

“The Newest in Biodanza Research”



“To investigate Biodanza is like to investigate a treasure deep in the ocean or to watch a indefinite universe full of incredible and beautiful miracles”

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1. Lectures at scientific congresses to the scientific results outside of the Biodanza scene: In February, March and July 2004, we will present our research results in a lecture to be given at the International Symposium of Dancing Therapy in Hannover (Germany), German Congress for Clinical and Health-related Psychology in Leipzig (Germany) and at the World Congress for Psychology in Peking (China). In October 2004, a lecture at the Congress for the German Psychology Association in Göttingen is being planned. These lectures are taking place outside of the Biodanza scene and we hope that they will serve to make Biodanza known to a broader public. Dr. M. Stück, the head of the project is leading the lectures in the congresses. **Titel of the lecture: “Investigation about psychological, physiological and immunological effects of Biodanza”** (Stück,M.;Villegas,A.;Schröder,H.;Terren,R.;Toro,V.; Sack,U.; Balzer, H.-U.;Mazzarella,L.; Toro,R.).

Abstract: Biodanza, a form of intervention intended to further health and well-being, originated in South American by Rolando Toro and encourages self-expression and self-management through music, dance and interaction. Since 1998, we have been investigating the influence of a 10-session Biodanza program on 150 subjects on various psychological (regulation of emotion, Health, Personal psychology) physiological (skin response, blood pressure) and immunological (Immunglobulin A) variables. Initial results from the experimental-control-group study in Argentina and Germany reveal significant changes in psychological health and personality variables after 3 Months (Post 1). After a further 3 months without Biodanza, the effect could be seen to have stabilized. It could be shown that regular, long-term participation in Biodanza had positive effects on subjects’ experience and behavior. It could be shown that regular, long-term participation in Biodanza had positive effects on the experience and behaviour of the subjects. **Keywords:** Biodanza; Evaluation

2. Publication of our research in a book: At the moment, we are working on a scientific book (approximately 300 pages), in which all of our research results concerning the effects of Biodanza can be found. The book will be published in German and will be available in German bookstores. We remain open to the possibility of translating the book into other languages and are making the necessary arrangements with the German publishers. If someone is able to arrange for a translation, he or she could contact Marcus Stück (stueck@rz.uni-leipzig.de). It is, therefore, possible that the book will be available at some time in English, Spanish, or Italian, given that someone is willing to translate it. I would like to present the book's Table of Contents in advance: **Title: Biodanza as Mirrored in the Sciences: Research concerning the psychological, physiological and immunological effects of Biodanza** (Marcus Stück, Alejandra Villegas, Harry Schröder, Raul Terren, Veronica Toro) TABLE OF CONTENTS:

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(Blood Pressure; Skin Response; Immune System)

3. Seminar concerning "Scientific Research in Biodanza": A seminar concerning "scientific research in Biodanza" has been offered in the context of the European Biodanza Instructors Training Program, authorized by R. Toro, since 2003. In this seminar, future Biodanza instructors are made familiar with the newest scientific research results from our project and experience for themselves how Biodanza works (measuring skin response and blood pressure during a Vivencia). The first seminar was held in April 2003 in the Biodanza School in Cologne (G. Mader). The next seminar will take place in December to the second Southafrican Biodanza-Encounter in Johannesburg (Carolina Churba) and in October 2004 in the Biodanza School in Mailand (E. Matuk). Participants received material that was easy to understand and written especially for them. Schools who are interested to invite Dr.M.Stück to give this seminar "Scientific Research in Biodanza" please feel free to contact following adress.

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4. Information concerning Results: For all those who are curious about the project. In the following section you will find a short description of the project with selected results focusing on psychological variables. Perhaps this will help to make Biodanza known in professional health-related institutions.

Since 1998, we have been studying the influence of Biodanza and investigating different psychological (e.g. emotion regulation, health psychology), physiological (e.g. skin response, blood pressure) and immunological (specific, non-specific immune response) parameters. We have collaborated with several universities and institutes (e.g. University of Leipzig, Institute for Stress Research Berlin, University Abierta Interamericana B. Aires), as well as the Biodanza school B. Aires. Approximately 150 persons have taken part in this investigation, which is based on an Experimental-Control-Group-Design. This paper presents selected psychological results of the study:

Initial results from the experimental-control-group study at the UAI in B. Aires (50 subjects) reveal that 13.6% of the 59 psychological health and personality variables examined showed significant changes ($p < .05$) in the experimental group, compared to 4.5% in the control group ($p < .05$), measured immediately after completing the three-month Biodanza course (Post 1). After a further 3 months without Biodanza, the effect could be seen to have stabilized (experimental group: 14%; control group 9%; ($p < .05$)). The following concrete effects could be demonstrated in Argentina:

- improved self-efficacy
- reduction in psychosomatic complaints
- improved regulation of emotions (anger regulation)
- positive changes with respect to concepts concerning future and life in general (in the Semantic Differential, “future” is seen as being “softer” and “more flexible”; “life” is assessed as being “more active” and “stronger”).
- A qualitative analysis of the Post 1 interviews reveals that reference is most often made to changes in level of social-affective functioning (higher tolerance and social sensitivity, better communication and improved interpersonal skills, improvement in the quality of affective expression, higher valuing of nonverbal communication).

The study in Leipzig not only confirmed these results but improved on them: With respect to the 66 variables examined immediately following a three-month Biodanza course, 33% showed significant changes ($p < .05$) in the experimental group, compared to 16.7% in the control group (aerobic). These effects remained stable at the Post2 measurement (EG: 36.4%; CG: 4.5%; $p < .05$). The changes in the experimental group were found in the following selected areas:

- higher self-efficacy
- improved, offensive problem-solving strategies
- improved anger regulation
- improved emotional expression in social situations (less fear of contact, increased ability to say “no”)
- more optimism and more of a relaxed attitude
- improved ability to enjoy
- fewer psychosomatic complaints
- greater autonomy and increased expansive behaviour
- improved psychological health

In further studies, which took place 9 months later, we found, a conspicuous significant increase ($p < .05$) in the number of personality and psychological health variables which had changed in subjects (50.9%) compared to three months earlier.

As expected, the patient sample examined showed fewer and less pronounced significant effects (5.3%; $p < .05$) in the following areas:

- increased expansive behaviour
- increased sense of relaxation and optimism
- greater sense of meaning (significant trend; $p < .1$)
- increased social coping (significant trend; $p < .1$)

It could be shown that regular, long-term participation in Biodanza had positive, holistic effects on the experience and behavior of subjects. Patients undergoing psychotherapy need a longer period of time participating in Biodanza in order to produce positive changes in experience and behavior.

5. Sponsorship and Video: In order to be in a position to continue investigating and to publish the investigations, as well as to do further research, we need your financial, or private support. To this end, we have made a movie reporting about this project (e.g. method, results). This movie is available in German and Spanish and can be purchased from Dr. M. Stück. The price is 50 dollars and constitutes a symbolic contribution to the completion of the project. We would be pleased to get some support from you. **Contact:** Dr. M. Stück (stueck@rz.uni-leipzig.de; Institute of Applied Psychology; Leipzig University; Seeburgstr. 14-20; 04108 Leipzig; Germany; Phone: 0049-341-4798627)

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There are much more people who helped us, who we can't name all but who we say thank you (e.g. practical trainees of Leipzig university, Biodanza-schools).

The whole project and also the book is dedicated to Fernanda Perche who worked with us and died in 1998. She lives in our hearts forever.

Please feel free to contact us for questions and comments !!

