

**We Circle Around**  
Community Spiritual Dances  
with Mark Stanton Welch

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\*Original Songs and Dances by Mark Stanton Welch  
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## Some Elements about Community Spiritual Dancing

1. The intention of the dances is to deepen one's personal spiritual connection with self, community, and the creative self.
2. The dances embrace many musical traditions from a variety of world cultures and religions. They intend to unify and build bridges between peoples of all lands.
3. Dances of Universal Peace are one of the premier sources of organized world dances. Sometimes called Sufi Dances, the idea has come from deep sacred dancing in that tradition for quite some time.
4. Though some dances are up tempo and a great deal of fun they are all considered sacred and are invited to be experienced as such.
5. One of the wonderful elements of the dances is that all are doing the same steps/dance. The unification of movement, sound, word, and intention is a foundation for a powerful and expansive spiritual experience.
6. Each dance begins with a centering breath and ends with silence to allow the vibration to settle into the cells.
7. Typically the lyric is taught first. The melody comes next, and the steps are last.
8. The power of the dances is repetition. The repetition becomes a mantra of its own. The steps are learned, the melody and lyrics become fluid, and the vibration of the dance raises in frequency. As it moves into the flow the collective energy lifts all to a higher and deeper spiritual experience.
9. Dances are full group or done in partners. To establish partners have all members form a circle. Count off as Alpha and Omega. Omegas can step into the circle and turn around to pair up with an Alpha. Some dances are in a single circle with partnered moments. Do the same Alpha Omega action and then remind that the Alpha turns right and the omega turns left. Thus at the right time they will have a partner.
10. Sometimes individuals will not desire to participate or be physically challenged by the tempo of the dance. Honor their particular needs and invite them to sit or stand in the center of the circle. This includes them and also allows them to feel and contribute to the growing energy and vibrational collective.

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## Dance One: Bismillah *Islamic*

### Music and dance steps

Islamic tradition. *Bismillah* translates as "In the Name of the One Unity", *Er Rachman* translates as "All Compassion", *Er Rahim* translates as "All Mercy"

This song begins many evenings of Dances of Universal Peace. All surrender to the will of the Divine and allow the heart connections to sweep away resistance or differences. It is about emptying out so that we may be filled. The dance is done in humility and with a sense of awe at the miracle of each breath

Am Dm Am  
Bismillah Bismillah  
Dm Am  
Er Rachman Er Rahim  
F G Am  
We begin in the name of Allah

1. Bismillah  
*Facing center, dancers cross hands over chest, right arm on top of left, fingertips on own shoulders, and bow deeply*
2. Bismillah  
*Arms stretch up and out widely, as dancers gaze upwards and bend back slightly, keeping knees flexible*
3. Er Rahman  
*Spin once to the right with palms facing outward (like the sun, radiating compassion)*
4. Er Rahim  
*Spin once to the left with palms facing in (from the moon, receiving mercy for oneself and others)*
5. We begin in the name of Allah  
*Big circle, hands on shoulders move to the right*

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## Dance Two: Gate Gate *Buddhist*

### Music and Dance Steps

From the Hindu tradition this song is referred to as the Heart Sutra Song. The phrase "*Gate Gate Paragate Parasam Gate Bodhi Svaha*" translates as "*Going, going, going on beyond, always going on beyond, always becoming Buddha.*" It suggests movement toward awakening. It expresses the enlightenment of a Buddha as an unfolding process, rather than a steady state. It puts us in the hopeful position of one who may not have arrived, but who may be on the way. The destination may not be an end, but the trip itself. Use the mantra to take you beyond. Let it take you to the other shore. Allow it to awaken you. Let it remind you of your becoming. Let it carry you away without your leaving.

D                    C    D

Gate Gate Paragate

D                    C            D

Parasamgate Bodhi Svaha

1. Gate Gate  
*Dancers face clockwise and walk in a circle, hands opening outward from the heart on each Gate*
2. Paragate  
*All hold hands in circle and move backward, lowering arms as if gathering energy to go in*
3. Parasam Gate  
*Still holding hands, all move in raising arms towards the center*
4. Bodhi Svaha  
*Dancers spin individually out to the right out from the center and end bowing toward the center. Bring hands to the prayer mudra position in front of the heart, with a definite ending on the Sva in Svaha.*
5. *Dance begins again moving in the clockwise direction continuing at leader's discretion*

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# Dance Three: Blessed Be

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## Music and dance steps

This original song and dance honors and blesses the Earth and all her inhabitants. Great for use as an opening, a prayer, a meditation, or even a discussion starter. It is a large circle dance that moves alternatively left and right after each full sequence.

Em

Blessed be the Earth and all her creatures

Blessed be the Earth and all her land

Blessed be the air, the sky, and water

Blessed be each woman, child, and man

C B7 Em

Ah, Ah, Ah.....

1. Blessed be the Earth and all her creatures

*Dancers in circle take small, gentle steps towards the center on pulse of the song starting with right foot. On "blessed" hands on heart. On "be" hands in prayer mudra at the mouth. At "all her creatures" each makes a motion representing some Earth creature.*

2. Blessed be the Earth and all her land

*Dancers take small, strong steps backwards back out on pulse of the song starting with right foot. On "blessed" hands on heart. On "be" hands in prayer mudra at the mouth. At "all her land" each hold hands parallel to Earth and pulse with the beat.*

3. Blessed be the air, the sky, and water

*Staying in the large circle, pulse the beat with steps in place. On "blessed" hands on heart. On "be" hands in prayer mudra at the mouth. On "air" hands push up towards the sky, on "sky" the arms sweep across the sky, on "water" use the palms to make like the movement of waves*

4. Blessed be each woman, child, and man

*Circle turns and moves to the right as one while doing the same hand moves on "Blessed be". On "woman" palms to earth for Mother Earth. On "child" hands to heart to represent the Inner Child. On "man" hands reach back up to the sky to represent Father Sky.*

5. Ah, Ah, Ah

*On first "ah" dancers, still walking to the right in the large circle, slowly bring the hands down as if gathering energy. On the second "ah" hands form the prayer mudra at the lip, while still moving forward slowly circling to the right. On third "Ah" dancers stop, now facing towards the inner circle, place hands on the heart and bow from the waist...coming up to begin again.*

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## Dance Four: Wa Tahoe (*Native American Zuni Nation*)

### Music and dance steps

This is a sunrise song from the Zuni tribe in the Southwest part of the United States. This call for the sun to wake up is a beautiful morning dance. It lifts the spirit and moves to unify the human and the natural world, a wise choice indeed. Allow the song to grow in intensity as the call is made for the return of the sun to bathe and nourish all on this earthly plane. *Wa Tahoe* means wake up, arise!

D

Wa Tahoe taho Wa taho taho

Bm

Gmaj7

Bm

Gmaj7

Wake up, arise, life is calling you Wake up arise, life is greeting you

Em

Bm

Em

Bm

Mother Earth God, she is calling you Mother Earth God, she is greeting you

1. Wa Tahoe Tahoe

*Dancers in a large circle facing outward. Arms reach up to the sky as if calling the sun to shine in the morning*

2. Wa Tahoe Tahoe

*Dancers make a 180 degree turn to the inside of the circle and again call for the sun with arms raised*

3. Wake Up arise life is calling you

*Turn to the right in a personal circle palms facing inward then up to ears to listen*

4. Wake Up arise life is greeting you

*Turn to the left with palms turned in then hands move from heart outward in a greeting*

5. Mother Earth God, She is calling you

*Entire circle moves in the solar direction (right) side step (right together left) with palms facing the earth.*

6. Mother Earth God She is greeting you

*Entire circle moves side step in the lunar (left direction)*

# Dance Five: Heart Please Open

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## Music and dance steps

An original chant invites the heart chakra and the greater heart chakra to open. This call to for the love I Am is potent, direct, and timely. The call breaks the hold of the energetic protection we have used to separate and isolate, allowing the power of the inner love to expand to merge with the outer frequency of Big Love. The chant repeats the question with reverence, respect, and rhythm.

Em                    D                    Bm7                    Em  
Heart please open wide Free the love I am inside  
Em                    D                    Em  
Heart please open, I Am, I Am

1. Heart please open wide  
*Large circle moving forward to left. Hands cover heart and open up outward*
2. Free the Love I Am inside  
*Hands circle back to heart and lift up the "Love" energy towards the heavens*
3. Heart please open  
*Hands back to covering heart and open on "open"*
4. I Am I Am  
*Circle stops and faces the center with left hand palm up just below heart. Right hand drops straight down from above head at perpendicular to left palm on 2<sup>nd</sup> "I Am". Quickly turn right as circle and begin movements again in new direction. With each repetition large circle changes direction of movement.*

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## Dance Six: Kuake Lano Lano Mahote (*Native American*)

### Music and dance steps

This a Native American Sun Dance. It seeks unification with the Solar energies to allow the flow and the expansion outward. This is a large circle dance that is strong, powerful, and earthy.

Em	D	Em
Kuake lano lano mahote	Hayyano hayyano hayyano ah	
Em	D	Em
Kuake lano lano mahote	Hayyano hayyano hayyano ah	
Em	D	Em
Let me be one with the Infinite Sun	forever and ever and ever	
Em	D	Em
Let me be one with the Infinite Sun	forever and ever and ever	

1. Kuake lano lano mahote Hayyano hayyano hayyano ah  
*Dancers in large circle move toward center, palms down to earth pulsing the beat. At "hayyano" cup hands slightly apart in front of the body palms down. Raise hands up on "haya" and lower them on "no". Do this once to the center, once to the right, once facing out, and once to the left on "ah"*
2. Kuake lano lano mahote Hayyano hayyano hayyano ah  
*Dancers move out from center, palms down feeling the earth and pulsing with the beat. Now in big circle rotate quarter turns with hands up on "haya" and down on "no" and "ah"*
3. Let me be one with the Infinite Sun forever and ever and ever  
*Dancers move to the right in side step without crossing legs. On "forever and ever and ever" each makes a walking turn to the right while bringing the hands up and down his time palms up four times*
4. Let me be one with the Infinite Sun forever and ever and ever  
*Repeat 3 but going to the left*
5. *Dance begins again as many times as desired*

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# Dance Nine: Father/Mother *Native American feel*

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## Music and dance steps

A reverent dance to Grandmother Earth and Grandfather Sky, to our own Father and Mother lineage, and to the fathering and mothering we must provide lovingly to our own self. A large circle dance that moves with the pulse

Em

Father (Mother) of the living Father (Mother) of the ancient

Father (Mother) of all things to come

Father (Mother), how I love you Father (Mother), how I love you

Father, (Mother) you and I are One

C B7 Em

Ah Ah Ah

### 1. Father of the living

*Outer circle takes four steps forward toward partner in inner circle, while inner circle takes four steps backwards in pulse with the music and in sync with the oncoming outer circle.*

### 2. Father of the ancient

*Outer circle takes four steps backward to original position, while inner circle takes four steps forward in pulse with the music and in sync with the retreating outer circle.*

### 3. Father of all things to come (2, 3, 4)

*Both circles face right and move to the right while turning a moving circle to the right. Palms facing upward in a receptive position. Stop on the word "come" and face a new partner*

### 4. Father, how I love you

*Facing partners raise right hands and connect palm to palm while circling the partner in step with the music*

### 5. Father, how I love you

*Facing partners raise left hands and connect palm to palm while circling the partner in step with the music*

### 6. Father, you and I are One

*Stop and take partners hands and, face to face, look in partner's eyes, allowing an open hearted connection*

7. *Repeat entire sequence using "Mother" in place of "Father"*

8. Ah, Ah, Ah

*At conclusion of Mother verse all face right and, reaching front with right hand to grasp the left hand of the person in front of you while reaching back with your left hand, walk with a quarter note pulse (1, 2, 3, 4) to the right during Ah (4 steps), Ah (4 steps), and stop on the third Ah turning to face a new partner (1, 2, 3, 4)*

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## Dance Ten: Gopala *Hindu Tradition*

### Music and dance steps

This a very joyful and spirited large circle dance. "Devaki, Krishna's mother, still loved him and found ecstasy in being his mother, even when he was in his mischievous state. Gopala is the name for Krishna, referring to him as a young cow herder, who would steal his mother's butter, churned with great effort\*." The song is, essentially, a celebration of the child-like spirit in all of us. It must be retained at all costs...Gopala means Krishna. Devakinandana Gopala means Krishna in Devaki's happiness.

Traditionally, the Dance is sped up with each repetition, until it is quite fast. Finish with one or two slow rounds to ground the energy. The dance works well with all ages

C            G            C            F            C G C

Gopala Gopala Devakinandana Gopala (2x)

C                            Gm7    F                            C G C

Devakinandana Gopala Devakinandana Gopala (2x)

1. Gopala  
*Holding hands in a large circle, all move in toward the center, raising held hands*
2. Gopala  
*Move back out, lowering hands*
3. Devakinandana Gopala  
*Release held hands and spin individually to the right, both hands up at shoulder level, twisting in opposite directions*
4. Repeat 1-3, spinning to the left this time
5. Devakinandana Gopala Devakinandana Gopala  
*As a group dancers take hands and move to the right in a circle*
6. Devakinandana Gopala Devakinandana Gopala  
*As a group dancers take hands and move to the left in a circle*
7. Repeat, as desired, speeding up each round, ending with one or two slowed rounds to bring energy back in.

\*From Dances of Universal Peace V booklet

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*in the vicinity of the heart, being respectful of anatomy. Often shoulder is a safe place to place it. Holding the hand in place look into the eyes of the other and see the God in every face*

7. *Quickly take hands of the persons on either side in the same circle to begin the dance at an ever increasing tempo*

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## Dance Twelve: Hey Ungua *Native American Chumash Nation*

### Music and dance steps

From the Native tradition of the Chumash tribe in the Central Coast of California comes this beautiful greeting song that also honors the seven directions: north, South, East, West, Above, Below, and Within. The dance connects beings and draws power from the natural world vibration to make an expansive experience. According to legend it is the song that was sung every day by the Chumash above Point Conception, CA where the portal for souls leaving the Earthly plane lies.

Em

1. Hey hey hey hey hey ungua Hey hey hey hey hey ungua

E

2. Hey hey hey hey hey ungua Hey hey hey hey hey ungua

Em

3. Hey hey hey hey hey ungua Hey hey hey hey hey ungua

4. Hey Ungua Hey Ungua Hey Ungua Hey Ungua

- 1. Facing front, hands go from heart down to Earth, palms down. Take quarter turn right and do the same heart to Earth movement. Quarter turn right and do the same. Another quarter turn right and do the same*
- 2. Now facing inner circle again move hands from heart straight out palms outward. Quarter turn left and palms push out to front direction. Do this two more times after quarter turns left*
- 3. Side Step 2 times R L R L to the right side palms tapping neighbors palms at both sides. Then reverse with same hand moving with 2 side steps to the left L R L R*
- 4. While taking quarter turns to the right raise hands up and flip up to the sky on "Hey" (4 quarter turns and hey's)*

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# Dance Fourteen: You Are Beautiful

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## Music and dance steps

This an original partner song that often ends the evening of dances. It is a tender and heartfelt song that honors, witnesses, and celebrates the person in front of you as a magnificent one. Each is invited to sing through the heart and send the Love vibration out in energy, voice, and eye contact. Two circles facing each other with equal partners in each. Inner circle moves one dancer to the right after each round to begin again for as many times as desired.

F C Dm C  
You are beautiful, you are wonderful,  
F Bb C Bb  
My heart is open wide to let you in  
F C Dm C  
You are so beautiful, you are so wonderful  
F Bb F C Gm7 C F C F C7  
And I do love you as you are, my friend

1. You are beautiful  
*Partners facing place hands on either side of the head of the other as if cradling them energetically*
2. You are wonderful  
*Partners mirror hands that sweep the field of the other from the top out in both directions in a circular motion*
3. My heart is open wide to let you in  
*Hands on heart open up to the other. Then point back to self with both thumbs*
4. You are so beautiful  
*Repeat 1 but with strong emphasis like the love expressed from a Grandmother*
5. You are so wonderful  
*Repeat 2 but with strong emphasis*
6. And I do love you as you are, my friend  
*Take partner's right hand and place it in the vicinity of your heart being respectful of anatomy. Holding the hand in place as you sing and look into your partner's eyes, end with a hug.*
7. *Inside circle moves one to the right and the next round begins with a new partner.*

*\*I have done two concluding rounds with one asking the dancers to think of one in their life who is not present and sing to them as if they were. Each can use the other as a proxy or they can close their eyes and sing as they go through the motions. The last would be to sing the song to oneself, going through the motions as if the inner child, or current self were standing in front of them. Sing the song in first person... "I Am beautiful, I Am wonderful, My heart is open wide to let me in... I Am so beautiful, I Am so wonderful, and I do love me as I Am, my friend"*

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8. Radhe Bol

*Clap right...clap left...clap both...progress past partner and join hands in circle ready to begin cycle again*

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