that involves time travel? What influences the movements of dance improvisation performance with a sense of ease and lightness when an alteration in the perception of time is present? Why is no mention made of the time lost when a session runs over an agreed conclusion time?

Looking into the Last Question First
To illustrate how the last question arises: during the first year of the research a structured and formal presentation of improvisations with approximately thirty observers continues forty minutes over time. As observers enter the studio they are handed the running order for a presentation that is entitled Poetic Time Travelers. Perhaps the power of suggestion coming from the title is responsible for the presentation running over time? Who can say? All present including observers, participants and researcher are aware of a pre-set twenty minutes time limit. Prior to the commencement of the presentation one observer takes the role of official timekeeper.

Without interruption or declaration from anyone the presentation continues beyond the time limit and takes one full hour. In conversations directly following the presentation two observers speak with the researcher and describe experiences of personal healing at the same time that they are watching the dance work. Perhaps the process of healing runs a course in time and therefore simply takes the time required for that healing? Such an idea is pure speculation from the researcher.

During the presentation of Poetic Time Travelers the researcher sometimes speaks to the observers and participants. However the majority of the time the researcher introduces each segment and observes proceedings. The researcher only becomes aware of actual time by the clock when the presentation finishes and every one involved is late for their next appointment.
Time sense that allows a complete disregard for time constraints in correlation of healing and contemporary dance improvisation is a perception of time that seems easy to justify. Perhaps everyone is completely occupied and absorbed and time is simply forgotten. However within general practical exploratory sessions this does not appear to be the situation. From a point of observation perceptions of time in the areas of time travel, timelessness, reluctance to leave and a sense of eternity or heavenly time remain indefinable for the researcher.

**Time Past, Time Present and Future Time**

Healing in dance time is a most amazing phenomenon. To be more specific dance in healing time is far beyond conventional mainstream dance practices both to observe and experience. Amazing because usual time parameters of here and now are no longer a force to be reckoned with. The content of movements and modes of expression in the dance action in fact blur any sense of what is from the past, present and future. Thus structure and compliance to a framework for time or a timetable cease to be effective. Attempts by the researcher to define or classify the space and time of healing dance are fascinating and stimulating (Hall 1983 p.15).

**The Value of Appearances and Experiences**

The researcher watches closely and perceives the following three characteristic signs of time travel.

1. The improvisation appears effortless and airborne and these qualities could well tie in with Laban's theories on the relationship between weight, space, time and effort (Ullman 1992 p.21 and ). Participants demonstrate and describe experiences of incredible lightness. The researcher senses all limitations falling away from participants. In the experience of lightness participants appear enabled to do all things well.

2. Participants reach a particular depth and breadth of involvement in the process of dance creation. The researcher sees this as the vital factor for reaching the time altering dynamics of creative and healing dance experience.

3. In the general sense it is important to note an obvious physiological sign seen in conjunction with *Dance and Healing* time travel. That is the participants' faces reflect a rosy glow. The researcher interprets the facial glow as radiance.

**Creative Place in Time and Space**

The creative place or space where and when dance making happens and the place where healing dance movements come out from lend support to an alteration from any conventional or usual sense of time phenomena. This time free dance work does not appear as a technique or trained style from any particular dance pedagogy. This is happening, healing art in the making with a timing all of its own.
One threshold for discovery obvious to the researcher comes via the perception of a stress free creative place where everything for the participant is moving in synchrony and in the time of healing. The internal timing mechanism is keeping the participant in step with biological time (Hall 1983 p.16), dance time and healing time simultaneously. Another threshold is quality of surrender visible in every moment of each and every dance action emanating from the participant. Healing time travel appears to carry the participant along for a ride to dance in a free association with time.

**Transition and Surrender**

When participants experience a transition phase in dance from the usual sense of time and make a shift over and into the free flow of dance creativity they appear to surrender and move more within the action. The researcher sees no sign of resistance coming from within.

Complete surrender into the moment appears to be the key into the flow of time travel in improvisation. The participant is seen to surrender through the movement of dance into the time of the moment that is happening now. The time of now is a dance moment (Pollack and Humphrey 1993) and as the next moment comes the participant is right there involved and totally engaged in the moment of dance. This happens in the next moment and so on. The point of time, the dance improvisation and the participant are all in each and every successive moment of movement (Blom and Chaplin 1988). Who is to say what comes first (Dossey M.D. 1993 cites Davies p.119)?

Healing is happening as participants are creating improvisation. Those who observe this phenomenon are seen to engage in each creative dance moment with participants. Characteristically all present in the dance studio remain oblivious to any usual sense of the over all time the process actually takes.

**Experiential Journey**

The space and meter of healing time in dance does not stand on formality nor does it respect a particular person. It is of another time and travels a land that is more spirit and light than muscular movement, more heaven than earth. Present time perceptions are in suspension and participants are seen to be at once lost in time travel whilst fully absorbed into the experiential dance creation journey.

Hanging on to or trying to make time travel happen does not seem to work. Rather it slips into and over dance improvisations and is experienced as a fluid process in three transferable parts. The parts are seamlessly incorporated into the dance making (Ullman 1992 p.76).

Firstly dance phenomena in time travel carry a tangible pervasive atmosphere that surrounds participants and experienced with a sense of invitation (Dossey 1993 p.87) or a time of waiting. The atmosphere is characterized by an actual shift in the colour and brightness of light around the participants (Dossey 1993 p.50). The light is a haze (Discovery Four – Other
Gifts) with a golden glow when dance improvisations are in time travel. An experience of transition into the second part is recognized by a characteristically quiet expectancy or availability and hope in process of dance improvisation. The third part is seen as a gradual letting go for the participant and a shift from physical, mental and emotional positioning into the free flow of dance making and dance creation.

**The Space of Healing Time**

Boundaries in dance and healing time are dynamically fluid therefore the prevailing quality of the dance work is smooth. Transitions of weight and directional changes in dance movements slip easily from one place to another place. The researcher can distinguish a simultaneous coming together of all creative points as ideas, interactions, musicality, movement, composition and expression interweave.

The more familiar constructs usually applied in dance creation produce work via phrases and sections that develop through experimentation and repetitions. Such constructs are not applied in the light and fluid improvisational space of dance and healing time. The participants are observed to be creating dance in a time, space and atmosphere that seems to draws references from who knows where?

**Beyond Exploratory Workshop Sessions the Healing Goes On**

Perhaps dance in healing time can be described as dancing in heavenly time? It may to take an eternity and a moment and is certainly less quantifiable than healing processes. The phenomena of time travel are expansive in a community sense as seen when the researcher surrenders processes of the research work over to participants who incorporate the work into their individual creative dance practices.

Initially healing is experienced from within the context of a small circle of participants attending a group exploratory improvisation session. Secondly as individual participants network outside the research time with other dance groups the works produced reflect aspects of exploratory sessions. The healing processes of improvisation are thereby integrated effectively into more mainstream performance. Participants' larger dance works involve wider circles of dance people, musicians, artists and audiences in the community.

Exploratory improvisation sessions initiate healing directions with a flow on effect that actually ripples outward in ever widening circles in community (Price 1996 p.49). After a series of research sessions' participants instil practices from their experiences of time travel into more general choreographic works and dance productions.

Participants include healing connections found through this research in their performance work even two years after the original session times. The creation and performance of such productions are also shown in surrounding dance and art communities. Presentations and
performances for the general public are both formal and informal in style. (See Appendix One – Chronology of Research Activity and view videos entitled Glow, ADV Cloud and One Plus One.)

Letting go and observing the research work in contexts beyond the formal circumstances of exploratory dance improvisation sessions is a conscious choice for the researcher. The researcher has the happy fascination of simply seeing what happens and how far the practices of Dance and Healing move out.

Creation, production and performance augments a process initiated in research sessions and enables participants to access deeper and wider levels of personal healing in relationship with broader community contexts (Cunningham 1998 p.128). From the researcher’s perspective healing time travels through these community dance works and each encounter may be noted as an out-working of research processes (Price 1996 p.49). The researcher simply looks, learns and is inspired a little more each time healing dance moves onwards and outwards.

Containing Timelessness and This Paper

Alternative to ways of observation and interpretation are direct objective inferences. To this extent therefore the perception of time in this project and in relation with other writings on time perception may have academic value for insight, comparison and discussion. However to assist the researcher's understanding at this discovery stage of the present work consideration of this type of discussion is perhaps premature and beyond the boundaries of this paper.

Areas to further investigate the seminal ideas in this Discovery are found in the works of scientists, physicists, theologians and philosophers. Davies writes about the belief of many religious people into the technicalities of the logical relationship between time and eternity. Apparently from a religious perspective insights into this subject of time perception are provided by revelation rather than academic debate (Davies 1995 p.25).

Perception of time is a subject of much scientific debate. Space enters into (Observation Thirteen – Dance In Time) the equation when questions are asked about time perception. Where are the participants in space when they are dancing, healing and traveling through time? Chapman (1995 p.146) asks if time travel is possible then who can say where the time travelers are? The short answer is that the time travelers of this project are in the space of dance and healing time.
Discovery Three –
Prayer and Configuration

Working with the Unexpected

Unexpectedly a most remarkable discovery is made when the researcher prays and walks in circles on the perimeter of the room during dance improvisations. To be specific the discovery is with regard to prayer in conjunction with creative dance processes.

The researcher finds difficulty in articulating the specific significance and meaning behind the configuration of circles in the context of this discovery (Ullman 1992 p.21). Nevertheless the researcher regards active physical involvement in the circular pathway as a key into this discovery. The circular configuration is considered crucial because the researcher is no longer observing from the usual position of sitting on the side of the room. Also a degree of objectivity is lost as the researcher actually walks around the room praying and observing all at the same time.

About Walking In Circles

The pattern and practice of the circular prayer walk are relatively simple to describe. Observations and interpretations of transformational dance creation as performed within the circles follow.

The pathway of the prayer walk is more often than not at the very edge of the room so as to encircle the participants wherever they dance in the space. Occasionally the circle may close in towards the center of the room when one participant or a small group of approximately three participants improvise in a central position.

The pattern that effects the transformation in dance creation is a continuous circular walk in a clockwise direction. The clockwise direction is seen to positively influence the improvisations. The researcher is just walking around the room praying silently and observing the improvisations when this discovery is first made.

How Does the Researcher Walk?

Slowly is the answer, slower than a march and slower than a stroll. The steps are taken in a quiet, natural style with bare feet. Socks are worn if the temperature is low. The researcher’s hands are relaxed and swinging with the arms in the natural rhythm of walking. Ceremony, tradition and ritual are not considered as influential in this simple activity. For the most part the researcher walks around the room praying silently and sometimes to rest the eyes or concentrate on the prayers a few steps are made with eyes closed.
What are the Prayers About?
Audible words are not spoken. The prayers are silent within the researcher's mind in the form of repetitive invocation. The words are an invitation for the Holy Spirit (Dossey 1993 p.87). The three words of prayer are “Come Holy Spirit”. Occasionally the researcher sings spontaneously in the Spirit and continues to walk. A few times when a participant spontaneously joins in the prayer walk both the participant and the researcher may sing in the Spirit together. On rare occasions the researcher may also ask a participant to join the silent prayer walking.

Experimentation
To experiment with different possibilities the walking steps are taken sideways, forwards and backwards. Trials are made with fast and slow walking and running and dancing, lines and circles. The circular walk is tested with and without prayers and songs, speaking the prayers out loud and saying prayers before, during and after the dance improvisations. All the above are attempted in varying combinations. The simple natural walk in clockwise circles with prayer in silent invocation or songs in the Spirit brings transformation to dance improvisations. Incidentally anticlockwise circles simply do not feel right for the researcher.

What Happens Inside the Circles?
The researcher prayer walks in circles in many sessions over the three years of this project with many groups of participants and watches again and again as a marked increase of creative flow occurs. Creative flow in dance improvisation observed by this researcher is moving inward and outward within the circular configuration. Ullman who revises Laban's work in Mastery of Movement considers the motion factor of flow in detail because it plays an important part in all movement expression. Laban says flow streaming inward and outward establishes liberation. Freedom certainly appears to happen in the improvisations within the circles for this discovery.

Participants dance freely in the space and perform improvisations in bodies that are totally unbound. The researcher believes continuous intercessory prayer walking in circles is the catalyst (Hypothesis) for freedom. As the researcher physically and prayerfully joins in the action the power of group faith is released and as a result participants are enabled to create exceptional dance improvisations. Participants and researcher in communication with one another and God through prayer cause the factor of flow to accelerate dance creation processes (Ullman 1992 p.75). Within the circle exceptional dance and healing phenomena are happening and the circle is some how the key.

Discoveries Overlap
The researcher now writes to cause an overlap of Discovery Two – Healing in Dance Time with Discovery Three – Prayer And Configuration. The phenomena of work in a creative field such as
contemporary dance improvisation is interwoven and overlapping is primary to the process. Overlapping is intrinsic to wholistic dance practice and even more likely to occur when writing about faith, motion, time and space.

The common factors of time and space relative to Discovery Two and Three are differentiated by the researcher’s physical position in the configuration of a circular pathway. References may be drawn from the revelations of physicists who write about the curvature of our space and time as analogous with what happens in relative motion (Chapman 1995 p.135).

The ponderings of physicists and phenomena of shared experience in perceptions of time are said to come together under the influence of group focus. Greg Braden author of The Isaiah Effect writes about the effects of collective “feeling for the outcome” rather than the feeling of “how long it takes”. Relevant to this dance and healing research is the subtle yet important difference in a group’s focus of feelings (Braden 2000 p.92) between beliefs in healing objectives for the participants and however long a healing process may actually take.

Prophetic Books in the Holy Bible Inform Discovery

A marked increase in creative flow arising from prayer walking in a circle may find references in historical literary forms such as the highly symbolic books of Isaiah and Revelations. Old Testament prophet Isaiah (chapter 40 verse 22) sees God sitting enthroned above the circle of the earth. And New Testament scripture tells of an angel who gives a prophetic vision of crystal clear living water flowing in a river from the creator’s heavenly throne. (Revelations 22: verse 1).

The mention of a circle and the picture of the creator God releasing a flowing river of dance improvisation from above may be too symbolic or fragmented for contemporary western ideas. Never the less symbolism from the Holy Bible comes to life through faith in the context of Christian community in dance creation processes. Biblical symbolism informs the symbolic art form of dance (Thomas 1995 p.178) through the faith of a community of believers and via the dance creation processes in contemporary improvisation.

When Prayer is Answered

The simple prayer “Come Holy Spirit” is answered in an unexpected yet satisfactory way for the researcher. The experience of observation and the memories drawn from these observations deem further references out of place. More importantly interpretations of direct transformational dance experience can be drawn from the embodied texts of improvisational dance through objective observation and qualitative evaluation.
An Outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Dance Improvisation

Creative dance material literally pours forth from the participants. The dance work demonstrates heightened body awareness plus an availability to dance freely in space and time (Discovery Two – Healing In Dance Time).

Spontaneous improvement is seen in the quality and quantity of dance improvisation via interactions between participants. Physical contact is more sensitive, and participants demonstrate increased confidence in spatial awareness and dance creation design. The participants know where, when and how to lead or pass, follow or sustain a move.

Innovation is shown in both the dance work of an individual participant and the group dynamic as a whole. Participants’ innovations take the shape of a wider scope to demonstrate light, shade, weight and displacement in movement qualities and movement textures. Variable speeds in transitional moves and sculptural formations, height of jumps and number of turns are also innovative. The group dynamic becomes more synchronized and adventurous in dance creation. The work is exciting to watch.

Positive Developments in Dance Energy

Prayer walking in a floor pattern that encircles the participants sets off other changes in dance improvisations. The changes are positive and developmental. The ability to release physical energy through dance technique is significantly increased.

A new found physical freedom in terms of range of motion lets loose vigorous new dance and movement vocabularies. The sense of space within and around participants becomes a place of adventure and a place to take risks. Abilities to manage level changes, flexibility, virtuosity and musical responses are all enhanced. Audiotape number one in Appendix Eight is useful for hearing a participant’s point of view.

Signs of Healing

Participants are released from trained and conditioned patterns of movement and interaction. The dance improvisations are fearless, confident and fully conscious. If and when participants spend more time per session and in several successive sessions creating improvisation within the circular configuration they begin to process and articulate the experiences of dance inside the circle of prayer.

Meanwhile the researcher senses that good is happening and so continues to monitor changes and improvements in improvisations whilst continuing to walk and pray. From time to time participants are asked to step out side the prayer-walking circle so that they too may witness the changes in improvisations. Participants corroborate the researcher’s accounts of the positive effects of prayer walking in a circle around the dance work.
Questions Arising from Discovery Two

What prompted the researcher to walk and pray in circles? (Observation – The Spirit Of Prayer)
Why is the circle configuration of prayer causing a transformational effect on the creative flow of improvisation? How is this exploratory practice useful in the correlation of dance and healing?

Looking for the Answers

Possible answers can be found in Moving In The Spirit by author Phillip Pringle a Pentecostal Minister who writes about walking in the Holy Spirit (1994, Chapter Eight). Pastor Pringle explains the importance of focusing the mind on the Holy Spirit in order to keep in step with the Spirit. This explanation is in direct alignment with the silent words of invocation in prayers made by the researcher whilst walking around improvisations.

Apparently a relationship with the Holy Spirit is a subjective experience with a person living in another dimension who is able to guide, inspire, reveal, gift and empower us (Pringle 1994 p.3). These words resonate with the researcher who is most certainly guided and inspired to witness wonders in the realms of dance improvisation in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit has the credentials that can directly account for spontaneous embodied prayer, songs, (Other Gifts Discovery Three) freedom and much more. Pringle cites the Holy Bible (NIV 1984 Galatians 5:25) as the source of his thoughts about how life in the Holy Spirit will let us walk in step with the Spirit.

The Importance of Being There

The researcher witnesses and experiences the Spirit of prayer to be a catching force and supposes that over time research work in a prayer centered community accumulates a positive spiritual effect on the research practices. What appears to be in the first instance a combination of walking, praying and observing dance improvisation over time becomes a powerful force in the transformation of dance creation processes moving in the Holy Spirit.

PARTICIPANT COMMENT

Journal entry 23rd July 2002 – participant code 7. C

What an improvisation session. The Holy Spirit was on fire. Praise God for He is awesome in power. I felt God moving me in my dancing. I felt release for my inner being and the presence of God. God was speaking through my dancing to me. This was an opening for me that showed me beautiful things of how God will be with me and use me the entire way. Praise Him!
Discovery Four –

Other Gifts

A Context for Giftedness in the Social Culture of Dance Art

Beyond the parameters of this project in the wider world of professional dance the ideal physique for a dancer is a subject for ongoing debate (Ryan and Stephens 1987 p.5 and p.108) (Friedler and Glazer 1979 p.178) (Woolliams 1978 p.14). The visual impact of dance in the main stream brings emphasis to embodied imagery. Professional dance paradigms make demands for fully articulated body languages.

Dance technique training prepares highly cultured physicality (Woolliams 1978 p.18). Dance techniques finely tune the body of today’s successful dance performer with a range of extraordinary movement qualities that are only attainable through years of rigorous training. The program of fine-tuning is most successful when the dancer has the gifts of ideal physical proportions (Grieg 1994 p.52) artistry, musicality and dedication.

Relatively few aspiring dancers survive the rigorous pre-selection processes for professional training and continue on to professional dance life without giftedness. Commercial dance art is highly competitive business and a dancer’s physical attributes present as the first benchmark to success. The dancer who is endowed with a combination of dedication, artistic and physical gifts plus an excellent training in technique is a rare creature (Cosi 1982 p.5).

Significant professional dancers appear to be beautiful or handsome, talented and gifted with the right opportunities. Being in the right place at the right time, able to dance with the music and capable of original dance creation are three precious gifts valued by professional dancers and choreographers. The more successful and gifted dance artists are also diligent workers.

Conditioned Mindsets

Very few of the participants in this project are gifted in all or some of these ways. However the paradigms of today’s dance profession are an influence on the artistic, social, physical and environmental cultures (Anderson 1997 p.294) in the majority of people (Introduction p.8) involved in this research (Thomas 1995 p.168).

The researcher is under the influence of a lifetime of training, education and performance in mainstream dance and is aware of the influence and effect conditioning has in forming an image of what a gifted dancer actually does and is. Professional archetypes in the dance industry of today are strongly imprinted in this researcher’s ideas about gifts in dance. In particular the many years of training usually required in mastering such skills as those
involved in the performance of multiple turns, high leaps, feats of flexibility and strength. Artistic depth and performance experience behind dance work that communicates meaning and message are known to take many years to develop. This point of conditioning highlights the contrasting context of this discovery “Other Gifts” and offers an explanation for the researcher’s enthralled response.

Another Cultural Context for Other Gifts

Within the context of this project and from a position of observation the researcher is occasionally held spellbound. All preconceived notions in reference to gifts in dance fall away when participants display a range of “Other Gifts” in dance improvisation. Physical attributes, hard work, training (Introduction p.12) (The Challenge in the Mystery of Healing p.44) (Observation Three – Spiritual Considerations p.83) and professional opportunity are no longer relevant criteria in reference to these “other gifts”. To interpret and articulate what is observed about “other gifts” requires a somewhat different vocabulary from the terms usually applied in speaking about gifted dancers in mainstream dance.

The researcher looks else where for points of reference and finds these so-called “Other Gifts” to be phenomena that could be termed the gifts of the Spirit (Pringle 1994 p.71) moving through the participants dance improvisation. An impartation of the Holy Spirit may empower a participant or a group of participants to move in extraordinary ways with almost boundless energy (Discovery Three – Prayer and Configuration). Dance creation moves in full force and pours through that participant or group facilitating the discovery of “Other Gifts” in Dance and Healing.

Points of Differentiation

However dance creation in other gifts differs from dance creation that is described in Discovery Three – Prayer and Configuration. The main difference is seen in the content of the dance improvisations. Also Discovery Three – Prayer and Configuration shows the researcher as physically and prayerfully involved in observing a marked increase in dance creation processes in participants’ improvisation that are in step with the Holy Spirit. Here in Discovery Four – Other Gifts the researcher is sitting and simply observing participants when improvisational content is enriched with a whole range of exceptional gifts of the Spirit.

Gifts of the Spirit

Manifestations of “Other Gifts” may move as a prophetic calling in an improvisation. Messages transmit through embodiment in the dance movement and participants communicate healing, sacred wisdom, love and power to those who watch. At times the participants and observers may translate the improvisational material for themselves as the dance is actually created. Other translations and interpretations may be articulated in conversation times after the dance improvisation is finished.
Another Realm of Observation

The researcher is taken to another realm of observation as the dance language (Hanstein cited in Overby and Humphrey 1989 p.140) becomes wide-ranging. The researcher is in a state of awe. Another realm of observation refers to an inner place inside the researcher where social conditioning and critical thinking are transcended by an experience of awe. The state is quiet minded whilst questioning and thinking continue more as background thought an experience of awe predominates (Mysterious Soul Life p.45 and Observation Four – Stillness p.89) (Dossey 1993 p.87). The improvisational dance atmosphere in the room and the dance action that is performed before the researcher’s eyes is more enthralling than what happens inside the researcher’s mind.

Embodied Spiritual Gifts

Dance improvisation seen frequently in this study appears to be empowered by the Holy Spirit and looks remarkably similar to the gift of speaking or singing in tongues written about in the Holy Bible. It is in an effort to account for the empowering quality of this facet of dance improvisation that the researcher draws comparison with particular gifts of the Holy Spirit. Exhortation to eagerly desire “Gifts of the Spirit” such as speaking in tongues, healing, prophecy, the discernment of spirits and others may be read in Christian scriptures (Holy Bible NIV 1984 One Corinthians, Ch. 14).

Cultural Comparison

Visual diversity is provided in the origins of the movements, qualities of tone and texture, fluency and harmony in these improvisations are seen as embodied languages (Observation Two – Embodied Language) that compare with the spiritual gift of speaking or singing in angelic tongues or heavenly languages. Pentecostal church cultures today demonstrate the gift of speaking and singing in tongues and whilst this is an amazing acoustic experience through the sense of hearing it is also remarkably similar to the visual sense experience of observing dance improvisation moving in the gifts of the Spirit.

The experience of spiritual encounter is for the researcher essentially the same in both cases. That is to say observation of participants moving in improvisation in the gifts of the Spirit is comparable to experiencing the effects of listening to or singing and speaking in tongues.

Gifts are Freely Given

The participant who moves in the gifts of the Spirit is truly inspired from within and deeply informs those who look on. For participants and observers the phenomena of other gifts cause healing to become available via words, insights and transformation. (Appendix Four – Participants’ Responses.) Gifts of the Spirit do not exhaust the participants rather they are seen to inform, inspire and bring release, refreshment and restoration. The gifts of the Spirit in
improvisation are given freely. The participants are improvising creatively and proficiently in these gifts without any training regime.

**Constructs Fall Away**

So-called difficult bodies (Grieg 1994 p.xiv) for dance techniques by mainstream standards are set free to dance with an unworldly excellence. The participants improvise dances that are informed by concepts and ideas unknown to the world of mainstream professional dance. Familiar dance and social constructs fall away on the occasions when the participants are so inspired by the gifts of the Spirit.

The dance material speaks of adventure and breaks all regular spatial relationships with new and daring ranges of motion. Participants fly through the air with amazing leaps and spin many pirouettes at high speed. Any sense of being right or wrong with regard to body shape, age or appearance and inhibition is lost. The participants appear as though greatly embodied and perfectly placed in just the right place at the right time in most delightful and enjoyable ways. The researcher sees all the dance work happening through unconditional eyes and is totally enthralled.

**The Spirit Moves**

Being a Spirit on the move the Holy Spirit can move over the participants as a tangible atmosphere (Pringle 1994 p.17) (Dossey 1993 cites Paracelsus p.50) (De Sola 1986). In such a time as this the room fills with Holy presence and anoints the dance improvisation. Here once again as written in Discover Two and Discovery Three a seemingly golden haze sheds light over the dance activity in the room. So much so that in the instance of unsuspecting persons entering into the research dance space unexpectedly the researcher sees that they too are held spellbound by what transpires in dance improvisations.

Holy atmosphere infuses the artistic range and creative capabilities of active participants. Substance, form and delivery are refreshing. Boundaries expand and extend and new depths of meaning inform previously unseen areas of dance expression. Alternatively at times some participants are held spell bound and unable to move at all and together with the researcher may simply stand or sit wrapped in awe watching the phenomena of dance that is performed by participants who fully inhabit their bodies and dance in the gifts of the Spirit.

One, two or all participants involved in a session may be literally transformed by an anointing or impartation of the Holy Spirit. The fabric of this gifting appears to bubble up from inside participants, spill over and literally embrace the space or sweep into the dance space from who knows where? These “other gifts” in dance improvisation are what the researcher observes and experiences as a discovery of amazing grace in dance.
Reflecting on the Power of Unity

Spiritual unity is a strong influence on participants, observers and the dance improvisation work. Integrative influences from dance life in connection with Christian arts in an education community make for a very rich mix in the field of this research. The context of the project takes on an extraordinary emphasis from ideas of unity in the Holy Spirit. Dance ideas and dance art practices moving in the unity of the Holy Spirit give rise to creative community phenomenon that is new for the researcher and catalyst (Hypothesis) for this discovery of “Other Gifts” in dance improvisation.

Dreams That Come True

Filled to overflowing with wonder the researcher watches the power and beauty of men and women as they embody and create dance that is purposeful and edifying (De Sola 2001 v75 i12 p.62). Depth and meanings of communications in the content of these gifted improvisations are timeless and delightfully human. This is the dance that the researcher dreamed of as a child long before ever seeing dance performance. The gifts of the Spirit moving in dance are inspirational and a blessing to all those who watch or participate. Dance improvisation in the gifts of the Spirit is dance that heals.

PARTICIPANTS COMMENT

Journal entry 24th September 2002 – participant code 7. C

When a person dances the way they are is expressed. Improvisation is spiritual and reveals what is on one’s heart and how we relate to God. When I am improvising I express my deeply hidden emotions. When I improvise I come into one mind, one place and emotions with the other participants to be overwhelmed and know God and his gifts for us.


We watched improvisation dancing with God it was a beautiful sight, the passion behind the movements and the expressions of love all came out in the dance. To watch dance in God's presence with simple movements was a moving sight. There was so much love pouring out of the bodies dancing. It was amazing.
Chapter Five

Conclusions
Conclusion to the Aims and Objectives

Introduction
The results of this study in relation to the aims and objectives are as follows.

_The aims of this research are to explore the process of healing in dance creation and dance performance._

Selected Focus Successfully Contains Research
In relation to the aims: Exploratory focus is maintained around the processes of healing in performance of contemporary improvisation dance creation and dance performance. The selected focus towards one particular dance genre exploratory contemporary dance improvisation successfully contains the research inside manageable boundaries. Of course many other dance genres await exploration. The broad range of healing possibilities in correlation with dance need not be confined to one genre.

Exploration of dance and healing within University of Western Sydney research protocols provides formal guidelines and infrastructure. The aims are achieved within the context of this infrastructure and boundaries of the methodology of this project (Context p.21 and Boundaries p.30) and by the following objectives.

_THE FIRST OBJECTIVE:_
_To bring together learning, research and community in an innovative, productive and experiential form._

Community Through Faith
In relation to the first objective: Researcher and participants have chosen to study and work in Christian arts education communities and these communities support the research procedures of _Dance and Healing_. Community through faith is a significant factor in the sessions and facilitates production of an abundance of new dance material relevant to the research topic of dance and healing. As a consequence of community spirit a fundamental unity within each and every group of participants involved in dance improvisation explorations are sustained.

Practice Productivity and Limitations
The project is most productive in the area of innovative dance material generated in exploratory sessions and less successful in the production of video recordings of this dance improvisational work. All participants are given an opportunity to experience for themselves many aspects of contemporary exploratory dance practice. Video records of participants'
experiences are valued as tool for referencing and dissemination of this visual embodied communication. Limited financial resources and time constraints place restrictions on the research in this vital area so relevant in dance culture of today.

THE SECOND OBJECTIVE:

To engage in wholistic research practice. The researcher seeks to make connections between a participant’s inner world (Logan 1998 p.1) inclusive of mind, body, soul and spirit as an individual person and in relationship with community. That is to perceive the inter-relatedness of all aspects of a person.

Integrative Practice

In relation to the second objective: Via systematic integrative methods in the chosen medium of contemporary dance improvisation research, learning and community construct wholistic practices. With regard to participants Dance and Healing activity observed by the researcher is inclusive of the whole person as an individual and in relationships with others.

Observations are considered, interpreted and recorded in the form of thirteen written themes as can be read in the main body of this paper. The content of formal written responses from some participants together with informal responses in written, spoken and photographic forms is regarded as additional evidence of the wholistic nature of this research.

Innovation Obstacles And Reservations

The newness in this style of research in a dance context is ideologically vulnerable to a few obstacles. First, ideas of dance research are rarely contemplated simply research practice in mainstream dance is comparatively new. This research project breaks new ground therefore resistance to ideas and innovative frames of reference presents a challenge to the researcher. To communicate the aims of a dance research project in association with healing, creative processes and wholistic practice the researcher strives to develop ongoing dialogue with dance associates. The aim is to gain attention, arouse interest and meaningful exchange.

Second, dance research in a spirit filled Christian context is is seen to draw reservation from some sides of a more general dance community. Also the church in Sydney today is only marginally interactive with dance in comparison with performing arts such as music and drama. In addition matters of spirit and faith are perhaps more difficult to articulate in a dance context where embodiment and physical performance have primacy. In academic circles Spirit and faith seem less fashionable topics and biblical perspectives are not commonly drawn into frames of reference for faculties of dance education.
THE THIRD OBJECTIVE:
To devise, direct, facilitate, compose and present a practical dance project specific to the exploration of healing phenomenon in dance.

Building the Project from the Inside
In relation to the third objective: Previous findings from a pilot study facilitate methods of exploration. A pilot study is part of the researcher's qualifying program prior to this degree. Findings and processes gleaned from the study are refined to form structural and functional aspects in the current study.

Informed by the foundational work the researcher devises and directs exploratory dance practice sessions with six different groups of dance participants. The sessions are in clusters of between seven to fourteen weeks. Participants are introduced to and involved in creative dance processes and exposed to experiences of healing through contemporary dance improvisation.

Harmony Builds Continuity of Practice
Exploratory sessions facilitate social and physical harmony in the practical daily working environments. Harmony increases the potential for healing phenomena. The researcher seeks out the healing properties of dance via exploratory practice and thereby the dance sessions provide a means of gathering information. Continuity in the flow of learning via experimentation, trial, error and repetition is sustained by these sessions. Composition of this paper and research results are totally dependent upon observations of physical practice throughout the three years of this dance and healing project.

Conformation of Methods of Practice
From time to time the dance work is presented in community performances, conferences and seminars and at University of Western Sydney colloquia. Presentation increases opportunities to exchange ideas relevant to dance and healing phenomena. Performances provide confirmation of process validity and a forum for exchange through active physical practice.

THE FOURTH OBJECTIVE:
To observe and write about the mentoring and discipleship of subtle, spoken, spacial, musical, embodied textual forms of healing dance so commonly experienced yet rarely documented

Interpretation Transposition and Translation of Dance Material
In relation to the fourth objective: Healing phenomenon observable in dance performance is accessed via thirteen specific lines of practical and theoretical investigation. Over the course of enquiry ongoing observation of physical practice informs the writing of this paper. Through
methods of observation, reflection, discussion, note taking and referencing the researcher is able to examine the mentoring and discipleship of subtle, spoken, spacial, musical embodied textual forms of dance and healing.

Mentoring and discipleship of healing dance is finding new expressions through creation and performance of dance art works of, by and for participants in the wider dance community. (See Appendix Seven – "Glow") Three years of practical and theoretical investigation results in the writing of thirteen considered observations. Investigations come together in the composition of chapter three in the main body of this paper.

**THE FIFTH OBJECTIVE:**
To search closely and carefully for processes of healing within contemporary dance improvisation.

**Successful Improvisational Methods**
In relation to the fifth objective: The pre-selected mode of contemporary dance improvisation provides an appropriate creative field of action. Exploratory sessions and performances facilitate close scrutiny into the correlation of healing dance and open the way for discovery. The pursuit of dance and healing phenomenon results in some relevant discoveries as recorded in chapter five of this paper.

**THE SIXTH OBJECTIVE:**
To investigate and by a course of inquiry identify a range of ideas that informs the pathways of healing through contemporary dance and in turn form new paradigms for further research.

**Many Questions are Raised and Some are Answered**
In relation to the sixth objective: The search for healing within practical dance performance by methods of investigation, observation, reflection and interpretation is an incremental process. For researcher, participants and observers the ideas and images, methods and performances and interpretations and interactions undergo changes at every stage. Healing phenomena are found to be associated with faith, surrender, atmosphere, time and gifting.

As to be expected in a course of enquiry of this nature every anomaly imaginable and unimaginable comes to the surface. Never the less contemporary dance practice impacts on the range of ideas and provides a cohesive matrix to consolidate this research. Questions are raised and answers are found to some of them. In three years part time study the researcher identifies new ideas, breaks through long established conditioned responses (*The Challenge In The Mystery Of Healing*)/ (*Discovery Four – Other Gifts*) and discovers community dance and healing culture moving in the power of the Holy Spirit.
Transformational Practices

For the researcher in the early stages of the project the factor of faith simply underpins procedures, informs background thought and initiates prayer life. As the project unfolds and healing processes emerge faith takes a more open and expansive position. Initial emphasis on dance and healing with theory and practice informed by homeopathic medicine is gradually infused more and more by Christian influences via unity in the Spirit and participant's faith in the healer Jesus Christ (Yancy 2000 p.174). Thereby the open discovery approaches adopted in this project find new paradigms for further research.

Faith that was at the outset positioned in the researcher's background thought transpires into an all-pervasive atmosphere in practical dance research sessions. Faith acknowledges a healing presence. Participants share common beliefs capable of transcending differences in age, cultures and ranges of abilities. Over the course of the project the unifying effects of a common ground of belief causes a shift of emphasis in the research (Schneer 1994 p.99).

The Christian arts education community wherein all the practical dance activity takes place reinforces the sense of unity in the Spirit. Faith and the ramifications of Christian ethos and spiritual life are no longer confined to background thoughts in the researcher's mind. The factor of faith comes to the forefront of both the explorations and the outcomes.

Reflections in Hindsight

In the wake of this study the researcher can see that investigative methods reveal participants getting well when they dance and observers getting well watching dance via four principles.

Four Progressive Principles Apply

The first principle has three cohesive parts and they are wait, relax and pray. Second, healing processes operate through and in correlation with dance creation processes. An atmosphere where at least someone asks for and believes positively for healing is the third principle. The fourth principle comes as a gift of healing to be experienced as something to give and something to receive.

According to phenomenon observed in this study when these four principles are in operation then both those who dance and those who watch are available to the movement of healing.
State of the Heart –

Concluding and
Conjectural Remarks

Phenomenological Methodology

A sense of mission in a research project of this nature (Chapter Two – The Challenge In The Mystery Of Healing – Mission p.53) brings fusion to phenomenological processes (Thomas 1995 p.22). Whilst seeking, learning and discovering about Dance and Healing phenomena the researcher is taken on a personal journey.

Notions of embodiment through faith and dance in correlation with healing become consciously alive via observation of participants in improvisation (Thomas 1995 p.171). The point of view of the researcher finds re-orientation in the atmosphere of healing phenomena. The blending of a sense of mission within methods of study secures the project firmly with both passion and systematic practice. As a result the researcher’s ideas undertake a transformation. The research journey broadens the mind and methods of observation allow evidence of embodied healing dance to illuminate reason and reflection.

Generating Research Activity

The researcher currently presents practical, written, spoken and components of Dance and Healing at state, national and international conferences and seminars. An extract from this paper is due for publication July 2003 for Inspire international dance journal. As a direct result of this project and via these activities some degree of formalisation, presentation and promotion of conditions that surround healing processes in dance are beginning to be generated.

This Project Moves Towards a Vision

This project may be viewed as a decisive and positive step towards the researcher’s vision for further studies of healing processes in correlation with dance. As a result of this study the researcher now believes that there is some evidence for exploratory contemporary dance to significantly improve health in participants and observers providing the dance practice is conducted under defined conditions. This project puts down a legacy for further formal investigations.

To develop the results of Dance and Healing more fully plans need not be confined by ideas of reproducibility. That kind of approach is not an immediate concern. Rather the vision is for dissemination of the healing properties in dance from a much broader research base.
One strategy for expansion is by continuation of the present project. For example a possibility exists for this research to find a broader base within environments where the researcher is currently employed. This means the project can find additional momentum in areas of staff and course development.

Expansion of the project requires a more regulated qualitative approach of investigation than the present method. Also in order to define phenomena of Dance and Healing more rigorously a quantitative phase is thought practicable. Quantitative evaluation of results of healing outcomes from an effective number of surveys from approximately one hundred participants is a part of this strategy.

A second possibility is a furthering of the present work via continued postgraduate research to include the interrelation of three phases of investigation. First a phase to assess dance and healing with trained professional dancers. A contrasting second phase for untrained non-professionals who dance with an aim to improve health. Still another phase to study the affect of dance and healing specifically for observers. All three phases to link into an overall quantitative and comparative evaluation of healing outcomes from participants in all three categories could bring the study to a cohesive conclusion.

**Concluding Remarks**

In taking this time of approximately three years to observe participants and healing in contemporary dance contexts the researcher is happy to consider the time well spent. In this research equation a continual pull on the researcher’s heart is to look forward to health and improvement for the participants through dance. The process of observation is as objective as possible however the researcher’s desire for healing and dance to happen together is an openly declared bias and considered as an influential factor regarding the results.

Through research processes of observation fused with fascination and curiosity the researcher is now well connected with a community of people (Hackney 1998 p.1–10) who dance, heal and share their faith. As results are considered, interpreted and talked about the researcher regards the compound effects of dance, healing and faith phenomena as difficult to measure in quantitative terms. Of course quantitative evaluation is beyond the aims and scope of this project.

Exploratory practice enriches the researcher’s soul and provides food for the spirit. Finally the researcher is left with a vivid mental picture of participants dancing free, fully alive and well in the Spirit capable of favourably effecting those who may watch. Such a picture creates an internal movement that breaks the researcher’s heart open to dream of the healing possibilities of dance yet to be danced. To watch and see what happens for a participant in the moment of inspiration and transformation is indeed a privilege. Dance and healing is a happy dream come true for the researcher.
PARTICIPANT COMMENT

Journal entry 4th March 2001 – participant code 17. C

The experience in improvisation sessions was my first knowledge of an encounter with God. Oh yes I could feel the heat. It was burning. I am thankful with all my heart because I have started to understand why I am here as a student and the essence I will be carrying with me when I begin to teach others.
Bibliography


Benson, H. MD. 1996 *Timeless Healing* Australia, Hodder Headline Australia Pty Limited.


Bolwell, J., 1999 *Susan Jordan The Making of a New Zealand Choreographer* NZ, Wellington College of Education.


Casc, C. and Dalley, T., 1992 *The Handbook of Art Therapy* London,


Criddle, K., 1974 *Dance Therapy* Virginia, Reston Publisher.


Cunningham/Monk/Jones., 1998 *Art Performs Life* USA, Print Craft Inc.

Dacher, E., 1996 *Whole Healing* USA, Published by the Penguin Group.


Davies, P., 1995 *About Time Einstein’s Unfinished Revolution* USA, Simon Schuster.

Davis, F., 1985 *Taber’s Medical Cyclopedia Dictionary* USA Library of Congress cataloguing in Publication Data.


De Sola, C., 2001 *Dancing To Heal The Planet* USA, v75 i12 Dance Magazine, Inc.


Dowick, S., 1997 *Forgiveness and Other Virtues* Australia, Penguin Books Ltd.


Frost, A., & Yarrow, R., 1990 *Improvisation in Drama* Macmillan Education Ltd., UK.


Gawler, Ian, 1984 *You Can Conquer Cancer*, Melbourne, Hill of Content.

Gawler, Ian, 1987 *Peace of Mind*, Melbourne, Hill of Content.


Hahnemann, S., 1988 *The Organon of Medicine* India, B. Jain Publishers PT Ltd.

Hall, E.I., 1983 *Dance of Life: the other dimension of time* New York, Anchor/Doubleday

H'Doubler, M., 1957 *Dance a Creative Art Experience* University Wisconsin Press.

Houston, J., 1982 *The Possible Human* USA, Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data.


Moore, D., 1983 Pineapple New York, Delilah Communications Ltd.


Moreland, B., 1999 A Creative Partnership Dance Australia Magazine


Potter, M., 1999 Above All Others Dance Australia Magazine.


Rohr, R., 1999 *New Great Themes Of Scripture* Cincinnati Ohio, St. Anthony Messenger Press.


Schoop, T., 1974 *Won't You Join The Dance* California, Mayfield Publishing Company.


Todd, M., 1959 The Thinking Body New Jersey, Princeton Book Company.


Venkatessananda S., Philosophy Psychology and Practice of Yoga Australia, Chiltern Yoga Trust.


Appendices

One  – Chronology of Research Activity
Two  – Letters to Tertiary Institutions
Three – Information Statements and Consent Form
Four – Participants’ Responses
Five – Ethics Protocol Approval for Research Projects Involving Human Participants
Six  – Additional Photographs
Seven* – Videos
Eight* – Two Audio Tapes
Nine* – Confidential Table of Participants
Ten* – Colour Map – Case Studies

* These Appendices are Primary Data, and are not included within the document.
Appendix One

Chronology of Research Activity
Introduction

The researcher begins with an aim of integrating research writing, reading and practice with professional work. The intention is to collaborate with people from the work place and reduce the potential for isolation and loneliness commonly suffered by research students. Substantial progress is evident in the establishment of a broad base of friendly contacts and continuity of practice in the area of study.

Encouragement and support from two employers namely School of Creative Arts, Oxford Falls and Wesley Institute for Ministry and the Arts, Drummoyne is inspirational. These two institutions make the research work possible in practical and personal ways including academic discussion, access to library, audio-visual equipment, dancers to participate, studio space when required and performance and presentation opportunities.

Now follows a condensed chronology of research activity
JULY 1999 – JUNE 2000

Presentations and Performances

November 1999

UWS Nepean, SOCA Colloquium.

A one hour presentation entitled Poetic Time Travelers with seven dancers (scheduled for twenty minutes and actually concluded after one hour).

January 2000

University NSW, Spirit Dream National Catholic Conference.

Performance in the opening ceremony – 15 minute creative process dance performance entitled Spirit Dream with seven dancers.

April 2000

UWS Nepean SCOS The researcher guest presenter in An Introduction to the Therapeutic Application of Creative Processes with Jill Westwood. One three hours presentation entitled Dance and Healing and Plenary.

July 2000

UWS Nepean, SOCA Options Tertiary Dance Festival

One ninety minutes long workshop presentation entitled State of the Heart Mittagong, NSW, The Spirit Moves International Creative Arts Conference

Three 90 minutes practical sessions entitled Advanced Dance Technique and one 15 minutes performance of creative process in collaborative improvised dance entitled View of the Heavens (see video appendices).

Writing

Launch of Inspire international dance journal. This publication features current research, commentaries and book reviews. The researcher is a member of the editing committee.

Writing time to prepare of application to obtain an ethics protocol for research projects involving human participants. Application is to UWS Nepean HERC, Research Ethics Officer.
JULY 2000 – JUNE 2001

Presentations and Performances

July – November 2000

*Dance and Healing* – **Exploratory Workshop Sessions** two different groups of tertiary dance students. During this time of ten weeks with one group and fourteen weeks with the other and all at one sessions per week for each group the aim is to formulate research practices.

November – December 2000

**Green Spice Project** Work In collaboration with Ask Dance Theatre, One Vision Dance Company and The Edge Theatre Newtown. This project is an opportunity to develop the research in contemporary dance improvisation, healing and creative processes through the wider dance community. The researcher works as a dancer and consultant with musicians, dancers and choreographers in rehearsal and public performance contexts.

January – March 2001

Time devoted to preparation and writing of a second application for UWS **Human Research Ethics** approval for *Dance and Healing*. 23 March interim approval granted.

April – June 2001

Ten weeks of **Exploratory Workshop Sessions** with two different groups of tertiary dance students. The researcher continues to develop and refine *Dance and Healing* research practices in this time.

April – May 2001

**Body Mind Spirit Festival** – This project involved eight dancers in the creation and performance of two twenty-minute dance improvisation works in collaboration with One Vision Dance Company and the School of Creative Arts where the researcher is employed. The works entitled a **View of Heaven** and **Intimate Place** explore the correlation of contemporary dance improvisation and healing processes in the public arena.

May 2001

**Abundance Concert** – From a position as assistant artistic director the researcher extends the research practice into church, community and theatre environments. The concerts involve twenty-six dance works and over fifty dancers from Sydney and regional NSW. The Christian Dance Fellowship Australia and Wesley Institute sponsor **Abundance Concert**.

28 July 2001

The two tertiary institutions where the researcher is employed give formal approval and support to conduct the formal section of research within their environs.
JULY 2001 – DECEMBER 2002

Practical Research Sessions

Exploratory Work in Group Sessions Three different groups of participants took part in dance improvisation research sessions in the last 12 months. Each group attended a weekly session for fourteen consecutive weeks. In total thirty dance participants attended. In addition twenty-seven visitors observed at least one group improvisation session each.

One on One Creative Process Sessions Four professional dancers participated meeting one on one with the researcher. The total number of sessions came to twenty. The work took the form of discussions, workshops and rehearsals with presentation and performance outcomes.

Writing

Throughout the year writing up is a gradual and ongoing process with the focus on keeping abreast of activities observed in practical dance sessions (now 21,000 words)

July 2001

UWS Human Research Ethics Committee granted and ethics approval for Dance and Healing Registration No He01/021

January 2002

Completion of obligatory six monthly report for Human Ethics Review Committee.

June to September 2002

Negotiations and preparations for presentations of Dance and Healing at Expanding Horizons a bi-annual dance conference to be held for the first week in October 2002 Perth WA.

June 2002

Second draft of exegesis (incomplete)

July 2002

23 completed Dance and Healing Response Forms returned to the researcher.

September 2002

Third draft in progress (incomplete)

November

Third draft sent to supervisor Kathy Driscoll
JULY 2001 – DECEMBER 2002

Performances and Presentations

January 2002

Australian Dance Vision Project The researcher will apply a dance creation process specific to Dance and Healing. The product is to be a solo dance presented in the form and a training video for dance teachers who are accredited with VETAB and Australian Dance Assessment Program.

April 9 2002

Supervisor Kathy Driscoll observed one group session and two of the solo creative processes. Kathy gave time to meet, observe and talk with participants including feedback to the researcher. The visit was a highlight in the research year and a source of great enjoyment for participants.

May 17 2002

Abundance Concert (annual community dance event) included the performance of three creative processes from Dance and Healing.

June 2002

Completed editing for publication of journal of the International Christian Dance Fellowship INSPIRE: A selection of dance writings

July 8 & 12 2002

Performance and presentation of solo creative process to NSW dance teachers at the Australian Dance Vision Annual Seminar for the Australian Dance Assessment Program.

September 19 & 21 2002

Solo performance of creative process for Radiate Arts Festival, Christian City School of Creative Arts Oxford Falls Auditorium.

November 22 2002

Two performances of improvisation practices are included to introduce the end of year production We Are On Our Way in the Wesley Institute theatre.
Appendix Two

Letters to Tertiary Institutions
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY

Locked Bag 1797
PENRITH SOUTH DC NSW 1797

17th June 2001

Mrs. Mary Jones
Dean of Dance Studies and Acting Head of Department
Wesley Institute for Ministry and the Arts
5 Mary Street, PO Box 534
Drummoyne NSW 1470

Dear Mary,

By this letter I seek approval for a research project, which I would like to conduct with WIMA Dance students. The project entitled Dance and Healing is part of my work as a postgraduate student with UWS for a Master of Arts (Honours), Contemporary Arts due for completion 30th June 2002.

The purpose of the research is to explore, define, document and present healing properties in dance. The project focuses on elements of creative dance process contained within two components of WIMA Dance course Improvisation One and Two and Contemporary Technique. Therefore an opportunity exists for dance students to participate in the project through material I am currently teaching.

Participation means that students will reflect on their dance experiences, complete a response sheet and /or to take part in a twenty-minute studio style presentation on campus at UWS. The presentation will show a selection of the dance work to a small audience usually supervisors and postgraduate students from UWS School of Contemporary Arts.

Pending WIMA approval students will be given relevant information and invited to be research participants. Students who accept the invitation are asked to give informed consent prior to participation. Student will not be placed under pressure or obligation to participate at any time.

I am addressing this letter to you as Dean of Dance Studies and Head of Department at the request of UWS Human Ethics Review Committee. I would be grateful to receive WIMA approval by 30th June 2001 in order for the project to proceed.

Yours sincerely

Jane Farrelly

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Ethics Review Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (Tel: 02 47 360 169). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.
UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN SYDNEY
Locked Bag 1797
PENRITH SOUTH DC NSW 1797

17th June 2001

Mr. Jeff Crabtree
Principal of School of Creative Arts
Christian City Church Ministry Training College
Dreadnought Road
Oxford Falls NSW 2100

Dear Jeff,

By this letter I seek approval for a research project that I would like to conduct with SCA Dance students. The project entitled Dance and Healing is part of my work as postgraduate student with UWS for a Master of Arts (Honours), Contemporary Arts. Completion date for the project is 30th June 2002.

The purpose of the research is to explore, define, document and present healing properties in dance. The project focuses on elements of creative dance process contained within SCA modules Exploratory Contemporary Dance and Body Awareness. Therefore an opportunity exists for students to participate through dance material I am currently teaching.

Participation means that students will reflect on their dance experiences, complete a response sheet and/or to take part in a twenty minute studio style presentation on campus at UWS. The presentation will show a selection of the dance work to a small audience usually supervisors and post graduate students from UWS School of Contemporary Arts.

Pending SCA approval students will be given relevant information and invited to be research participants. I will at no time place any pressure or obligation on students to participate. Those who accept the invitation will be asked to give informed consent prior to participation.

I am addressing this letter to you as principal of SCA at the request of UWS Human Ethics Review Committee. I would be grateful to receive SCA approval by 30th June 2001 in order for the project to proceed on schedule.

Yours sincerely

Jane Farrelly

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Ethics Review Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (Ph: 02 47 360 169). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix Three

Information Statements and Consent Forms
INFORMATION STATEMENT AND CONSENT FORM
RESEARCH PROJECT - DANCE AND HEALING

Contact: Jane Farrelly
18 Melbourne St.
Fairlight NSW 2094.
Ph (02) 9949 1285

Dear Dancer,

I am writing to invite you to be a participant in a research project Dance and Healing. The project is part of my work as a post graduate research student with UWS for a Master of Arts (Honours), Contemporary Arts.

The purpose of the research is to explore, define, document and present the healing properties of dance. The substance of the research is contemporary dance improvisation. The elements of creative process, namely proprioceptive sensations, homeostasis, relaxation, imagery, the conscious and unconscious mind and spirit are the foci.

A participant is requested to dance in a series of exploratory practical sessions, reflect on their experiences and give comments and/or take part in a twenty minute presentation in a studio setting on campus at WIMA and or UWS. The presentation will show a selection of the dance work to a small audience, usually lecturers, supervisors and post graduate students from WIMA and or the School of Contemporary Arts.

Ethics protocols in the practice, documentation and presentation of this research will be on the basis that

☐ the privacy of a participant will be respected at all times and information linking results with a particular individual will remain confidential.

☐ research procedures will be unintrusive and applied with appropriate sensitivity.

☐ the research material is inclusive of a participant's requirements and autonomy. All activity is structured so as to allow balance in power, position and exchange between researcher and participant.

☐ privacy will be respected with regard to notes/videos/photographs to be taken/shown with the full knowledge and written permission of a participant on each and every occasion. (Videos/photographs are only likely to be seen by my supervisor Kathy Driscoll and official examiners.)

☐ all care will be taken to minimise risk of physical or psycho-social harm through holistic, safe dance practices.

☐ personal identifying data will be due for destruction five years from the commencement of the project.
UWS is the host institution for the research however ultimate responsibility for the project rests with the researcher who will abide by the professional ethics dance teaching, choreography and homoeopathy.

- a participant is free to withdraw from the project at any time and may do so without fear of any adverse consequences. There are no pressures/disadvantages/penalties/adverse consequences for not participating.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Ethics Review Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (Tel: 02 47 360 69). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

The experience of creative and healing processes within the project plus contact with other dance researchers may be beneficial and inspirational. If you would like to participate please give your consent by signing and returning the form below.

Yours sincerely

Jane Farrelly

CONSENT FORM

I volunteer to participate in the Dance and Healing research project.

Name: (please print) ..................................................

Signed: .............................................................

Date: .............................................................
Dear Student,

I am writing to tell you about my research project Dance and Healing and to invite you to participate.

This year whilst I am your lecturer in dance I am also a post graduate research student with UWS studying for a Master of Arts (Honours) Contemporary Arts. The project is part of my studies. Practical dance exploration within the subjects I teach contains some of the research material. This means there is an opportunity for you to be involved as a participant through the work we do together in class time.

The purpose of the research is to explore, define, document and present healing properties in dance. The elements of creative process, namely proprioceptive sensations, homeostasis, relaxation, imagery, the conscious and unconscious mind and spirit are the foci.

A participant is asked to reflect on class experiences and fill in one response sheet each semester and/or to take part in a twenty minute studio style presentation here at SCA or on campus at UWS. The presentation will show a selection of the dance work to a small audience usually fellow students, lecturers, supervisors and post graduate students from SCA and/or the School of Contemporary Arts.

Ethics protocols in the practice, documentation and presentation of this research will be on the basis that

☐ a participant will be respected at all times and information linking results with a particular individual will remain confidential.

☐ research procedures will be unintrusive and applied with appropriate sensitivity.

☐ the research material is inclusive of participant’s requirements and autonomy with all activity so structured as to allow balance in power, position and exchange between researcher and participant.

☐ privacy will be respected with regard to notes/videos/photographs to be taken/shown with the full knowledge and written permission of a participant on each and every occasion. (Videos/photographs are likely to be seen by my supervisor Kathy Driscoll and official examiners.)
all care will be taken to minimise risk of physical or psycho-social harm through wholistic, safe dance practices.

personal identifying data will be due for destruction five years from the commencement of the project

UWS is the host institution for the research however ultimate responsibility for the project rests with the researcher who will abide by the professional ethics of dance teaching, choreography and homoeopathy.

participant is free to withdraw from the project at any time and may do so without fear of any adverse consequences. There are no pressures/disadvantages/penalties/adverse consequences for not participating.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Ethics Review Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (Tel: 02 47 360 169). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

The experience of creative and healing processes within the project plus contact with other dance and research people could be of personal benefit and inspiration to you. If you would like to participate please give your consent by signing the form below.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Farrelly

CONSENT FORM

I volunteer to participate in the Dance and Healing research project.

Name (please print)......................................................

Signed: ...........................................................

Date: .....................................................
Dear Dancer,

Thank you for volunteering to participate in Dance and Healing.

I value your participation and any feedback you may care to offer. Please reflect on your experiences from the Dance and Healing sessions and respond in writing. Comments may be as brief or as detailed as you wish.

The process of reflection and writing could be useful as a way of clarifying and articulating your experiences and may also provide a sense of closure. There is no pressure to complete and return this response sheet. However within the next four weeks would be helpful.

Please do not hesitate to telephone or write if you have any queries. Your responses are to be held in the strictest confidence and of course there is the option of remaining anonymous if that is your wish.

I hope our time together has been enjoyable and of benefit to you.

Your sincerely

Jane Farrelly
RESEARCH PROJECT  DANCE AND HEALING  RESPONSE SHEET

Question 1. In your own words how would you describe healing?

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

Question 2. Perhaps you had an experience of healing in the dance sessions or as a result of what occurred in the sessions. If so please explain.

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

Question 3. If you did not experience healing can you describe what you did experience?

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
Would you like to comment on specific areas covered in the sessions?

Contemporary dance improvisation

The elements of creative process

Proprioceptive sensations

Homeostasis

Relaxation
Imagery

The conscious and unconscious mind

Spirit

In conclusion are there any other comments you would like to make.

THANK YOU FOR RESPONDING.

NOTE: This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Ethics Review Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer (Tel: 02 47360 169). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.
Appendix Four

Participants’ Responses
Who Received Response Forms?

During the second half of the researcher’s candidature coinciding with the last eighteen months of practical explorations participants who attend workshop style sessions are given information statements about the research project.

Included in the information statement is an invitation to participate. In this instance “participation” means the completion of a personal written response to the exploratory improvisation work.

Participants may give consent to voluntary participation in the Dance and Healing project by completing the consent form attached to the information statement.

Following written consent, participants are provided with a response form and a letter of thanks.

Participant Group Sessions And Numbers Of Participants

- Three groups of participants are involved in the process of receiving information statements, consent form and response form
- Exploratory sessions occur once per week per participant group
- The sessions run in clusters of between ten and fourteen weeks with each group
- Participants who complete and return response forms may attend at least a minimum of ten sessions and up to a maximum of twenty-eight sessions
- The total number of participants to receive an information statement in the period of eighteen months is thirty-seven
- The total number of completed forms returned with written consent is twenty-four.

Collation Process Preserves Participant Confidentiality

This appendix contains a collation of written participant responses transcribed from official response forms.

Original hard copies of hand written response forms and consent forms are withheld as primary data. Original forms are in the researcher’s care and not included in the appendices of this document.

To preserve anonymity and confidentiality participants’ forms containing written responses are each given an individual code before transcription into the collated format. Each
participant response form is code named with one number and one letter. As can be seen in
the following code-table the total number twenty-four.

By transcription and application of codes a participant’s name, handwriting and other
identifying features are concealed. Also wording that may identify a particular person is
altered so that personal details of all participants are protected. The researcher aims at all
times to preserve as close as possible the intent as originally set down in the original
handwritten response forms.

Method Of Collating And Transcribing Response Forms

1. Written participant responses are collated by following the order set out in the code table.

2. Beneath the first question a participant’s identifying code marks the answer they give in
response to that question. The answer given by all participants to question one are then
recorded one after another in the order of sequence set out on the code table.

3. The second question is followed by all the answers to the second question. Each answer is
recorded with the same code as before and so on.

4. The procedure is repeated until all the answers to all questions are recorded.

Post Script

Unprejudiced objectivity in observation on behalf of the researcher is an aim throughout
practical and written components of the study. Therefore the following answers to questions
and comments written on formal response forms are not actually read or collated by the
researcher until the conclusion of the project. This is thought to maximize objectivity.
Dance And Healing 2002
Collated Participant Response Forms
Code Table

1. C
2. C
3. C
4. C
5. C
6. C
7. C
8. C
9. C
10. C
11. C
12. C
13. C
14. C
15. C
16. C
17. C
1. J
2. J
3. J
4. J
5. J
5. J
6. J
7. J
Collation of Participants' Responses for Dance and Healing

QUESTION 1.

IN YOUR OWN WORDS HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE HEALING?

1. C  Healing is the recovery of the body after injury to the former state of good health.

2. C  Acceptance of ourselves as a “whole being” giving our physical, energetic mental, emotional and spiritual aspects expression.

3. C  Restoring to perfection, to the original condition.

4. C  Connecting with your inner being, getting to know yourself better, release, relief, lucky, beyond imagination.

5. C  A process that takes part to restore health to its optimum level involving integration of mind, body, soul and spirit.

6. C  A release from hurt, pain, sickness. This can be emotional, spiritual or physical pain.

7. C  Recovering from any pain/sickness whether it is spiritual, physical or emotional.

8. C  Fixing or adapting the body so that it doesn’t feel chronic physical or emotional pain.

9. C  An immediate (or over a period of time i.e. process of) restoration; being set free from sickness/bondage/addictions physically, mentally, emotionally.


11. C  Change, growth and fixed up again.

12. C  Restoration, God’s will for all.

13. C  Internal harmony, being touched by God from the inside and through out.

14. C  To be made whole/complete/functioning

15. C  Blank

16. C  Something that has been distorted or disturbed or painful (either physically or emotionally) that then gets set right, it has had time for recovery until it finally functions and fulfils its original purpose.

18.C Healing is when a person or group find release from a problem or burden (physical/emotional/spiritual).


2. J Healing is a process of restoration. It can be physical, mental, emotional or spiritual healing.

3. J Healing is a process incorporating the whole being (i.e. physically, spiritually, and emotionally) restoring man to his optimum health/life. Results are at times rapid while at other times are gradual.

4. J The spirit of God moving through your body, mind and soul releasing them and making them whole. Freedom, completeness, peace and trust.

5. J Wholeness; free from pain: released from burdens.


7. J The process of becoming whole.
QUESTION 2.
PERHAPS YOU HAD AN EXPERIENCE OF HEALING IN THE DANCE SESSIONS OR AS A RESULT OF WHAT OCCURRED IN THE SESSIONS. IF SO PLEASE EXPLAIN.

1. C  I experience extreme tension in the upper right hand side of my neck. Due to this I have difficulty sleeping. After a session when we did and exercise called the “Three Blessings” the pain disappeared. I did ask my husband to check my neck and he said there was no more tension. Before this exercise I had no expectation/knowledge of possible healing.

2. C  To be able to travel, in the physical body to a realm – beyond imagination.

3. C  During the session there was a release and where there was a heaviness came a lightening to the soul.

4. C  It was like a tingling sensation all over my body and all the negative thoughts and emotions just started to be repelled from my body by such an amazing force. It was as if nothing could hurt me.

5. C  Healing takes place in these classes for me simply by giving my body permission to move to an internal response (guided by the Spirit of God in Jesus’ name) which then helps me to balance my mind, filter it of unnecessary cognitive words or thoughts (“taking every thought captive” in the name of Jesus). Wisdom at moments comes in these periods. The experiences are heightened by the touch and interaction of others in the dance.

6. C  I had a healing from an emotional pain. I felt a real release during group prayer dance improvisation. All the tension left my body and I became so happy. I felt warm and accepted. I was healed!

7. C  No healing instantly but edifying my spirit every time. Healing of my spirit/soul. The dance sessions have been a process of spiritual healing especially through the prayer dancing. I have never been given the opportunity to not follow choreographed steps.

8. C  I felt a real sense of peace as though I had nothing wrong. This feeling was a temporary moment but a relief during the long periods of sickness! I have been sleeping well on Tuesday nights after the improvisation sessions!

9. C  Overall: At first I was concerned/embarrassed to move among others who are/might have been watching me. I find that I can move more freely now!

10. C  Release of tension and built up emotions

11. C  1. Internal stuff happens – nothing noticeable in my technique but inside patchwork is happening, patchwork of old issues. 2. The sessions also lift my spirit.
12. C  Blank

13. C  My heart has softened and in doing so God's joy comes into me (at times).

14. C  Stress and depression – through the dance I have been released and feel so much better, lighter in mind and body.

15. C  Blank.

16. C  Yes healing came to me when doing an intercession in prayer and improvisation. The healing was in regard to my country of origin and my acceptance of my own nationality.

17. C  I always leave the class with a smile on my face feeling at peace.

18. C  I have experienced healing in so much as I am now able to dance more freely and expressively and put aside my fears and doubts.

1. J  I felt blessing from heaven (specifically peace) raining down upon one of the dancers as we prayer danced in intercession around her that caused fear and uncertainty to subside.

2. J  Yes I have. I was sitting with the rest of the class and the teacher asked me to talk about how my journey with God is going. I started to talk about a bad experience of mine. It was an experience that could have been fatal and one that I haven't ever really got over – until now. The teacher placed her hands on my head and while I was talking I went hot, my head was burning and my chest and back were burning, I was also crying. I didn't realise it at the time but God actually saved my life five years ago and through improvisation I was able to let go of the negative emotions I still had up to this time.

3. J  Yes when I became aware of my nervousness through improvisation I was able to see my nervous reactions for what they were and to deal with them effectively leading to a sense of release. I realize now how emotions and mindsets can affect the body physically. My muscles released and therefore the tension in my shoulders was reduced.

4. J  Love, peace and acceptance beyond understanding. Through these sessions I found a greater freedom to be myself. As I released I found I was able to move more easily. I became free from pain that is caused by tension.

5. J  When I surrender to God and allow him to move in me and through me the focus moves off the pain and the burden is released. I am healed as I minister to others in improvisation. I let people help me. I admit my weakness and let go. I find a space that is just God and there's no pressure to be anything – I can just be, I don't know it's happening at the time but afterwards I know the pain is gone.
6. J  I had the curvature in my spine (I have had this curvature for my whole life) straighten considerably and there is an increase the movement in my spine.

7. J  On an emotional level I realised I still have a need to seek people's approval. The teacher's working method allowed me to accept what was happening without judgment therefore precluding any expectation of gaining approval.
QUESTION 3.
IF YOU DID NOT EXPERIENCE HEALING CAN YOU DESCRIBE WHAT YOU DID EXPERIENCE?

1. C Blank

2. C The ability to express the emotional trauma more deeply and to communicate it without the need for verbal communication.

3. C I experienced myself held to the floor as if by a magnet. A warm tingling feeling radiating out.

4. C Blank

5. C Blank

6. C Blank

7. C Well it has been spiritually healing through the dancing. I have felt badly about not documenting my dances because I am usually on such a “high” after it that the last thing I feel like doing is writing it down. The experience of doing the dancing is still wonderful even though we have to analyse it!

8. C I did not experience healing but a sense of calmness at times and one particular session I experienced shaking of the body and an unusually short concentration span! It was a struggle for the inner body to focus.

9. C When the teacher asked us to think about the moment we remember being most healthy I remembered times being touched by the Holy Spirit that often made me feel more than healthy! (Often during ‘Revival’ meetings), and interestingly enough all the same feelings (?) / touch of the Holy Spirit happened again in the very class!

10. C Freedom within my body.

11. C Blank.

12. C Unity, learning, peace, joy.

13. C Frustration/harshness towards self when I am running, on my will not God’s will.


15. C Blank.

16. C Sometimes extreme frustration and depression, self doubt and hate.

17. C Blank
18. C  When healing has not happened I have had an intense desire to overcome and to try the process again because I have been so close to a breakthrough.


2. J  Blank.


4. J  Although I did find healing I also became more aware of my body, of how it works and what it needs.

5. J  Blank.

6. J  Personal account of the healing of a friend (not included due to privacy and confidentiality concerns).

7. J  I became closer to my unborn son and closer in my relationship with God.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO COMMENT ON SPECIFIC AREAS COVERED IN THE SESSIONS?

QUESTION 4.

CONTEMPORARY DANCE IMPROVISATION

1.C As this area of dance is new to me I'm discovering another facet of dance I have not previously appreciated.

2.C It is the most joyful experience – words seem a little inadequate – creatively challenging. On completion of the class I feel a richer, fuller being.

3.C It is freeing the body and spirit so they can work together to bring healing to the dancer and others.

4.C Release, forgiveness, patience, unexpected areas now being found.

5.C Has been like the experience of a dream/vision, floating in and out of bodies – embodying the dynamics of space, time and energy. Dancing until we dance as One.

6.C This is great because of the free technique. I am free to dance and don’t have to worry/think about technique and the ‘right’ way to do it.

7.C It was really fun. I didn’t have to point my feet or turn out! It wasn’t stiff or structured but flowing. The Spirit led and blessed.

8.C It’s sooo much fun and a creative sense of release.

9.C I love to feel the music, ideally having my eyes closed and simply starting to move however the music makes me feel inside! I express outwardly what starts to happen inside!


11.C Creativity and technique need to be combined – these classes allow that.

12.C Finding movement from within and release whatever is inside.

13.C Subtle movements – finding them inside my mind; seeing skeletal structure; seeing the picture in my mind, flooding this with colour, time i.e. fast/slow, and breathing this inside of me so the movement comes out.

14.C It has helped me: physically and emotionally to become creative for the first time in my life, to be more expressive, to have bigger movements and to be adventurous.

15.C Spontaneous, movement led by the Holy Spirit

16.C Any movement or shape made inside by the dancer enhanced by muscle strength and coordination skills (but these are not prerequisites).
17.C Free form, going into the unknown, confusion into discovery.

18.C Contemporary improvisation does not demand what you can do but to move in a way which is you and to explore from that point.

1.J (Intercessory dance) Crossing all bridges, no right or wrong.

2.J Dance is dance. You can move and stay in time with music, but that is only one aspect of dance. Dance is a wonderful journey with God and oneself. I have experienced many wonderful sessions with healing through contemporary dance improvisation. I have danced as light as a feather. I have overcome with God’s strength many fears within dance confinements. I have also witnessed many emotional healing sessions. Prayer instigated most sessions. Usually the teacher prays for someone in the group.

3.J Improvisation allows things to come out that you don’t want to or simply can’t put into words – thereby bringing a sense of relief.

4.J Contemporary dance improvisation helped me to go beyond my fears. There is no right or wrong and you are free to express yourself and what God is saying and your heart.

5.J Peaceful, gentle.

6.J Improvisation is a place of expressing the internal thoughts and reflections rather than searching for words. I’ve had times of great freedom in some of these moments.

7.J This is a very enjoyable path to healing through the personal expression of my feelings about unfamiliar creative process and the need for approval issue.
QUESTION 5.

THE ELEMENTS OF CREATIVE PROCESS

1.C Although I am feeling lost at times, a sense of freedom to be me is emerging. I have never experienced this before.

2.C In sessions attended there has been diversity: art, literature, sound and movement.

3.C Inspiration, imagery, emotion and life experience, beliefs and freedom to express.

4.C Ideas, thoughts, colours, movement, images, light, freedom, expansion, spiritual connection, blessings.

5.C I am experimenting with Gabriel Roth’s technique “The Five Rhythms” as my base to each creative process.

6.C Blank.

7.C Beautiful healing process. Not clear until the end of the term – like all the other dance therapy theory classes!

8.C It relaxes the body and allows growth of the mind with unexplored areas of dance being scraped at!

9.C 1. Preparation 2. Exploration 3. Illumination 4. Form(ul)ation. Knowing that it takes these four steps makes it easier to be patient. Not to be frustrated if often (or during) Step 1 you are not already at Step 4!

10.C You start here (diagram of the small end of a telescope shaped “Creativity”)…… and end up with a much larger scope view.

11.C My mind runs too fast to track or record. Basically it is a string of a million random thoughts. Each thought relating to the next.


13.C LISTEN – first to God, let him fill that room inside.

14.C I am being set free -- through dance. It is affecting my life in many areas. A new experience.

15.C Listen to God.

16.C Development, conscious and unconscious, a thinking mind is the basis for it.

18.C The creative process is the important part of the journey: The Idea, the catalyst, the beginnings of the developing dance.

1.J It becomes the fuel, it energises. Holistic (it covers everything) it refreshes, it has a presence. Dancing, felt free to explore, the presence embraces The Baby, I became more attentive, touch like a dove.

2.J Creation is a wonderful thing – I used to have a mental block when it came to creating. I used to limit myself. What I have found in using elements of creative process is that it is far more profound and beautiful if I let go and let the Holy Spirit guide me. I have experienced wonderful feelings of freedom when I dance.

3.J It seems to get deeper as you become more aware or emotional, physical, spiritual states, in accessing the creative.

4.J Having an inspiration/motivation behind the movement helped me to become focused and more involved in the process. Every part of you is included and there is and energizing effect like a warm comforting hug


6.J I've observed that different creative processes are successful for different individuals.

7.J Although I have performed in structured improvisation before, the expectation of result was always to do with dynamics/floor pattern etc. Very nurturing therefore to work where the desired result is more about God and about me as a person.
QUESTION 6.  

PROPRIOEPTION

1.C Learning to rediscover my body's subtle movements and connections.

2.C An awareness of the body and its relationship to the space around it and to where the body is in that space.

3.C Knowing what you are doing in your body can prevent injury and encourage healing.


5.C I would like to have a thorough knowledge of the skeletal muscles, tendons and joints of the human body to give more quality to the timing, positioning and dynamic of the organic movements.

6.C Blank

7.C I have learned more awareness of body. I am still very self-conscious of people watching me because I feel awkward not moving within the safety of steps.

8.C Relaxes the neck muscles and relaxes the mind. Calms the mind.

9.C Never before in my life did I learn to look into and listen to my own body so closely! This should be taught at Primary School already!

10.C Relaxation, repetition, in touch, awareness.

11.C I often think I am better than I really appear.


13.C Sensing where my body is - I see a lot of this inside of me - how this affects me - I try to visualise my skeleton and how it is lying and to put air around the joints - to visualise things moving - I'm trying to visualise my organs and muscles.

14.C Being aware of organs - dancing from the inside out I get to process hurt, pain, joy.

15.C Aware of body and more meaningful.

16.C Awareness and sense of my own physicality (both my body and also those around me i.e. people and things).


18.C In the beginning body awareness is hard but your awareness increases with practice.

1.J Being different parts of a oneness, being aware of everything.
2.J I have enjoyed studying proprioceptive sensations. I have become much more aware of my body in space and my body in relation to the room and surrounding people.

3.J I have further developed this sense of awareness. I am in awe of how God created us so that we 'know' the position and movement of our body, that the ability to move a limb and the ability to feel a movement are separate.

4.J I am still learning about this but I think it makes me feel as if my whole being (mind, body and spirit) is involved in the movement and very aware of everything.

5.J Sense of being a part of oneness – like a body.

6.J I experienced heat on the top of my head the day my spine was straightened.

7.J When I stopped seeking approval I found I was freer to sense (physically and emotionally) my own experience of the moment more deeply and clearly.
QUESTION 7.
HOMOEOSTASIS

1.C Blank.

2.C A sense of balance and wholeness. All systems of our being are able to function together.

3.C It allows you to be in balance with your surroundings, where I can feel one way while being influenced for the best by my surroundings.


5.C Homeostasis has given me: growing awareness of what is happening in a cellular level within my body, questioning where there may be imbalance internally or externally. What are the effects on my body, mind, emotions and will?

6.C How awesome our bodies are! The way that they are made is so awesomely set up. The fact that our body can often fix itself is amazing.

7.C Healing within the environment of study (spiritual healing through study). I’m not very good at knowing where I am or where I fit in. The integration of my body with its space is not good after dealing with an eating disorder for three years BUT healing is coming through these sessions.

8.C Connection to my legs and arms. It feels right!

9.C Being aware of each single body part really helps in the fluidity of the overall dance! I especially liked the exercises we did with a partner (back, forwards, back).

10.C Balance, at peace and understanding, close listening, space, a wave.

11.C After class I sometimes feel homeostatised.

12.C Blank.

13.C Balance. At times I feel wonderful dancing – today in ballet running forwards and jumping I felt glorious – some music in improvisation I let go.

14.C I feel really connected in these dance sessions. I feel comfortable, safe, accepted and good.

15.C Blank.

16.C Balancing and complimenting of related or unrelated oppositions e.g. inhaling/exhaling, asleep/awake.

17.C Blank.
18.C I still struggle with understanding this as I am unaware of all the areas that I need to work on.

1.J Fluid, flowing.

2.J "The balance". Balance is a delicate subject as its boundaries are rather contained. When using homeostasis in dancing I have enjoyed calling upon Jesus Christ and claiming balance but mental and spiritual balance.

3.J I realise that I can let go and let my body take its natural path. This is an inbuilt control centre and communication network.

4.J Finding my balance helped me to find confidence in my dancing. This is a fluid feeling.


7.J I found it a real struggle to rehearse while I had the flu. The teacher encouraged me to keep going that day. I saw it as a dancer's discipline still occurring throughout and maybe despite the holistic approach.
QUESTION 8.

RELAXATION

1.C Wonderful allowing life’s cares to go.


3.C ...is allowing the body and mind to fully rest with stress leaving the body.

4.C Calm, clear, focussed, intensive, in control, creative.

5.C ...has been wholesomely edifying with the use of scriptures. The exercise “The Three Blessings” involving touch in a duo dynamic of giving and receiving has been deeply therapeutic.

6.C It is so important to relax. To let everything go and completely relax. It is hard to do but very important.

7.C Relaxing in God.

8.C Makes me really sleepy! Relaxes really large muscles!

9.C Maybe that is what I need most! It is most effective after first tensing as much as possible then releasing the tension and breathing. (What I completely forget to do every so often.) Breathing and realising that it actually feels quite similar to relaxing and resting in the Holy Spirit!

10.C Stress less, letting go, softness.

11.C Relax in 2 ways: 1. My body is allowed to move as I wish. 2. When we do relaxing things I wholly relax.

12.C Taking my mind off other things.

13.C Learn to quieten inside and soothe the body – self nurture.

14.C I really relax in this session. It is active/restful. Feel great – relaxation.

15.C Blank.


17.C Blank.

18.C I still hold tension in my body but I am able to tell where the tension is – but it is still a slow process for me.

1.J Breath, love, comfort, flexible.
2. My mind was relaxed but my body was frustrated. I kept on dancing with a focus on relaxation and imagery of water. As a full-time dancer I have found it hard to actually relax my body. If I am not physically dancing then I am mentally stressed over assignments. By focusing on relaxation and handing all my problems over to the Lord I have started to find relaxation. The best part is that my health has picked up. I am not so physically tired and drained.

3. Be still and know that he is God. I’ve learnt to let go and let God – affects muscles, tension, etc.

4. I found that when I relaxed all my joints just relaxed and fell (clicked) into place. I found it hard to relax my shoulders. This brought peace to my soul making me more relaxed and able to dance, stretch, sleep and eat better. (At the beginning of the year I would get very nervous and worried about things. This would make me feel bloated. However now I hardly ever feel bloated and I feel a lot more peaceful. I’m not sure it was just the relaxation exercises we did or if it was a combination of everything we did in class. (Thanks so much to the teacher – you’re a legend). I experienced peace and love.


6. This is where healing/freedom begins. Tension restricts the movement of the Holy Spirit.

7. I began most rehearsals already feeling tired (due to the pregnancy and dance teaching) which was hard but the process was so beneficial to me emotionally and spiritually that I did not mind most of the time and looked forward to rehearsals.
QUESTION 9.

IMAGERY

1.C Images spring unexpectedly to the conscious mind.

2.C A wide range of imagery is used during the sessions.

3.C It relaxes me when better dancers surround me, when understanding dance moves I grasp the moves better.

4.C Form, patterns, and pictures (the participant adds a drawing of a butterfly).

5.C ...works for me helping me create a picture for the movement. Especially in physical alignment work.

6.C Blank.

7.C Brings images to mind when thinking of healing, washing images of God's love through all my cells.

8.C Creativity is enhanced. Picture animals.

9.C It helps a lot to actually see (and continually work on seeing) myself healed. It's a lot more difficult to see myself healed than I thought! No wonder it's hard to be healed as long as I can't see myself healed!

10.C Form, colour. (the participant includes a drawing of zigzag line leading to flowing line). Associations. Dance on the clouds with God.

11.C Use it all the time, a lot of the time unknowingly.


13.C I started off with not very good imagery of self: huge bottle inside of me – about how I used to be, how I am and self acceptance – and attached to big heavy images. They are starting to lighten. This has changed when the teacher has asked us to imagine being healthy.

14.C How I see myself is changing. It is powerful and has helped me/my attitude changing them for the positive.

15.C Blank

16.C Pictures in my mind that can inspire my body's movement in effort and dynamic and muscle sequence.

17.C Blank.
18.C I deal a lot in imagery. It can be visual, thought or a sound that initiates the image.

1.J Free, joyful, strong, assured, confident, victorious, bold, imagery that mediates between where you feel you are at and what you think you need to be doing i.e. how well.

2.J I found imagery to be very powerful. An example was when we were dancing about how our studies were going. I chose to dance joyfully because I had just finished an assignment even though I had five more to go in the coming weeks. The point is that when I danced being joyful and free of stress I actually felt free from any worries, assignments or physical ailments.

3.J Can affect our qualities, actions, behaviour, muscular tension, nerves and spiritual, physical and emotional health. It is strong to bring awareness and seeing and breathing.

4.J Using imagery helped me give my worries to Jesus. It helped me minister to others. It helped me to be in the movement. I loved the imagery – it gave me a base to work from and something to aim for. It brought freedom.


6.J This process has helped me to discard negative thoughts of myself and to overcome and realise the truth.

7.J I felt very comfortable with this aspect – I am a highly visual person anyway, I think and speak in pictures usually. I love to work with imagery.
QUESTION 10.
THE CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS MIND

1.C In these sessions my conscious mind relaxes and this allows my unconscious self to surface.

2.C I have experienced touching the unconscious mind in a recent session.

3.C What is in my conscious mind is affected by my unconscious mind by fears and doubts of the past.

4.C The past, present, future, memories, problems and issues are seen.

5.C This has been supported by the free flow of emotions. The teacher’s constant prayer walk in our class, and filling with words that edify oneself for a higher course, has given room to filter waste products of the mind, released old blocked patterns and ways of thinking to replace them with new ones. Amen.

6.C Blank

7.C God is working through dance with healing. Touched by His speaking to us. I always could/can dance even when my back was in chronic pain – it always brought healing.

8.C Out of your usual realm! Dancing on a cloud!

9.C Once you made yourself aware of your body consciousness – it's easy/easier to find these things again even without thinking about it (breathing, tension/relaxation, Proprioception, Homeostasis.


11.C Thinking about it I'm going crazy.

12.C Both travel without permission!

13.C I came back to dance because this is where I feel peaceful, alive and I know I can heal. Through the teacher however I am starting to change my thinking from “I am unwell” to “I could actually be well”.

14.C I am amazed that my body holds so much memory – it is powerful and has helped me – my attitude and changing it for the positive.

15.C Blank.

16.C To see what is in my thoughts from past and present experiences and I gained knowledge.

17.C Blank.
18.C The conscious is the thing you know you are doing. The unconscious is the thing you do without knowing.

1.J Faith/hope/love work together and connect the conscious and the unconscious. What is it that connects? Hard work, time, surrender, quiet and detail are fuelling the place (the mind) in this.

2.J Touchy subject!


4.J Understanding the conscious and unconscious mind helped me understand my body and how it works. It helped me to relax. Learning about this is a quiet detailed feeling.

5.J Quiet. Still trying to grasp it. Profound. Filling the gap. Relaxation. God is in the picture. This is fuel for the journey and the ability to move on and keep moving.


7.J I feel I have covered this elsewhere?
QUESTION 11.

SPIRIT

1.C  My spirit is free to be itself – feeling safe and accepted.

2.C  For me it is a devotional time – the highest form of devotion. (Devotion cannot be quantified!)

3.C  This is powerful, feelings explosively joyous, completely freeing.

4.C  Spirit is flying, freedom, fullness, happy, soothing.

5.C  This is the reigning power in this class and an ever-growing huge encouragement of an embodiment of the Holy Spirit's movement to carry faith in all areas of life.

6.C  Blank.

7.C  I have been blessed by the Holy Spirit, healed through God and dance. I am now, after this lesson, more in love with God and have come to the realisation that God does heal us through dance and that He will hopefully use me to bless others through spiritual dance.

8.C  Leads me, takes me to unknown heights, moves my body in strange ways not like me!

9.C  Improvisation has so much to do (if not everything) with the Holy Spirit and his guidance – if we only recognise it. Relax, listen/look into and flow with it!

10.C  Open, flying, soaring, free, uninhibited, unheld.

11.C  I want to lift my hands and praise God (included here is a drawing of musical notes surrounding these words).

12.C  Perfect spiritual dance is connected with the Spirit – unity.

13.C  My spirit is coming alive – sort of golden twinkles occasionally. I am happier now in my Spirit than I have been the last few years.

14.C  I have a great freeing release when I dance in the Spirit – my body is so much together and I feel so well/healthy.

15.C  Blank.

16.C  Spirit is something eternal. God is Spirit and a part of our being as well.

17.C  Blank.
The True Self. The spirit defines the person. It can be damaged or not. The spirit can find, grow and heal to further define the Individual. This can include the Holy Spirit that dwells in us.

Spirit is sighing, soaring, drunkenness, breathing, buoyancy.

After one year of improvisational dance I have received most of my healing in the Holy Spirit. I have become aware of His power in movement, in shaping a class, in controlling feeling and in guiding the teacher through the class.

Enlarged.

As I found peace my spirit became freer. There were times when my spirit was in my improvisation movement and it wasn't just my body moving. I was sighing, breathing, flying, watered, consumed and I could relax and find freedom.


The initiator and inspirer of steps resulting in healing and release.

I feel the process and each performance (3 times) enabled me to worship and enter a place where I could fully and freely accept, experience, be permeated and infused by the care and nurturing of the Holy Spirit.
QUESTION 12.

IN CONCLUSION ARE THERE ANY OTHER COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE?

1. C  For me these sessions are a total surprise. It was recommended and so I did them thinking perhaps I would drop it if my schedule was too hectic. However after the first session I knew this would be the last class I would drop. Although at times I’m not sure of what I’m supposed to do I just step out in faith allowing Jane to guide me and I try to follow in total obedience. From this I have and am finding a new side to me. I feel loved and cherished in a way I’ve rarely felt before. Joy and peace is here. Giving and receiving feels great. Growing and learning physically, emotionally, spiritually in total acceptance is helping me to blossom and touch others.

2. C  Such freedom of expression is surely our birthright – I would like to advocate for these sessions to be widely available in the community as a truly healing modality.

3. C  One needs to be aware of oneself spiritually and physically and emotionally while also being aware of others and things around you.

4. C  Yes! We must get connected more to these elements to enjoy life to the fullest, to know ourselves better.

5. C  I would love the entire universe to experience this teacher’s classes – deeply touching on an internal level, spiritually supported and much opportunity for exploring movement whether on a subtle level or free and wild – much to gain.

6. C  Blank.

7. C  I love these classes. I hope that I will be able to be like the teacher and be able to open people’s spiritual lives through the Holy Spirit so that they can be free to dance.

8. C  Movement is something that expresses the self, releasing self.

9. C  Too long I have believed, it needs the laying on of hands by a really anointed minister of God to receive (ideally instantly) healing through the power of the Holy Spirit. But if we work on getting into this relaxed, ‘receiving from God’ attitude of our bodies on a daily basis (Fight therefore to enter into His rest. Heb. 4:11) healing could spread more easily every day! Imagery – thinking God’s word, picturing it rather than natural (seemingly) limitations.

“And everything shall be possible through Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be the glory.” Eph. 3:20

Praise the Lord and thank you to the teacher!
10.C Discovery, realisation, connections.

11.C It was really good.

12.C I enjoyed this survey. Thanks.

13.C Blank.

14.C I find this session so helpful to my body, mind and spirit. I am getting stronger in all areas of my life – it is such a blessing. I feel like a butterfly coming out of a cocoon.

15.C Improvisation builds confidence and self esteem as well as allowing you to find freedom spiritually and physically. It has the power to heal physically and from past memories and deepens my relationship with God.


17.C Blank.

18.C Blank.

1.J I was stimulated by the different venues the teacher used for her class.

2.J Thank you for all the healing that you have brought into my life via dance. I strongly believe that dance with Jesus Christ is a powerful tool in healing.

3.J There is still so much to learn...... I feel like I have only just begun to see, would love to learn more about healing via dance.

4.J Thanks heaps for everything you’ve done with us over the past year. Sorry it’s taken me so long to fill out the form. I hope it’s still helpful. If you need more details give me a call (phone number included). I learned to breathe!

5.J I love the teacher. I feel so loved. Everything feels so easy. The pressure’s gone.

6.J I’m a living example of the power of healing through dance.

7.J The kinaesthetic exploration, development and expression enabled a greater depth of spiritual connection and emotional growth/freedom than if the creative process had been towards painting a picture or creating a poem – both of which I have done a lot of previously.
Appendix Five

Ethics Protocol Approval for Research Projects Involving Human Participants
APPLICATION TO OBTAIN AN ETHICS PROTOCOL APPROVAL FOR
RESEARCH PROJECTS INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS

You are reminded that your project should not commence without
prior written approval from the UWS Nepean Human Ethics Review Committee

1. Title of Project
(use approx. the space provided and type in 12 point font)

Dance and Healing

2. Chief Investigator/s

Name: Jane Farrelly

UWS Nepean School: Contemporary Arts

Contact details: 18 Melbourne St.
Fairlight NSW 2094
Ph (02) 99491285

Qualifications:
1999 Completed MA Qualifying Program, UWS Nepean

Schools of Contemporary Arts and Community and
Organisational Studies

Subjects:
Research Methodology in the Performing Arts 10562
An Introduction to the Therapeutic Application of Creative
Processes SN 6161
Arts Research Qualifying Project / Thesis 55999

Please see attachment 1. for other qualifications
3. Type of Project
   Pure Basic Research Strategic Base Research Applied Research Experimental Developmental

Staff Member Research Degree Candidate (student)

If Candidate, state research degree being undertaken
   Master of Arts (Honours) - Contemporary Arts

Name of Candidate's Supervisor
   Chair Supervisor is Kathleen Ann Driscoll (02) 9852 5541

* Candidate please note your Supervisor is required to sign the Supervisor's Declaration, refer Question 18

4. Address for Correspondence *Students must provide a mail address
   Jane Farrelly
   18 Melbourne Street
   Fairlight
   NSW 2094

5. Anticipated Duration of the Project

   Proposed commencement date: April 1st 2001
   Proposed completion date: June 30th 2002

6. Funding

   Is the research project the subject of an application to an internal or external grants body, drug company, or other funding support? No
   If yes, Name of the funding agency Not applicable
   What was the outcome? Approved Pending Refused

7. Associate Investigator/s

   Name UWS Nepean School Contact Details Qualifications
   Not applicable

   This is a solo investigation
8. Lay Summary of Project

Write in words a layperson would understand a brief description of the project, ie use 'Plain English' (use approx. the space provided and type in 12 point font)

DANCE AND HEALING

Some of the earliest connections between dance and health are to be found in the pure and ancient forms of tribal and sacred dance such as the Increase Ceremonies still performed today by aborigines of the Aranda tribe of central Australia (Dean 1967 p.36). To commune through dance with the nature of being with one's self in relationship with others and the social and physical environment is a fundamental unity of wholeness in mind, body, soul and spirit. The methods of handing on and the integral approach to well being innate to primitive dance are emerging in contemporary dance. Dance is again a medium for good medicine.

Contemporary dance is often a catalyst for reading, uncovering or contacting awareness from within. How and when does the contemporary form create a catalyst for healing? Is the process of dance creation the key? Perhaps healing potential is part of a dancer's make up? What working conditions are prevalent when healing is in motion? The research will seek to address these questions and to identify the medicinal action of dance through exploration, observation, individualisation and personal and reciprocal interaction.
9. Scientific, Educational or Cultural Aims of Project

Refer to Guidelines Section 9. for information on details required

(use approx. the space provided and type in 12 point font)

The healing properties of dance so commonly experienced by those who love to dance operate within a variety of frameworks. Concepts, theories and findings specific to healing and dance are often handed on unconsciously by dancers, teachers and choreographers. The mentoring and discipleship of healing dance knowledge moves through subtle, spoken, spacial, musical and embodied textual forms, sometimes undeclared and rarely written down. Formalisation of this aspect of the dance profession seems to be overlooked. Research and literature in dance medicine and dance therapy are slow to establish in Australia compared with America (J. Exiner and D. Kelynach 1994) and the United Kingdom (H. Payne 1992). These concerns reflect the applicant's interest in generating research activity into dance and healing practices, literature and education.

The essential aims of the project are

1. To facilitate dance activity in correlation with healing and creative processes.
2. To identify, systemise and document healing properties within contemporary dance.

These aims will be pursued via pathways designed as a result of the 1998-99 pilot study. As tested in the study, innovative and safe exploratory procedures evolve from an harmonious and nurturing ambience where content and conduct give all due respect to the individual. Consideration of ethical issues will be integral to the activity and an on-going concern in the researcher's mind. Anonymity, privacy, confidentiality and sensitivity for all participants will be of prime importance throughout practice, documentation and presentation of research.
10. Value and Benefits of Project

Refer to Guidelines Section 10 for information on details required

(use approx. the space provided and type in 12 point font)

This particular piece of research is worth doing because

- The exploration, systemisation and documentation of healing properties within contemporary dance breaks new ground.

- Processes and findings could be made available to the dance community through Australian Dance Council - Ausdance NSW Inc, the national network of Australia's dance industry commonly known as Ausdance.

- Information concerning the correlation of contemporary dance and holistic healing practices relevant to dancers, teachers and choreographers gives way for informed choice regarding improvements in health care and dance practices.

- An increase in creativity, personal awareness and health for the participants and the researcher.

- Opportunities to communicate, stimulate thinking, generate discussion and practical exchange about exploratory material with participants, fellow researchers and academic staff in presentations and workshops.

- The clarification and augmentation of established intellectual and practical boundaries concerning the combination of dance art, theory and practice with homoeopathic art and science.

Special groups who stand to benefit

Dancers, dance teachers, choreographers, dance therapists and dance organisations will stand to benefit from this research.

The information will open up further avenues of research

- This research will give a base or a model for further investigations into holistic dance practice

- To investigate the nature of dance with an integral approach to the whole dancer, mind, soul, body and spirit establishes a position for comparison and differentiation from the more segmented approaches of dance research.

- Formal research in the area of dance and healing, theory and practice will make inroads towards the development of dance therapy as an established profession.

- The results of this research could form an information base for a follow on project where homoeopathic medicines in conjunction with dance practice make inroads to dance medicine.
11. Details of Research Procedures/Methodology
Refer to Guidelines Section 11 for information on details required
(use approx. the space provided and type in 12 point font)

Creative processes activated in dance and healing require research methods that are phenomenological and qualitative. The exploratory work is holistic, participatory and people centred. Contemporary dance improvisation with free association, imagery and the unconscious, stillness, spirituality and the memory of health are the pathways of healing relevant to the study. The theoretical framework is an interweaving of the art of contemporary dance and the holistic medical science and art of homoeopathy. The direction of healing, reading of signs and the interpretation of experiences are observed and recorded in correlation with the ethics, principles and practices of the researcher's chosen professions, dance art and homoeopathic medicine.

Plans are now in place for practical and theoretical explorations culminating in presentations and reports. These plans are influenced by two models of university engendered dance research currently serving the Sydney dance community. The first model Safe Dance Report Two by Tony Geeves is accessible via Ausdance network. The studio style, practical workshops and presentations of Rosalind Crisp, Masters (Honours) 1998 LJWS Nepean is the second model.

The applicant's 1998 pilot study Dance and Healing gives clarification in the selection of material and indications and insights as to how the study may progress within university protocols and calendars. The method is primarily one of active analysis with three steps. Firstly an in depth and detailed observations of the dance as it happens. To seek a plan of internal order and trajectories so as to make sense of the
observations is the second task. Finally and most importantly transparent and accurate interpretation of the synthesis of embodied text and dance data.

The work will operate in two phases concluding with presentations and reports. Phase one is an experiential study of dance improvisation with approximately eight tertiary dance students. The specific elements of creative process, namely proprioceptive sensations, homeostasis, memory of health, relaxation, imagery, the conscious and unconscious mind and spirituality will be the foci. The second phase brings into play two mature age dance professionals for the purpose of identifying the healing potential of an individual while involved in the process of dance creation. The researcher will also study the correlation between creative and healing processes specific to dance in this second phase.

11. Continued

From what groups are the participants to be drawn?

Phase one of the research involves healthy volunteers who are tertiary dance students where the applicant works. The applicant is currently employed as a part-time lecturer in Dance with Wesley Institute for Ministry and the Arts, Drummoyne and the School of Creative Arts, Christian City Church, Oxford Falls. Both tertiary institutions hold interest in and sympathy for dance and healing research. Two courses presently conducted by the applicant are inclusive of the research material. The subjects are Exploratory Contemporary Dance and Contemporary Improvisation. During day-to-day work and with the knowledge and approval of the department heads students become acquainted with the applicant's research interests, dance and homoeopathic practices. Opportunities for students to be involved as research participants are made available by way of conversations in and out of class times.
Phase two of the research will include at least two Sydney based, female, mature age dance professionals as healthy volunteers. To date three such dancers have voluntarily expressed a willingness to participate in the project. Firstly, a dancer with a lifetime of international performing experience who is currently and independent artist, performer and teacher, married with children. The second is a performer, choreographer, researcher and teacher with academic qualifications and employment. The third dancer has vast international experience in performance, research and dance administration and is married with adult children.

11. Continued

Negotiations for recruitment of human participants will proceed in the following manner. Phase one: The heads of dance within the two institutions where the applicant is currently employed have given informed consent for the research to progress including involvement from the student body. Any student who expresses interest will be offered written and verbal information about the project from the applicant. Volunteers will be welcomed and informed of all finer the points to consider prior to confirmation of involvement. Information statements in the form of a letter of invitation to include a consent form will conclude the recruitment process.

Phase two: Formal conversations, written explanation, experimental sessions and presentations with the dancers are recruitment methods used by the applicant for this phase of the research. These will be followed by a letter of invitation including relevant information and a consent form.
What will participants be required to do within the research project?

- The participants will be required to work individually or together in approximately sixteen practical dance sessions.
- Dance improvisation and dance creation sessions will include conversations, questions and comments.
- The time frame of approximately ninety minutes for each session spread over a two to three semester period.

- **Phase one** participants will be required to complete simple response sheets given out during the course of the lectures. Return due date for the sheet is approximately four weeks from final session. The response sheets will give an opportunity for the dancers to reflect, find words for their experiences, give feedback and make a written contribution in discovery process.

- **Phase two** participants will be invited to communicate freely during practical sessions and or check notes made by the researcher.

The research is qualitative and phenomenological and centres around creative process and observations made by the researcher rather than results from the response sheets.

All participants will be invited to dance in at least one presentation/performance. Video recordings / presentations / performances of selections from the dance work will be offered as available options. Participants will be given full details with these options. For example dates, places and procedures will be explained fully and with adequate notice to make withdrawal or participation as simple as possible for each individual.
12. Participant Sample Details

Refer to Guidelines Section 12 for further information on details required
(use approx. the space provided and type in 12 point font)

Sample size is of low importance to the researcher due to the qualitative nature of the research.

Number of human participants

Phase one - a maximum of eight tertiary dance students
Phase two - a minimum of two professional dancers

Is this enough to get meaningful data?

Phase one - to compare and contrast variables and establish effective interactive group work relevant within a tertiary environment four dancers could be considered a minimum number. An intake of eight will allow for a drop out rate of half whilst at the same time give ease to the process and sufficient continuity for meaningful research.

Phase two - the study becomes in depth, therefore more than two mature age professionals would create a labour intensive situation. Expressions of interest so far indicate that replacements could be found in the event of participants leaving the project. Satisfactory choreographic interplay has been achieved with two professionals in the pilot study.

How did the applicant determine sample size?

Sample size is determined by the following criterion.

1. Information gleaned from the applicant's 1998 pilot study
2. Experience gathered over thirty years in dance and health care work including groups, both small and large plus one to one situations.
3. Double the minimum number of participants will be taken into the research as a precautionary measure. The idea being that the option for participants to withdraw from the project is always available whilst at the same time insuring sufficient continuity for practice and process.
Age range of human participants
Phase one - between nineteen and forty years
Phase two - over thirty five years of age

Gender of human participants
Phases one and two - predominately female with possibly one or two males

State of health of human participants
Phase one - tertiary level dance students are generally in a moderate state of health with some exceptions. Phase two - active health is a pre-requisite for professional mature age dancers. Long term effects from dance injuries are common in mature dancers.

13. Evaluation of Potential Harm or Risk of Harm from Research Procedures
Refer to Guidelines Section 13 for information on details required

   Does the project involve any of the following research procedures?

   a) the possibility of physical stress/distress, discomfort
      Yes
      If yes, give details:

Harm or the risk of harm due to physical stress/ distress, discomfort could be in the areas of

1. Physical restrictions / inhibitions / discomfort from old dance injuries.
2. Day to day concerns such as fatigue, sore muscles, head aches, menstruation, colds / flu.
3. The effects of age and stage, for example ageing processes in the case of mature age dancers.
4. It is common practice for dancers to attend class / performance with one complaint or another and the research sessions will no doubt show similar patterns.
The nature of dance is to move the body in space therefore the possibility for human error is always present. Risk of physical harm will be reduced to an absolute minimum with safe dance and wholistic dance practices. Although the idea that some harm may bring about some good is well known by the researcher and a common practice amongst dancers it is in fact far from the realms of this project. The preferred choice is to become aware of and encourage the correlation of healing pathways innate to dance and the individual dancer.

13. CONTINUED b) the possibility of psychological/mental stress/distress, discomfort Yes
If yes, give details:

Details of possible psychological/mental stress/distress, harm/discomfort include

- punctuality and other issues of time
- general day to day stresses and the anxieties of life
- the resurfacing of old habits or traumas could occur within the safe and relaxed environment of this project (a common event in dance practices)
- to be still and quiet with one's self within the context of a dance space is a stress for one dancer and joy for another
- the discomfort of reflective practice is real and an integral part of any dance research or personal growth
- due to the gentle and supportive nature of the study, risk of harm within this research is greatly reduced in comparison with risks involved with more usual dance activities

In simple terms the volunteers will be asked to dance, relax, reflect, comment, question, answer and discuss. Persons who volunteer for this project will have prior contact with the researcher. Prior contact will include opportunities to become familiar with the working style of the researcher. The project is process based rather than product oriented. Practical explorations and verbal exchanges similar to those applied during the
research are currently a part of general dance practices already in use for potential participants. This familiarity reduces to a minimum the chance of coercion from the researcher because volunteers may rely on their experience as to how the study proceeds. In order to draw from the inner landscapes of contemporary dance practice the style of research is reflective rather than theatrical or performative. Procedures of processing, publication, storage and disposal of information generated in the course of the research are designed so as to respect and protect any sensitive or private details.

With foreknowledge and experience of risk factors the research sessions and presentations are designed to minimise physical and psycho-social harm by methods of sensitivity and safety first. Privacy, social reputation, psychological fears and confusions are covered by ethical practices and standards commensurate with the researcher’s professions and with due consideration of personal ethics, needs and requirements of all participants.

c) deception of participants at any stage of the project
   If yes, give details: No

d) the use of drugs or invasive procedures
   If yes, give details: No

14. Potential Ethical Issues
You should address each potential ethical issue as it relates to your project
(use approx. the space provided and type in 12 point font)

a. Integrity, respect for persons, beneficence and justice
Refer to Guidelines Section 14 a for information on details required

Value of Integrity
Whilst the commitment to the search for knowledge and the dissemination and communication of results are essential they are no pecuniary interests or personal or
professional gains to be made by the results what ever they may be. The position of the researcher within the project is primarily that of the observer. The research conduct needs to be of the highest standard so as to honour participants, researcher and the institutions in which we are all associated.

**Respect for Persons**

Phase one of the project is conducted in environments where there are long established principles of ethical conduct with regard to welfare, rights, beliefs, perceptions, customs and cultural heritage of the individual and collective. The project is designed to embrace the ethics within these environments and the students who come from around Australia and from many nations of the world and to learn from the loving and harmonious culture currently evolving from these principles. Phase two of the project has a more individually negotiated and personal approach to matters of respect in line with the researcher's and the participants' personal and professional principles needs and requirements. All participants will be given the opportunity to proof read / check notes and interpretations made by the researcher who will make any necessary adjustments.

**Beneficence and Justice**

The research is qualitative creative and artistic. The Inherent value of the work is one of concern for the wellbeing of the dancer as a whole person. Observation and interpretations of the art of creative dance practice is the work of the researcher. Consequences of participation in such an environment are more than likely to be beneficial and just. Everything will be done to reduce the possibility of burdens of any kind for the participants.
b. **Consent**
Refer to *Guidelines* Section 14 b for information on details required

**Voluntary Participation and Well-Informed Participation**

**Prior to Commencement of Research**

Informed and written consent from persons who voluntarily choose to participate in the project will be a condition. Manipulation and exploitation at any stage of the project particularly to gain consent is guarded against by open access to information and by the fact that there is nothing to lose by non participation. *Please see attachments 2 and 3-phase one and two Information Statement and Consent Form*

a) In simple terms the volunteers will be asked primarily to dance and to a lesser extent relax, reflect, comment, question, answer and discuss.

b) Likely consequences should they participate

* increased awareness of healing pathways within contemporary dance improvisation.
* a positive, creative, individual/group experience within a familiar dance context
* opportunity to explore, articulate and develop personal dance material within a safe and encouraging wholistic framework

**Research Integrity and Autonomy**

The integrity and autonomy of all participants is vital to the research in order to provide useful information particularly in the area of peer review. The participants are the researcher’s peers and objective results will require independent thinking and mutually negotiated and agreed ethical codes of a high standard without any coercion, inducement or influence that could impair the voluntary character.

To discontinue participation persons may simply cease research activities and choose to communicate their withdrawal by not returning their response sheet. This may also be done by telephone, in writing or in person at their convenience. At the conclusion of each session/workshop/presentation and at the close of the project time is allotted for debriefing the project and as to the nature and disposition of results.
c. Research Merit and Safety

Refer to Guidelines Section 14 c for information on details required

- The need for research to be valid.
- A research design to provide useful information
- Satisfactory soundness of the research methodology
- Value to be achieved by carrying out the research
- Participants in research have their integrity and autonomy as persons respected and protected.
- Physical /psychological harm or risks of harm from research are both minimised and outweighed by benefits. Balance to be struck between the invasiveness of the human research. Consider discomfort, health risks and loss of privacy.

The content of this research project is overtly declared as inclusive. The structural framework is carefully selected and assembled from elements found to be effective in the applicants earlier pilot study, preparatory workshops and courses of study. Prior testing of the design so as to insure a balance in power, position and exchange between researcher and participants will free the researcher to focus on the research material. The risk of subjugation of the participants or manipulation from the researcher at any stage is reduced to a minimum because the researcher is positioned more favourably as a facilitator and or impartial observer so as to reduce bias in the collection and interpretation of data.

Together the qualities of inclusiveness and balance form an intention that points towards a goal of discovery and the exchange of information. The agenda is healing from a wholistic point of view and dance is the embodied text. The research procedures facilitate a shared action of exploration and sense making by way of a therapeutic application of creative processes. The circumstance of the sessions is such that a state of complete emersion in the interaction prevails. The sessions are conducted in an established safe dance environment with sprung flooring and tarquet, adequate privacy, effective ventilation, lighting and change- room facilities
The application of improvised dance as the chosen medium for the healing work is this researcher's preferred option because this form easily engages the senses in a meditative state. The sensual and spiritual become nondualistic in meditative dance.

Verification for creative process where flow states spontaneously manifest can be found in *Living Well* (M. Csikszentmihalyi 1997 p. 32 and p. 28)

Activity can produce flow provided the relevant elements are present. It is possible to improve the quality of life by making sure that clear goals, immediate feedback and skills are balanced to action opportunities. What is common to such moments is that consciousness is full of experiences, and these experiences are in harmony with each other (...). The metaphor of 'flow' is one that many people have used to describe the sense of effortless action they feel in moments that stand out as the best in their lives. Athletes refer to it as 'being in the zone,' religious mystics as being in the ecstasy and musicians as aesthetic rapture.

Patterns begin to emerge and various healing directions become apparent. The records depend on the interpretations the subjects and researcher make. The differing viewpoint of each subject is recognised and as a consequence interpretations and meanings are negotiated. Naturally these interpretations are influenced by existing levels of health, inherent values, understanding and experience. This is particularly relevant in the dance dialogues.

The research is qualitative and almost defies objective measurement. (Shakespeare, Atkinson and French 1993 p. 72) This means that there are no certainties other than the fact that the participants will or will not have improved health. Validation may be approached by observing the direction of cure and thereby proving increased levels of wellness for the dancers.
The method is fully acceptable to reason and held in accordance with established laws or recognised criteria. For example the application of Herrings Law of Cure. Herrings Law is the most common model employed by Homoeopaths for the purpose of mapping the direction of healing. This law claims the direction of cure is from within the person moving towards the surface, from the organs of more importance to the those of less importance and in the reverse order the symptoms develop. (Garion-Hutchings 1988 p.31)

d. Ethical Review and conduct of Research

Refer to Guidelines Section 14 d for information on details required

Ethical review and conduct of this research project will be undertaken if and when review and approval has been granted by Human Research Ethics Committee. Funding is not being sought for the Dance and Healing project.

Collection of Personal Information

Storage of Data and Personal Information

Research data is to be retained for a minimum period of 5 years

All forms of data will be stored in the researcher's home office system including

1. Personal computer for writing up.
2. Filing shelves for written correspondence, rough notes, photocopies etc.
3. Cupboard space for photographs, videos and sketches.
4. Participant identifiers will be removed. Names will not be linked to responses as numeric codes will be used in the writing up process unless a participant wishes otherwise.
Access

1. Only the researcher will have access to the research data.
2. The home office is secure.
3. The premises and contents are covered by insurance.
4. The researcher has professional indemnity insurance cover.

Disposal

Data will be disposed of when the recommended time period of five years has elapsed or if and when a participant requests.

15. Privacy requirements

   Refer to Guidelines Section 15 for information on details required for Questions a & b

   a. Will you be accessing data held by a Commonwealth Department or Agency? No
   b. Are you aware of and agree to abide by the Privacy Principles in dealing with personal Information Yes

16. Ethics Approval from Another Institution

   Does this research require the ethics approval of another institution? If yes, give details including whether or not you have submitted an application to that institution for ethics approval.
   No

   Name of Institution Application Approved/disapproved Application Pending
16. Ethics Approval from Another Institution

Does this research require the ethics approval of another institution? If yes, give details including whether or not you have submitted an application to that institution for ethics approval.
(please ✓)

Yes ✓ No X

Name of Institution Application Approved/disapproved Application Pending

17. Chief Investigator/s Declaration

I/we certify that the information given in this application is correct to the best of my/our knowledge. I/we acknowledge that I/we must notify the Committee if there is any ethically relevant variation or if the project is discontinued prematurely. I/we have read, and agree to abide by the relevant code of practice for research involving humans.

Chief Investigator Signature/s:

Signed... Jane... [Signature] Signed..........................................

Signed........................................ Signed..........................................

18. Supervisor of Degree Candidate Declaration

I certify that the information given in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Supervisor's Signature: [Signature] M. O'DRISCOLL

Signed... [Signature] Dated... 4th March 2001

Before lodging the application please complete this checklist

☐ All questions have been answered YES ☐ The Information Front Sheet has been removed YES
☐ Chief investigator/s/Degree Candidate Supervisor have signed the declaration YES
☐ Supporting documentation is attached YES ☐ Required number of copies plus the original are attached YES

The Research Ethics Co-ordinator has reviewed the application Yes No

Application submitted... 2nd March 2001... (Date)

End of Application Form
Qualifications

1960  Elementary Certificate, Royal Academy of Dancing.
1977  Elementary Certificate, Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing.
1978  Associate Certificate, Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing.
1979  Advanced Certificate, Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing.
1982  Maestro Cecchetti Diploma, Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing,
1990  Registration Certificate, Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing.
1990  Diploma of Homoeopathy, Nature Care College of Naturopathic and Traditional Medicine.
1999  Senior First Aid Certificate, St John Ambulance Australia.
Appendix Six

Additional Photographs
Appendix Seven

Videos
- Case Study
- View of the Heavens
- Glow
- Clouds
Appendix Eight

- Two Audio Tapes
Appendix Nine

- Confidential Table of Participants
Appendix Ten

- Colour Map
- Case Studies
Glossary of Terms

Aesthetic Distance
Artistic space provides objectivity

Contact Improvisation
Contact improvisation in its most basic form involves two people who, in effect have a dialogue in motion. They relate to each other lean against each other, roll and slide on the floor and climb over each other, communicating by sensing each other's presence and through a constant give and take of weight and energy (Anderson 1997 p.248).

Contemporary Dance
Dance and movement that is relevant today. Dance created and performed in the here and now.

Dance
Within the context of this project, dance refers to exploratory contemporary dance improvisation. Also there are some references to dance as a profession.

Faith

Field
Author and lecturer in homeopathic pharmacy Steven Kayne (1997 p.88) cites van Wijk & Wiegant (1995) in an explanation of the concept of a field theory in existence within biomedical research. The field is said to be an organizing factor in which certain reactions occur with space and time being used as a language for the continuous interactions between material elements.

Healing
Healing is about making well. (Collins Dictionary 1970)

Holy Spirit
The Holy Spirit is a living person (Pringle 1994 p.3). The Holy Spirit is God (Holy Bible NIV 1984 Acts 5:4) The Holy Spirit was poured out on all flesh (Holy Bible NIV 1984 Acts 2:17) The Holy spirit is our advocate. (Holy Bible NIV 1984 John 14:16)
Homoeopathy

Homoeopathy is a system of medicine developed since the eighteenth century from the work of German physician and chemist, Samuel Hahnemann. Homoeopathy views all symptoms of sickness as an indication of an underlying state of ill health that affects the whole person and not just one or two body systems.

Improvisation

A creative dance composition or dance performance without preparation or choreographic concepts. Also called creative dance, spontaneous dance or expressive dance by some authors.

Kinaesthetic sense

See proprioception

Proprioception

An awareness of the activities of muscles, tendons, and joints and of the equilibrium is provided by the proprioceptive or kinaesthetic sense. Proprioception informs us of the degree to which muscles are contracted, the amount of tension created in the tendons, the change of position in a joint and the orientation of the head. The proprioceptive sense enables us to recognise the location and rate of movement of one body part in relation to others. It also allows us to estimate weight and determine the muscular work necessary to perform a task. With the use of proprioceptive sense, we can judge the position and movements of our limbs without using our eyes when we walk, type, or dress in the dark. (Tortora 1987 p.344)

spirit

Essential meaning as in We must keep the spirit as well as the letter of the agreement (Collins Dictionary 1970)
Dance and Healing

J. Farrelly

Master of Arts (Honours) – Contemporary Arts

Year of Submission 2003

University of Western Sydney
PLEASE NOTE

The greatest amount of care has been taken while scanning this thesis,

and the best possible result has been obtained.
Abstract

Dance consciously or unconsciously can by its very creative process from idea or feeling through to performance work and beyond, form a catalyst for healing.
Acknowledgements

Thank you to University of Western Sydney for the opportunity to carry out this research.

Thank you to my teachers, colleagues, employers and supervisor for showing interest and giving support and encouragement.

Thank you to those people who give their time to participate in this project. Thank you for your dancing, your drawings and photographs, and responses.

Thank you to Anne Penny for her assistance with the document design and layout.

Thank you to my awesome, faithful and loving God who makes his presence felt in the people and places of this research.

Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and
lean not on your own understanding;
in
all your ways acknowledge him
and
he will make your paths straight

by Solomon, Proverbs 3:5–6 The Holy Bible
New International Version 1984
## Contents

**CHAPTER 1 – FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS**  
Introduction  
Aims and Objectives  
Researcher’s Job Description  
Hypothesis  

**CHAPTER 2 – FRAMEWORKS OF THE STUDY**  
Context  
Exploratory Contemporary Dance Improvisation as a Medium for Healing  
Boundaries of the Study  
Research Sessions  
Creative Processes  
The Challenge in the Mystery of healing  

**CHAPTER 3 – THIRTEEN OBSERVATIONS OF DANCE EXPLORATIONS**  
Introduction  
Observation One – Relaxation Facilitates Improvisation  
Observation Two – Embodied Dance Language  
Observation Three – Spiritual Considerations  
Observation Four – Inner Stillness  
Observation Five – Dance Electricity  
Observation Six – Spirit of Prayer  
Observation Seven – Homoeostasis and Kinaesthetic Sense  
Observation Eight – Transference Phenomenon and Contact Sequence  
Observation Nine – Choice and Thoughts  
Observation Ten – Choice and Conscious and Unconscious Imagery  
Observation Eleven – Beyond Words  
Observation Twelve – Creative Process and Aesthetic Distance  
Observation Thirteen – Dance in Time
CHAPTER 4 – DISCOVERIES AS A RESULT OF OBSERVATIONS  87
   Introduction to the Discoveries  88
   Discovery One – Uncovering the Mystery of Healing  89
   Discovery Two – Healing in Dance Time  94
   Discover Three – Prayer and Configuration  100
   Discovery Four – Other Gifts  105

CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSIONS  110
   Conclusions To The Aims and Objectives  111
   State of the Heart – Concluding and Conjectural Remarks  116

BIBLIOGRAPHY  119

GLOSSARY  125

APPENDICES  127
   Appendix One – Chronology of Research Activity
   Appendix Two – Letters to Tertiary Institutions
   Appendix Three – Information Statements and Consent Form
   Appendix Four – Participants’ Responses
   Appendix Five – Ethics Protocol Approval for Research Projects Involving Human Participants
   Appendix Six – Additional Photographs
   Appendix Seven* – Videos – Case Study – View of the Heavens – Glow – Clouds
   Appendix Eight* – Two Audio Tapes
   Appendix Nine* – Confidential Table of Participants
   Appendix Ten* – Colour Map – Case Studies

* These Appendices are Primary Data, and are not included within the document.