

# ***Rhythm is a Dancer: An Essay about Affectfulness as a Parameter of Human Development***

***Helga Loos-Sant'Ana***

Federal University of Paraná

***René Simonato Sant'Ana-Loos***

Independent Researcher

***Aldemar Balbino da Costa***

Federal University of Paraná

## **CORRESPONDING AUTHOR**

**Helga Loos-Sant'Ana**

Main e-mail address: [helgaloos@yahoo.com.br](mailto:helgaloos@yahoo.com.br)

Alternative e-mail address: [helgaloos@gmail.com](mailto:helgaloos@gmail.com)

55 (41)992144080

Rua das Araras, n. 5 Recreio da Serra, Piraquara, Paraná, Brasil

CEP. 83305-600

## **Abstract**

*This essay is an invitation to consider the possibilities of dancing as a process of education and human development. The intention of this theoretical work is to bring some foundations about how human development may benefit from dancing as a reference for constructing parameters based on affectivity and the search for existential self-realization. With this ambition, we explore the notions of human development, corporeity, affectivity, interaction, playfulness, arts and dancing. The primary foundation is the Theoretical System of Affectfulness and the respective concepts of Affectfulness and Psychic Cell. Further, we dialogue with other authors in order to expand the discussion. We support dancing as an artistic expression with the potential to extend individual's perception, balance and sensitivity. If experienced as an activity connected with the sense of harmony that gives us existential pleasure, i.e. if the dancers experience corporeity while willing to connect to the implicit needs of their bodies towards a rhythmic harmony, dancing may lead to discovery of the unfragmented essence of being, in consonance with nature and the universe. This is owed to the potential of dancing to outline affective-emotional parameters that may serve as models to be generalized to other interactional situations, contributing to nourishing a cycle of more positive and pleasant interactions.*

**Keywords:** Dance. Human Development. Affectfulness. Corporeity. Rhythm. Self-realization.

## Introduction

Human development and education are intimately related to the arts. Dancing is one of the most significant expressions of this phenomenon. The experience of dancing, and, with it, the notion of art, triggers our sensitivity, preparing us to see life with more inherent signification of our existential movement. Thus, life, one way or another, through paths not so clear to human cognition, delivers an infinite amount of perspectives. This introduces us to opportunities of realizing the existence of the diverse possibilities of being, the multiple available options of conflict resolution, and the reaching of the most harmonic states: what we translate as human development. Therefore, this essay explores *dance* as an instrument that may, depending of our relationship with it, offer parameters to build one of the foundations of *human development: affectivity*.

Knowledge, reflection and solutions about the diverse individual and social phenomena may be achieved through art in education. In its diverse forms, art considers human existence and its varied relations with its surroundings. It connects agents, observers and contexts; human condition itself. It pictures the world's dynamism in different languages, sensitizing, providing insights, affecting for the sake of transformation. Art works as an instrument integrating cognition and affectivity in order to balance the organism to the environment [1].

In this perspective, dancing is a form of artistic expression that integrates other forms of art, such as music, theater, literature, and visual arts. It may propose a specific language depending on the context, of course, such as jazz, modern ballet, contemporary, tap-dance, ballroom, folklore dances. Each style envisages peculiarities allowing uniqueness in expressing various rhythms and styles.

Regarding education, school has prioritized the knowledge developed and accumulated over the years. However, all information that is necessary and transmitted loses value if the recipients do not know how to use it. They must acquire such pieces of information, recombining, reorganizing and transforming them. Nevertheless, the concretization of this process requires nourishing open and flexible minds. This is when art helps develop this openness and flexibility of thoughts, resulting in individuals capable of using knowledge to improve reality. Art in itself is knowledge, and practicing it requires knowledge of other areas. Though, the possibility of signification of all knowledge abstracts a domain of the *cognoscent subject* who practices it with their full sensitivity [2], which, in turn, arises through affectivity [3].

Therefore, this essay seeks the connection between the arts, human development and education. In this sense, we must urgently consider that interaction and affectivity are intrinsically related, and that educational experiences that include themes like dancing are indispensable.

After all, without affective exchanges, the existential sense towards the extension of cognitive development is lost. It should be noted that human development is not exclusively cognitive development. Human development is the entire process involving also affectivity – the way we affect the world around us, and, at the same time, are constantly affected by it –, which is present since one's birth and will follow along one's entire life. Thus, affectivity occurs in relations, and only through them, one may transform oneself, evolve and extend one's cognition, within a socioaffective process.

## Justification and Goals

Interest in the theme *dancing*, as explored here, which has been triggering insights that serve as bases for this essay, has been motivated mostly by (a) curiosity about why people dance; (b) interest regarding the real role of dancing in human development; (c) discomfort with the current social and scientific paradigms supporting education.

The premises assumed in order to guide the argument developed here are as follows:

1. Socioaffective development of an individual depends on the interactions experienced with their surroundings;
2. Interactions are estimated by the cognoscent subject as from their sensitivity;
3. The pleasure (or displeasure) of the affectivity experienced in the interactions is the primary principle of a personal, subjective parameter to the path towards human development, which is objectively shared with others;
4. The interactional paradigm is most appropriate in order to comprehend human development, even in atypical circumstances;
5. Affectivity provides for human development;
6. The arts clearly allow for the pleasure of knowledge (of oneself and of the world), and for the appearance of creativity;
7. Art is directly related to education and human development;
8. Dancing experiments and ludically promotes the existential pleasure;
9. The pleasure experienced by dancing may improve a parameter of affectivity that may provide for human development;
10. Dancing is an artistic expression that extends an individual's perception and balance, as well as their sensitivity.

In this perspective, it is our intention to present foundations in order to answer the following question: *How may human development benefit from dancing as a reference to building existential parameters based on affectivity and the search for self-realization?*

By assuming the importance of the arts in an educational context and in life in general, we support the need of more reflections, as well as scientific works, questioning the current paradigmatic path of prioritizing "reason above emotion". Essentially, arguing for a more balanced perspective between these two instances comprised by the human condition. Since sensitivity is the propellant of art, a greater valuing of the arts tends to aid a fuller human development.

Thus, we intend to raise indicators to support the notion that dancing, as an instrument of educational and human development, has an active role in the process. In doing this we intend to stimulate research in Human Sciences with the goal of, in a greater scale, reaching a better understanding of the true role of education and how to reach appropriate parameters to support human development.

As such, we may also think of strategies to obtain policies prioritizing the arts, attempting to provide more accessibility to the artistic experience to society as a whole. This will be possible if the arts have a more significant role in the teaching-learning process. By heightening the arts as a fundamental piece of education, an attempt to reach more effective results of human development would directly

contribute to society as a whole. As observed by Pombo [4], we must perceive the value of emotionality – non-fragmented; rather, together with all other aspects of the individuals – integrating the arts egalitarianly into education. And, in this process, recognize the value of the diverse forms of art, such as dancing.

Specifically, this essay intends to use premises of the *Theoretical System of Affectfulness* (TSA) [5], [6], [7] and dialogues with other authors to gather elements to answer how human development may benefit from dancing as a reference to building existential parameters based on affectivity and the search for self-realization

Accordingly, the following topics cover considerations about key, indispensable concepts for understanding this perspective.

## Human Development

We propose to contemplate the idea that self-realization and human development are intimately related. The humanist stance in Psychology was developed in opposition to psychoanalysis and to behaviorism. It credits development to each individual's intrinsic potential and the interactional possibilities that expand and update this potential. Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, contemporary humanist authors who wrote their most important theoretical contributions between the 1950s and 1970s, believed in the potential of self-updating and self-realization, supporting that human nature is essentially constructive and reliable. In fact, according to those authors, the same principle applies to all living beings, since positive forces towards health and growth permeate the natural dynamics, being intrinsic to every organism. Therefore, the trend towards development is paramount to the life project of any organism, which will seek methods to preserve and value itself.

In this line of thought, such trends towards health and balance are facilitated by complete, genuine interpersonal relations, that are mutually accepted and do not constitute obstacles to self-knowledge and self-realization. Rogers [8] states that if one is able to affectively understand the other's feelings, one will also understand one's own. Thus, one is able to turn to certain virtuous directions, walking towards self-realization as one advances to maturity and real and full socialization.

Abraham Maslow denotes the value of the process involving the path to self-realization. In order to become self-realized, one must experience motivations related to the many levels of necessity, starting from physiological, through safety-related needs, social needs and finally needs related to esteem. Further, one must accept and invest in one's own motivation for growth, as an exciting and rewarding process. That is, self-realization happens through experiences of interacting with the world that provide sense, abundance and value to life, aiming for growth and preservation of integrity. The author argued against anything that closes doors or limits possibilities. Maslow [9] explained:

(...) the adaptation to this world becomes indispensable, for example, the proof of reality, the knowledge of this world's nature, the learning of differentiation between this world and the inside world, the learning of the nature of people and society, the learning to hide from what would be dangerous, the learning of the parts of the world that are gratifying and those that are dangerous or useless to satisfying necessities, the learning of approved and allowed cultural paths to

gratification and the gratification techniques. (...) The world is intrinsically interesting, beautiful and fascinating. Exploring it, manipulating it, interacting with it, contemplating it, enjoying it, are all motivated kinds of action (cognitive, motor and aesthetic necessities). (p. 221).

Self-realization and self-actualization imply to experience the world and oneself intensely, with full concentration and absorption. It is to make every experience true, allowing oneself to truly, rather than potentially, exist. An individual in process of self-realization is in line with their own intimate nature, paying attention to what happens within themselves, as well as in the world, turning each choice into an option for growth and development.

The interactionist author Lev Vygotsky [3], in turn, notes that human development includes biological maturation, socialization, development of motor and psychological functions, and the diverse learnings one is exposed to along one's life, provided by the social and cultural experience. These functions do not occur in isolation, since the development of one dimension constantly interacts with the others. This author lived and wrote his works in the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and his most relevant writings to psychology of learning and human development arose especially between the 1920s and 1930s. From him, we gather a very relevant concept for this essay: that human development is propelled by learning, and that the teaching-learning process we usually call "education" happens everywhere and all the time, as one learns through social interactions, thus building oneself and one's knowledge. Developmentalist concepts were created by Vygotsky especially in the final phase of his life. Generally, however, this author had a multidimensional view of human development, considering it from the most specific and narrow perspectives (microgenetic) to some with extended reach, such as phylogenetic, which reports to the history of human development. In all perspectives, he referred to the notion of development as "self-actualization exercise for interactions", as described by Sant'Ana-Loos [10] in his analysis of Vygotsky's scientific project.

Vygotsky's interest in human psychology resulted from his experiences with the arts, having focused in the role of aesthetic experience on development. This fact is particularly interesting for this essay. For Vygotsky [11],

(...) art "works" with human feelings and artistic works embody this activity. Feelings, emotions, passions are all part of the works of art, but they *are transformed* with it. Much like an artistic procedure triggers the metamorphosis of the raw materials; it may also trigger the transformation of feelings. The meaning of this metamorphosis of the feelings is that they reach above individual feelings, becoming generalized and social. As such, the meaning and function of a work of poetry on sadness is not that of transmitting the sadness of the author; rather, to express this sadness in a manner that in mankind may be found something new, a higher, more human truth. (p. 6).

In this regard, through its own aesthetic experience and playfulness, art infiltrates the relation between education and human development, unveiling new possibilities to individuals and to society, working in several perspectives of development. We will further elaborate on this argument, specifically

related to dancing as an art form.

For the Theoretical System of Affectfulness (TSA) and its Monist approach, the view of the whole and its dynamic relation with the parts (units) that compose it is thought of as a relation of interdependence with the workings of the elementary unit that constitutes the foundations of the human psyche, designated in this theoretical perspective as *Psychic Cell*. Through this psychic logic of development, one acquires the skill of “affecting and being affected” and of developing, that is, building resources to take part in the most diverse possibilities of interaction. Regarding the Psychic Cell, the authors of TSA [6] explain:

This denomination is inspired by its constitution in three dimensions correspondent to those of a biological cell (nucleus, cytoplasm and membrane). Those support the Gestalt of diversity that exists in every human psyche. Together, the three instances constitute an organicity of the mental process that support the existential administration of the sensitive and thinking “I” that reports to its condition of being, at the same time, a biological, psychic, social, affective, rational and universal entity. (p. 67).

Therefore, we have the psychic processes known as *identity* (as the basis of the Configurative Dimension), *self* (as the basis of the Recursive Dimension), *extended resilience* (as the basis of the Creative Dimension), thus composing the *Triadic Unit* that builds the basis of the human psyche. Through a fourth dimension, *alterity* (as the basis for the Modulating Dimension), the basic unit interacts with the human world. These dimensions and their respective processes are interdependent, and, at the same time, complementary. In this dynamic of the Psychic Cell there is also a meta-dimension that may emerge through the development of the aforementioned dimensions. It is responsible for the functional and structural homeostasis of the psyche: the *True I* (or *Complete Language*). Kloeppel [12], writing one of the first works based on the TSA, explains this meta-dimension of the Psychic Cell:

A “big I”, capable of harmonizing itself with the world through the Complete Language; a universal being in relations with the other (“I”-“other”), a full and true “I”, obtained by efficient efforts in maintaining relations of alterity. As highlighted by the authors of TSA, the fifth dimension is essentially a meta-dimension, a dimension combating the nullifying entropy by achieving totalizing energy, through the promotion of pro-homeostatic thought. It corresponds to looking at the world and at the “other” by containing in itself the same responsibility as when looking to “I”. In this regard, the “other” also becomes a “big Other”, a capitalized Other. It is by reaching this level of interactions with oneself, with others (people) and with the world (things, ideas, other beings, etc.) that one may reach homeostasis, a condition of harmony in interactions. (p. 79).

The essential psychic structures – resilience, identity, self and alterity – may arise sequentially or even be interrupted in their healthy development, leading to problems of self-regulation, and, therefore, of behavior. The balance between these instances is necessary for one’s complete development; that is, one

must open up in order to homeostase interactions, in all levels or dimensions. Between individuals: I and the other; between subjectivity and objectivity; between ideas (abstract) and materiality (empirical). We observe a frequent forking in existence, one that incurs in dualisms or polarizations, commonly lead to interactional and existential conflicts, distorting human development [10].

This essay presents the need to approach the psychological processes from an “extended” perspective: without the polarizations and dualisms between the cognitive and affective-emotional scopes. Further, between conscious and subconscious, or corporeal and mental, as supported by Luna, Loos-Sant’Ana, Sant’Ana-Loos and Silva [13]. It supports that human development may be guided by the search of self-realization, where potentials and learnings are equally valued and balanced towards health – psychic, social/interactional, and corporeal.

## **Corporeity**

Diversifying experiences is very important for cerebral plasticity, as indicated by Kolb and Whishaw [14], because new and diverse experiences extend neural networks and create new neurons. The authors suggest that one way to stimulate the brain is to place individuals in environments offering some sort of experience involving corporeity, activating the sensory or motor pathways. In the supporting experiment, they compared animals restricted to living in cages to same-species animals encountering diverse experiences in complex places. The results showed diverse experiences to lead to alterations in different neural systems, especially those experiencing complex places.

In this regard, this essay notes the importance of an approach to human development that place corporeal experiences in similar esteem to learning of scientific knowledge from a cognitivist bias. Thus, from a limited group of possibilities valuing corporeity in the scope of Psychology and Education, we must credit Alexander Lowen, developer of the mental-corporal psychotherapy known as Bioenergetic Analysis in the 1970s. This author has studied and written about corporeal expression since the 1950s, having psychotherapy as his focus for over 60 years of his life [15].

Lowen [16] supports that “pleasure is the conscious perception of the body’s rhythmic activity” (p. 201). In his book “Pleasure: A creative approach to life”, he explains that rhythmic movements are present in nature as a whole, as well as in involuntary activities of our body (breathing and heartbeats, for example). Thus, voluntary activities guided by conscience constitute the medium that allows for elaborate expressions, such as dancing, working, and singing, among other corporeal manifestations. Conscious activities such as these are often pleasant; that is, there is an intrinsic relation between rhythm and pleasure. If a motor activity is rhythmic, that is, there is synchrony between the internal movement patterns of an individual and the external models, feeling is pleasant. Conversely, if an activity is performed mechanically, with excess priority given to demands external to the body, it becomes painful [16].

The author also elucidates that one may find sensorial pleasure in stimuli that harmonize with the rhythms and tones of one’s body. One must, however, be inclined to receive pleasure, i.e., one must search for it and be open to it. For example, one may be pleased by listening to one’s favorite song in a given moment. Conversely, the same song may be unpleasant if one is trying to concentrate on a demanding activity.

One may evaluate pleasure or lack thereof by observing how people move or perform their daily activities. In order to feel pleasure or assess the pleasure of another, one must identify with one's body and its search for rhythm. Rhythm is pleasure and vice-versa. It is the healthy and natural functioning form of organisms. As one improves one's coordination of body movements, they become rhythmic and, almost always, a source of pleasure [16]. The author also explains that individuals are capable of changing rhythm as their excitement varies. Therefore, since they are creative beings capable of opening themselves to new possibilities, individuals may merge complex rhythmic patterns in order to increase pleasure and happiness.

Rhythmic, spontaneous activities are undervalued in a society focused on the ideas of reward, success and perfection. Lowen [16] states that, normally, what one believes one knows, ideas usually arise only from intellectual learning, contradicts one's sensitivity, and in the conflict between corporeal and mental perspectives, one tends to rely excessively on knowledge and deny one's affective and spontaneous comprehension. The author demonstrates this through the observation that while everyone recognizes the importance of inner peace and pleasure to our integrity, in order to obtain power (something of great value in our world), people often sacrifice everything else. For symbols of power, money and success, one will often forget what is essential: pleasure and affectivity [16]. To accept that such behavior is detrimental to human development and well-being of life in society, to pleasure and intimate affective interactions, we must evidence the value of corporeity – the rhythmic necessities of the body. Only then may we fully promote the balance of the Psychic Cell, the psychic unit of human development. In doing so, we may grow towards self-realization.

## Affectivity

The notion of *affectivity* ought to be extended beyond a mere notion of decorum in relations, because foremost it involves the quality of relations and interactions we experience in the world, i.e. how we affect them and are affected by them [7]. Feelings and emotions are consequence of the impact felt by us, at an internal level, from these interactions. Therefore, feelings and emotions are subsets of affectivity. This is a Monist approach to understanding affectivity.

The *Theoretical System of Affectfulness*<sup>1</sup>, suggested by Sant'Ana-Loos and Loos-Sant'Ana [5], [6], [7], aims at better understanding the relation between mankind and nature, including the notion that mankind is also a product of nature. The authors support the idea that all human phenomena occur in a systemic perspective, connected to further elements of reality. Through this perspective, affectivity is a set of phenomena that manifests along with encounters, interactions established with other things in the world, whether human or not. For the authors, "all that exists is a result from the kind of affectivity created by interactions" [17] (p. 115). Thus, the existence and movement of any being or object affect its surroundings. This extended concept of affectivity intends to surpass traditional definitions because it harnesses the deep ecology of the universe, turning affectivity intimately dependent on the rhythm established in the most varied interactions as the fulfilling phenomenon of pleasure and existential sense.

Through the Theoretical System of Affectfulness, the authors expect to reclaim the role of human

---

<sup>1</sup> References to the recently redubbed *Theoretical System of Affectfulness* may be found in previous works as *Theoretical System of Expanded Affectivity* or *Theoretical System of Extended Affectivity*.



sensitivity: affectivity, emotions, and feelings. It focuses on equating the partaking dimensions in each situation, albeit the dimensions may vary according to each scale. However, all constant instances of reality should in some measure contribute to the equation, according to a Monist stance. Therefore, reality should be investigated starting from the sense of the interactions it comprises. The simplest idea of *Affectfulness* is to dynamically balance the analysis of how a being that seeks to establish and solidify itself while balancing itself to reality, affecting the world and being affected by it.

As a consequence of this affectivity found in all perspectives and scales of reality, emotionality is one of the primary domains that constitute mankind. Simply because in a world with so many interactions and ensuing effects (as in the result of affections), distinct emotions lead to the observation of certain events, while others go unnoticed. A fearful individual, for example, observes different things than a calm person. Something similar occurs with every emotion. Thus, one should notice that affectivity may lead to different emotional states, and that those are generated not only by the individual; rather, they are influenced by the myriad of interactions happening in their surroundings, be it directly or indirectly. As these interactions are experienced, the play of effects may trigger multiple transformations. Since interactions are considered by all theoretical backgrounds mentioned in this essay as essential to an individual's development, in their absence, the possibilities of "being" are limited in all scopes encompassing human beings. What each individual Psychic Cell will consist in will depend on the experienced affectivity and the type of ensuing emotionality, as well as how these effects will be processed and will contribute to generating vital psychic resources.

Sant'Ana, Loos and Cebulski [17] support rationality to be affectivity itself, but arranged in a human manner: the resultant from existential sense crossed against extended reality. In such light, the historical defense of cognitive supremacy to the liability of affectivity, as those are two facets of the same phenomenon, configured by the affects sensed, perceived and processed by each individual. "This premise may eventually contribute to educational thinking by (re)integrating affectivity and cognition, contradicting the current practice that excessively privileges rationalist education." (p. 110). The authors identify that the combination of arts, philosophy and psychology may contribute to integrating (or reintegrating) affectivity to cognition. In this manner, whenever an individual makes themselves available in this evolution of thinking, feeling and acting, they will ultimately affect other persons in their own development.

## **Interaction**

As previously announced, comprehending affectivity includes comprehending the quality of interactions between individuals, as well as between these and the other elements of the world. Hence, the Theoretical System of Affectfulness assumes as premise that investigations of any theme always be in consonance with understanding the whole and its relation to the parts, its connections and reciprocal contributions. I. e., requiring observations not only of the "outside" or "beyond", but rather also of the "inside" or "within" of phenomena, converging them in an equation that may only be fully appreciated from a panoramic perspective, with the assistance of a meta-theory [5], [12].

Drawing on opportunities provided by interaction, *Affectfulness* (as an outline for human development) emerges as a possibility of learning about the parameters guiding our existential sense.

Perhaps the most important of these parameters is pleasure, true pleasure, which is conducive to wellbeing. When interactions arise in an orderly fashion, that is, *rhythmically harmonious*; when corporeity and all other dimensions composing the beings are valued, beyond the mechanistic sense imposed by excessive rationalism (which became cognitivism), the possibilities for self-realization are extended. Then, the arts become fundamental for building parameters of existential sense, those conducive to human development in its best form.

## Playfulness

Playfulness is a way of attaining great possibilities of “being”: the full, rhythmic, melodious human being, in harmony with the powerful forces of the universe. It is a possibility to envision and reach skills often not accessible in the concrete and “serious” life. By means of roleplaying and imagination, one may awaken human creativity and unveil possible worlds [18].

The scope of playfulness reaches power capable of transforming individuals, by giving their own bodies possibilities of transformation. In playful situations the body is more easily stimulated, awakening desire and pleasure. Furthermore, playfulness grants the possibility to experience something innovative, not crystallized in the commonplace interactions, leading to learnings that may expand the existential sense. Porpino [19] describes it as exposing the organicity that inhabits the bodies. A body that presents itself as playful and affective possibilities.

Pleasure is the foundation of a happy life. The creation of a playful atmosphere is indispensable so that a child can fully embrace playing and may then manifest creative impulses. Adult creativity emerges from the same source, resulting from the desire for pleasure and from the need for self-expression. Pleasure grants motivation and energy for a creative approach to life. Every creative act begins as an excitation of pleasure. Aside from providing motor force to the creative process, is also the product of this process. Without pleasure there is no creativity, and without a creative attitude towards life there is no pleasure [16]. Meanwhile, Vygotsky [20] highlights that playing is responsible for the sociocultural development of individuals, as it is through varied playful activities that a child is introduced to cultural and social aspects of its community. Besides, for Vygotsky, fantasy and imagination are ultimately serving affectivity.

Accordingly, we support in this essay that playful and artistic activities have an extremely important role in human development, both in corporeal and psychological senses, as explained by Sant’Ana-Loos [10]:

One could say that while an individual learns to interact with the symbolic world, especially when it is coated with playfulness and happiness, they slowly become more capable of transmuting existential dimensions: to “jump” from a point of view to another without dissolving, learning to go back to themselves and, simultaneously, through alterity, to acquire from the experience with the other something to help them grow, develop, expand. (p. 229).

In order to obtain knowledge about all the things, one must use all creative possibilities, transforming oneself while being transformed by one’s deeds. Thus, one is humanized by the practice of

action-reflection, sensitivity and projection, by the proficiency of imagination and creation, consolidating everything into something a concrete or intellectual product [21].

The dynamic process of learning in integral human development comprises the need for the consciousness of a corporeity that demands playfulness and pleasure in order to favor an individual's creative processes. Because of this, we criticize the lack of emphasis on playful and artistic activities in education. After all, playfulness and the arts can and should "[...] be agents of insertion in ethics, the search for human happiness, which is meaningless without the affective and emotional perspectives that distinguish the living of the species." [10] (p. 227).

## Dance and Art

Regarding the notion of human development, Sant'Ana, Cebulski and Loos [22] report that we live in a paradigm that prioritizes essentially materialist matters, as opposed to matters of human relations and sensitivity, such as ethics and the arts. They observe that art subtly permeates the dawn of development, including connections to affective and emotional aspects of human condition, which, in turn, is externally coated (in the concrete reality) by cognitive instrumentalization.

A complete education demands a paradigm capable of valuing the uniqueness of mind and body, of the psychic and material processes, of seriousness and playfulness. Granting a way of jointly developing them is indispensable if we intend mankind to finally synchronize with the many possibilities offered by nature and by the universe as a whole. Artistic and playful activities offer in their essential aspects, such as imagination and fantasy, greater possibility of regulating and equating social-affective development of individuals. Hence, teaching-learning processes may significantly benefit from the constantly affective and playful nature of the arts, and, specifically, of dancing. Imagination and fantasy are intrinsically related to human emotions and their motivations.

Cebulski [23] clarifies that in artistic processes imagination grants access to reality from a different perspective than that of scientific knowledge. The arts warrant the synthesis emotions, which go through a reorganization and an occasional depuration. Still, through this effort to "escape reality" in an activity with relative independence from consciousness, in an aura of playfulness, the arts may present themselves, since it is their nature to be an "alternate reality", a more intense one, a hyperbole elaborated from a different view. Thus, one obtains a consciousness filled with new, progressively complex and enriched possibilities of reading the concrete world, in whose bases the motivating forces of imagination that build the existential sense may be found.

The arts, in making themselves present through *dancing*, may allow the germination of several of the possibilities exposed in this essay. As explained by Gil [24], "dancing operates some genuine experiments of this ability of the body to manage itself, creating a laboratory where all possible managements are tested". Likewise, Porpino [19] supports: "artistic productions of dancing unrest, deconstruct, trespass what has been previously built, and may trigger the appearance of new forms of thinking, new attitudes and new points of view, occasionally reinforcing and occasionally rejecting previous actions." (p. 95). Hence, the artistic process involving dancing, may, in fact, be considered an educational process.

Rocha and Almeida [25] agree that dancing has great educational potential, not only to express ideas, feelings, emotions, or even philosophical, social or political principles. It also goes beyond overcoming stress, daily conflicts or easing tensions. They explain that through its human domain-integrating essence, dancing is capable of leading an individual to (re)discovering its corporeity and sensibility: the language of the dancing, talking body.

One must understand, however, that the act of dancing will not, by itself, solve problems or spread magical solutions. The dance and the involved persons must be playfully contextualized in the arts. Individuals must risk exploring corporeity, transcending the many impervious barriers erected along the history of mankind. They must be willing to connect to the implicit needs of their bodies, heading towards rhythmic harmony, where movement leads to discovery of the unfragmented essence of being.

Dancing retrieves this sense of being in the world “wholly”. It acts as a model to be generalized to other aspects of life. Dancing is playful, but here we support that it may become a parameter to “complete living”. The pleasure felt when dancing should be sought in other aspects of life, as self-realization is the key to becoming a full person; and, therefore, one of the bases to human development.

## Final Thoughts

The preface of Karenine Porpino’s book “Dance is Education” [19] has been written by Maria Conceição de Almeida. From it, we draw the following statement:

In fact, education may be conceived as an aesthetic experimentation of human condition in its multiple dimensions, which assumes experiencing pain and happiness, foreignness and familiarity. Easing the experiencing of porous, open, unfinished identities in permanent reorganization is to rehabilitate a culture of movement, another way of stating our corporeal inscription into the world. (p. 13).

We find Almeida’s words fortunate, as, we, likewise, support the necessity of openness to development and self-realization. In this process, we highlight the role of education and dancing (by offering opportunity for aesthetical experimentation) may eventually have in mankind’s evolutive process. We would, however, allude not only to our “*corporeal* inscription into the world”, but, rather, to an “*existential* inscription into the world”, i.e. the necessary integration of body and mind and of those with the world’s essence, since this essence is in some form inscribed into all of us.

We consider dancing to be an artistic expression that extends the perception, balance and sensitivity of individuals. If our assumptions are correct, dancing, if experienced as an activity connected with the sense of harmony that gives us existential pleasure, may help to outline affective-emotional parameters that serve as models and foundations to our development as human beings. Once in possession of such parameters, one may reveal the ability to generalize the emotional experience felt in the successful situation of dancing and actively search for experiences of such feelings in other contexts, or even attempt to create situations that may provide such experiences. In this cycle, we may be able to sustain more harmonic interactions and more positive feelings in relations between people, and between them and the

rest of the universe.

## References

- [1] Oliveira, M. E., and Stoltz, T. “Teatro na escola: considerações a partir de Vygotsky”, *Educar em Revista*, 26(36), 2010, pp. 77-93. Retrieved from <https://revistas.ufpr.br/educar/article/view/17582>
- [2] Schrödinger, E. *Mente e matéria*. In: *O que é vida?* São Paulo: UNESP, 1997, pp. 103-174.
- [3] Vigotski, L. S. *O desenvolvimento psicológico na infância*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1998.
- [4] Pombo, M. M. S. “Ampliando e transmutando dimensões existenciais: uma experiência teatral em escola Waldorf”, Master Dissertation, Federal University of Paraná, Curitiba, 2014. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/1884/43748>
- [5] Sant’Ana-Loos, R. S., and Loos-Sant’Ana, H. “A Afetividade Ampliada enquanto meta-teoria: ensaio acerca do que nos faz humanos e repercussões para a Psicologia”, *PsicoDom*, 12, 2013a, pp. 9-26. Retrieved from [http://www.dombosco.sebsa.com.br/faculdade/revista\\_12ed/artigos.php](http://www.dombosco.sebsa.com.br/faculdade/revista_12ed/artigos.php)
- [6] Sant’Ana-Loos, R. S., and Loos-Sant’Ana, H. “*Célula Psíquica*: a face estrutural da unidade básica da psique conforme a Afetividade Ampliada”, *PsicoDom*, 12, 2013b, pp. 63-82. Retrieved from [http://www.dombosco.sebsa.com.br/faculdade/revista\\_12ed/artigos.php](http://www.dombosco.sebsa.com.br/faculdade/revista_12ed/artigos.php)
- [7] Sant’Ana-Loos, R. S., and Loos-Sant’Ana, H. “Sistema Teórico da Afetividade Ampliada e a noção de interação: breve síntese epistemológica – Parte I (Acerca da unificação da realidade e do método científico)”, *PsicoDom*, 12, 2013c, pp. 267-43. Retrieved from [http://www.dombosco.sebsa.com.br/faculdade/revista\\_12ed/artigos.php](http://www.dombosco.sebsa.com.br/faculdade/revista_12ed/artigos.php)
- [8] Rogers, C. R. *Tornar-se pessoa*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 1991.
- [9] Maslow, A. H. *Toward a Psychology of Being*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1968.
- [10] Sant’Ana-Loos, R. S. *Do método e da filodoxia na compreensão da realidade: o caso da leitura do projeto científico de L.S. Vygotsky para a Psicologia*. Saarbrücken: Omniscryptum / Novas Edições Acadêmicas, 2016.
- [11] Vigotski, L.S. *Psicología del Arte*. Barcelona: Barral Editores, 1972.
- [12] Kloepfel, A. J. “Quem é o *Professor Afetivamente Ampliado*? Uma análise psicológica das interações no ambiente escolar”, Master Dissertation, Federal University of Paraná, Curitiba, 2014.

Retrieved from

<https://acervodigital.ufpr.br/bitstream/handle/1884/40775/R%20-%20D%20-%20ANA%20JULIA%20KLOEPPEL.pdf?sequence=2>>

[13] Luna, M. D., Loos-Sant'Ana, H., Sant'Ana-Loos, R., and Silva, N. C. "Das dicotomias teóricas às práticas desarmônicas: a agregação e a integralidade dos fenômenos humanos são irrelevantes na Psicologia?", *PsicoDom*, 11, 2013. Retrieved from [http://www.dombosco.sebsa.com.br/faculdade/revista\\_11ed/artigos.php](http://www.dombosco.sebsa.com.br/faculdade/revista_11ed/artigos.php)

[14] Kolb, B., and Whishaw, I. Q. *Neurociência do comportamento*. São Paulo: Manole, 2002.

[15] Torres, S. P. "A corporeidade no ensino fundamental: a busca de uma educação emancipatória". Master Dissertation, Federal University of Lavras, Lavras, 2016. Retrieved from <http://repositorio.ufla.br/handle/1/11019>

[16] Lowen, A. *Prazer: uma abordagem criativa da vida*. São Paulo: Summus, 1984.

[17] Sant'Ana, R. S., Loos, H., and Cebulski, M. C. "Afetividade, cognição e educação: ensaio acerca da demarcação de fronteiras entre os conceitos e a dificuldade de ser do homem", *Educar em Revista*, 36, 2010, pp. 109-124. Retrieved from [http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=S0104-40602010000100009&script=sci\\_abstract&tlng=pt](http://www.scielo.br/scielo.php?pid=S0104-40602010000100009&script=sci_abstract&tlng=pt)

[18] Santos, S. M. P. *Brinquedoteca: o lúdico em diferentes contextos*. Petrópolis: Vozes, 2011.

[19] Porpino, K. O. *Dança é educação: interfaces entre corporeidade e estética*. Natal: EDUFRN, 2018. Retrieved from <https://repositorio.ufrn.br/jspui/handle/123456789/25583>

[20] Vygotsky, L. S. *A formação social da mente*. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2007.

[21] Cebulski, M. C. "Teatro, como arte, na escola: possibilidades educativas da tragédia grega *Antígone*". Master Dissertation, Federal University of Paraná, Curitiba, 2007. Retrieved from <https://acervodigital.ufpr.br/handle/1884/11335>

[22] Sant'Ana, R. S., Cebulski, M. C., and Loos, H. *Ampliando o sentido da arte na educação por meio da afetividade*. In: Cunha, D. S. S. (Org.). *Arte, atualidade e ensino*. Guarapuava: UNICENTRO, 2013. Retrieved from <http://www2.unicentro.br/editora/files/2013/09/Arte.pdf>

[23] Cebulski, M. C. "Um diálogo entre Vygotsky e o Sistema Teórico da Afetividade Ampliada: o teatro na educação básica e o desenvolvimento socioemocional humano". Doctoral Thesis, Federal University

of Paraná, Curitiba, 2014. Retrieved from

[http://www.ppge.ufpr.br/teses%20d2014/d2014\\_Marcia%20Cristina%20Cebulski.pdf](http://www.ppge.ufpr.br/teses%20d2014/d2014_Marcia%20Cristina%20Cebulski.pdf)

[24] Gil, J. Movimento total: o corpo e a dança. São Paulo: Iluminuras, 2004.

[25] Rocha, M. D., and Almeida, C. M. “Dança de salão, instrumento para a qualidade de vida”, *Movimento & Percepção*, 7(10), 2007. Retrieved from

<http://ferramentas.unipinhal.edu.br/movimentoepercepcao/viewarticle.php?id=102>

### **Copyright Disclaimer**

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).