



# Freedom through Movement

**W**hen I first heard that raw dancing could energise and strengthen my base chakra, I was both curious and a bit sceptical: *Yeah, it sounds fun, but could the simple act of dancing really create change?* In a word: Yes! One experience of raw dancing and I was a convert.

Raw dancing is one of the most fun and dynamic ways I know of shifting energy and really connecting with your body. It's what you instinctively did as a kid - FREE uninhibited movement and expression - before you became self-conscious and pretty serious about life.

I was first introduced to raw dancing during an energy anatomy course that focused on healing, balancing, strengthening and really getting to know the chakra system. And when I say really, I mean really.

This was not a course that focused on an intellectual or conceptual transfer of knowledge; rather, the teachings, movements and exercises I learnt gave me an in-depth, tangible experience of my own chakras.

These days, the word 'chakra' has become part of our vocabulary, which is great, but how many people have moved from knowing how to use the word in a conversation to actually knowing the health and state of their own chakras? Or, more importantly, ways in which they can connect with their chakras and create change in their life at the base level?

Picture this... You put on your favourite track of music and the beat starts to build. You close your eyes; first you can feel it in your ears, and then a wave-like pulsation starts to move through your body. You feel your body instinctually responding to the music. All of a sudden you want to stamp your feet or shake your arms. You may even find yourself shimmying or jumping up and down. You want to smile and laugh for no reason other than the joy of being alive and moving.

I've not yet seen or known a child that does not express him/herself through movement; it's the most instinctual and innate thing for us as humans, yet so many adults have become disconnected to this internal source of power.

Let's be clear about what raw dancing is, and isn't: Raw dancing is not choreographed or rehearsed, it's not done to be sexy or attract attention; rather, it's playful, spontaneous, freeing and - truth be told - it could look pretty weird to an outside observer.

Dancing in this way is for you, and you alone. It's a chance to connect with your body, really feel your body, be absolutely present and *allow your body to move you*. How often does

the body actually have a chance to 'take the lead'? Our mind is mostly, if not always, directing and taking charge, which is often to the detriment of our body. Raw dancing, on the other hand, is a way of switching 'directors' and getting the ego to sit it out.

A friend recently shared her personal experience from a time when she was 13 years old: She was in her bedroom and cocooned in her own world of wonder, enthusiastically dancing around... Then suddenly the door was flung open and her older male cousin stared at her with a baffled expression. She felt humiliated. And you know what? It was over 50 years before she danced like that again! Sure, she still loved to sway her hips while listening to her favourite songs or tap her feet and clap her hands at a concert, but she hadn't allowed herself to feel that degree of self-expression and freedom since that incident.

I once had a client who at the mere mention of raw dancing, widened his eyes in alarm and shifted uncomfortably in his chair - this reaction shows the degree to which many people have become disconnected to the idea of moving their body; for some people it actually feels distasteful, or even scary. He was a mentally driven man who had regularly used his mental strength to override his body's signalling system in order to get things done. His body was now paying the price: rigidity in the back and stiffness in the neck and shoulders.

I was encouraging him to disengage from his mind, drop into his body and simply move. The next time I saw him he beamed at me, shaking his head in disbelief. He had put aside his reservations and hit the play button on his stereo. He kept laughing at himself, thinking of a full-grown man dancing around the house like a young boy. He had broken through a mind-made barrier that had not allowed him to access his child-like self in a very long time.

If it helps, you don't have to think of it in terms of dancing, instead, view it as movement. And it doesn't have to be wild, it can be whatever you want it to be. Listen to your body and be guided. If, in any way, you are prohibited in movement due to injury or otherwise, then work with what you do have.

Listen to music that stirs something in you; music that deeply touches you - sometimes there's no rhyme or reason why, it just does. In a world of complexity, sometimes you need something as simple as raw dancing; the perfect opportunity to just let go.

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