

Introduction

Imagine entering a space full of people, all engaged with their own movement, emotions and process. Some are dancing fast; others are lying on the floor. Some are stretching their bodies tall in all directions, whereas other movements are barely visible. People may be crying, shouting, or dancing with an expression of joy on their face. There are men and women of all ages, colourfully dressed. If you let your fantasy run wild, you can imagine them as animals swishing their tails while moving stealthily through the jungle, as indigenous people, stamping their feet on the beat. You may see dancing fairies, solid trees and stout warriors. You may see vulnerable, delicate beings of great beauty, or even see seaweeds, moving gently on an invisible current. The raw and the ugly, the wild and the contained, the silence and the storm all may be present in the room.

Welcome. You have just arrived in a *Movement Medicine* space. These spaces form the focus of this research project. Indeed, paraphrasing Performance Studies scholar Fiona Buckland, this research is both a dance floor where people enter and move, and simultaneously a dancer who even now is checking out the floor (F. Buckland, 2002: 14). My baseline motivation for this study is a curiosity about people's search for meaning and self-understanding in western culture in the early 21st century. The decline of traditional religious frameworks after the Second World War, led to the remarkable rise of many so called alternative spiritualities or New Religious Movements¹ (compare Greenwood, 2000: 8). These movements brought and bring together elements of ancient and modern practices, Eastern and Western philosophies, and furthermore psychology, psychotherapy and cutting edge science. The rise of New Religious Movements seems to be intertwined with that of a wider range of social movements which gained momentum at the same time, including a fast growing body of complementary medicine and alternative therapies, various forms of activism (such as feminist, environmentalist and gay movements), and more recently a growing interest in local, organic, non-

¹ Glock and Bellah speak of 'New *Quasi*-religious Movements' (1976: 73).

genetically modified and ‘slow’ food.² Whether the emphasis of these movements be (quasi) religious or not, they have collectively contributed to an enormous range of businesses, teachers, books, workshops, spiritual retreats and holistic magazines. This testifies to a collective search for meaning that has turned into a lucrative, economic commodity, as well as a kind of spiritual enquiry. Although the forms this search takes have changed, the need for connection and meaning remains strong in secular, individualist, consumerist, post-industrial society (compare Armstrong, 1993; Boyer, 2000). These different forms of expression or ‘threads’ articulate an undercurrent of desire amongst certain groups within modern society, who long for a dimension they feel has been repressed or conquered by the rational or instrumental. This desire is fuelled by feelings of disconnection, loneliness, emptiness, isolation and estrangement, and often results in ‘symptoms’ such as low self-esteem, values confusion and “absence of personal meaning”, eating disorders, substance abuse, chronic consumerism as expressions of inner emptiness (Cushman, 1990: 604). According to anthropologist and philosopher Ton Lemaire, there is a collective longing for communication with nature, oneness of subject and object, and an integration of animistic and transcendent worldviews (Lemaire, 2002: 160-1, my translation).

Psychologist Philip Cushman described the general psychological condition of people after World War II in the United States as the ‘empty self’ (1990). This is a state in which the absences of “community, tradition, and shared meaning,” result in a yearning to compensate the loss of these aspects through for example increased consumption of foods, material products, celebrity news, experiences, empathic therapists, hoping to fill up the “chronic, undifferentiated emotional hunger” (Cushman, 1990: 600). According to him, evidence of this can be found in, among other things, consumerism, advertising strategies that appeal to emotions rather than critical thought, and a difficulty to maintain meaningful personal relationships. He underlines that identity and personality are impacted by economic and political power structures, and ideologies that try to remedy the condition of the empty self must be viewed in their wider context (*ibid.*). The general tendency is to provide

² For a discussion of social movements, see for example Cohen & Rai (2000), Della Porta (1999) and Lowe (1986).

short-term solutions that seem to fill the empty self for brief periods of time through emphasising self-improvement “to a degree unknown before” and has resulted in different activities that minister the need for personal growth, enjoyment and fulfilment as new commodities (ibid.: 604).

The goal of self-improvement is one of the main motivations behind the ideology of the Human Potential Movement, also called ‘Growth Movement’ (York, 1995: 9). This term was coined in the 1960s, for a multitude of practices which focussed on bringing out so called “hidden potential of the individual” (Hammer, 2005a: 575). Although the idea of stimulating or accessing (unused) inner potentials already existed during the Romantic period towards the end of the 18th century, and also during 19th century and its ‘New Thought’ philosophies, more recent roots of the Human Potential Movement lie in humanistic psychology as formulated by Rollo May, Carl Rogers, and Abraham Maslow. By the late 1960s this movement gained a more religious emphasis, largely due to Maslow’s description of ‘peak experiences’, which he thought to be the main drivers of self-actualisation (Hammer, 2005a: 573). Workshops were and still are offered at so called ‘growth centres’, residential places where participants immerse themselves in various therapies and techniques (Hammer, 2005a: 575). One of these centres in particular, Esalen Institute in California, has played an important role in the development of the Human Potential Movement.³ Well known academics, practitioners and key thinkers of various disciplines were and are invited to teach there, such as psychologist Abraham Maslow, psychiatrists Fritz Perls and Stanislav Grof, anthropologists Gregory Bateson, Carlos Castaneda and Michael Harner (the latter two have played an important role in ‘translating’ shamanism to western settings), mythologist Joseph Campbell, and director, dance teacher and artist Gabrielle Roth.

The Human Potential Movement can be seen as part of or as precursor to the New Age Movement. The two movements share many similarities (see for

³ In 1976 Donald Stone counted over twenty thousand people attending courses at Esalen yearly, with Esalen being only one of at least 25 similar centres within commuting distance of San Francisco at that time. According to him, in 1973 17% of the population of Bay Area had participated in workshops such as encounter groups and sensitivity training (Stone, 1976: 98). In 2010 Esalen still offered over 500 workshops a year, claiming over 300.000 visitors over the last forty years (<http://www.esalen.org/>, accessed September 16, 2010).

example Hammer, 2005a: 578; York, 1995: 8). The New Age Movement, or simply the New Age,⁴ includes a range of translated, adapted and revived spiritual traditions such as paganism, (neo-)shamanism, wicca, nature religion, Buddhism, Celtic and Native American spirituality (Pearson, 2002; Sutcliffe, 2003: 27; York, 1995: 1). It largely consists of small networks of people with mutual interests, usually without formally organised, hierarchical structure, and with varying degrees of commitment from the people involved (Hammer, 2005b: 858). Despite the movements' outward diversity, we can nevertheless distinguish a substantive core of ideas, values and ideologies. Among the shared characteristics are for example drawing inspiration from ancient Egyptian, Greek or Roman traditions, Eastern philosophies, the alchemical opus, astrology and quantum physics (Prince & Riches, 2000: 28; Sutcliffe, 2003: 25). The New Age Movement can be described as a (religious) counterculture, underground current or subculture. Although it may indeed have started as such, nowadays many of the tools and practices are incorporated in mainstream fields such as nursing, corporate business strategies, management and social bonding strategies (Greenwood, 2000: 8; Hammer, 2005b: 858, 861; Prince & Riches, 2000). According to Paul Heelas, New Age is not a 'fringe curiosity', but has become strongly embedded in contemporary culture, due to a long history based in the ideals of individualism that evolved since the eighteenth century (Heelas, 1994: 105).⁵ In short, New Age concepts are translated to and used in many different fields, including the arts and art therapies.

Knowing dance intimately as a tool that I can apply to anything that appears on the palette of my experience,⁶ I am interested in the role that dance can play in

⁴ The term 'New Age' refers first of all to a changeover from one astrological period to another. These periods roughly span 2.150 years, and the 'Age of Pisces', which apparently covered the 2000 years CE is now changing into the 'Age of Aquarius'. New eras are also announced in the Mayan Prophecies and the Dark Age or Kali Yuga (Hammer, 2005b; York, 1995).

⁵ The relationship between postmodernism and spirituality, and between *Movement Medicine* and the New Age, will be discussed in §3.2.1 and §3.2.2 respectively.

⁶ From 1987 until 1995, with a break of 1,5 years, I undertook a professional dance training first at the *National Ballet Academy* in Amsterdam, and later at the *High School for Music and Dance* in Rotterdam, followed by a year at the *Rotterdam Dance Academy*. I trained in classical ballet, various styles of contemporary dance (Graham, Limon, European contract/release style), jazz, Ethnic Eastern European and African dance, improvisation, choreography, Pilates, and in my free time I did ballroom dancing and Latin American repertoire. After I enrolled at the *Rotterdam Dance*

dealing with the increasing demands of a fast and often fragmented world (compare Aldred, 2000: 339; Cushman, 1990; D. Halprin, 2003: 78). In many cultures the capacity and right to express oneself and connect with others and life through the dance has been shared between most people. In the West, this right is maintained within some communities (notably that of professional and amateur dancers) but no longer celebrated in the society at large. People may be shy about their own dance capacities and need an opportunity to learn or re-learn the pleasure and wisdom to which dance can give access. I recognise that of course dance is not the medium of choice for everyone, and also that similar experiences can be accessed through many other activities. Nevertheless, movement in itself is a unique medium of expression because, as Sklar observes, it is a ‘double act’ of moving and feeling oneself moving at the same time (2000: 72). This intimacy allows us to bring that which we embody in ourselves “into our relationships with others and into the world” (D. Halprin, 2003: 79). We will see later on that dancing gives access to a different *way of knowing* which offers knowledge, wisdom and insights through a different mode than the rational mind exclusively; namely through the moving body which *includes* the intellect. I believe that any form of dance has the capacity to connect us with ourselves and the greater web of life, with meaning and significance because it is the *intention* with which we do things that can make them meaningful (compare Hanna, 1988a: 163). Dance can, among many other things, be used for healing the connection between mind, body, emotions and spirit, provide tools for meaningful social interaction, and bridge the gap between the dancers and their environment as is also recognised in the field of Dance Movement Psychotherapy and, more generally, the field of somatics (compare Penny Lewis & Avstreich, 1984; Payne, 1992; Penfield, 2001; Worth & Poynor, 2004). Apart from contributions on physical, mental and emotional levels, dance can clear the mind from distractions, could evoke a sense of insight, understanding and evaluating of one’s own mental functioning, and leading to an increased self-esteem (Hanna, 1988). Furthermore, dance can be useful in digesting or preparing

Academy in 1994 however, I realised that the training diminished my joy in dancing, and I chose to not further pursue a career as a professional dance performer. Nevertheless, I have always been able to express myself strongly through dance, and it has remained a way for me to communicate and be in relationship with the world around me.

for threatening or upsetting events (Halprin, 2003; Hanna, 1988; Williams, 2004 [1991]).

Recognising the possible contributions of dance in general, this study focuses on one dance practice in particular, *Movement Medicine*, which can be seen as one of the many contemporary expressions of the wider “search-for-meaning-tapestry,” and one of the many initiatives to integrate personal wellbeing, spirituality, social justice and environmental awareness. *Movement Medicine* is a movement meditation practice developed by Ya’Acov and Susannah Darling Khan (born in 1964 and 1963 respectively), based on their studies of and personal experiences with dance,⁷ shamanism, healing and transformation. Like other new spiritualities, *Movement Medicine* combines “the ancient and the modern, the psychotherapeutic and the shamanic, the devotional and the traditional, the scientific and the mystical” (Darling Khan & Darling Khan, 2009: xxii-xxiii) and blends together different ingredients such as movement, ceremony, voice work, practical life skills and a framework for meaning. It is “a movement meditation system designed to awaken and connect” people to their ‘full potential’ (Darling Khan & Darling Khan, 2009), providing participants with tools to make concrete changes towards a sustainable life. As a personal fusion of different traditions it underlines inclusion and an integration of diversity, allowing for a pragmatic incorporation of other frameworks and the (possible) pre-existing beliefs of participants as well, who may already work or have affinity with a variety of spiritual practices.

In 2007, the ‘School of Movement Medicine’ was established, offering courses and workshops in the UK, other European countries, and South Africa. The School is co-directed by Ya’Acov and Susannah Darling Khan as founders of the practice, with Roland Wilkinson as the school’s administrator, assisted by Suzanne Fehr. Almost immediately after meeting Ya’Acov and Susannah Darling Khan in the autumn of 2006, I felt both the potential for research and a strong urge to participate in further study of *Movement Medicine* myself. I therefore designed this PhD so that it was congruent and intertwined with and supportive of my personal

⁷ Most notably Gabrielle Roth’s *5Rhythms*TM practice, which will be introduced in more detail in §2.1.3.

development. In 2009, halfway through this PhD, I became part of the first circle of Apprentices, followed by the first ‘Teacher Training’ in 2011.⁸ This of course raises several methodological issues, which will be discussed in Chapter 1. The curriculum and development of the School will be explained in further detail in Chapter 2. It is important to acknowledge that this thesis is written at a time of transition from *Movement Medicine* being a practice taught by the two people who developed it, to also being taught by newly trained teachers. As they are starting to offer classes and workshops, it will be interesting to see how the practice continues to develop.

This thesis provides the first academic analysis of *Movement Medicine*, examining in particular the characteristics, mechanisms and contributions of this practice with regard to physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual wellbeing, and personal growth as experienced by participants. It is based on various sources of data, collected during the research project between 2006-2011, such as participant observation, interviews, analysis of the electronic newsletter of the ‘School of Movement Medicine’ and some other written sources, including my field notes and personal dance diary. The structure of this thesis is based on the main themes that emerged during the analysis of the research data and includes both quotations from the different data sources and external literature references to place these in a wider perspective. The way *Movement Medicine* participants speak about their key experiences, reflect assumptions, ideologies and values of New Age Movements. Themes that feature throughout this thesis are personal growth, empowerment and transformation, connection to self, to other people and the world around, and expansion of consciousness or trance in a ritualised space.

During the research and through my personal experience, I often perceive the entire dance experience in three different stages. The first one I recognise as the pull or call that initially draws people to the dance, their motivation to start dancing and the preparations for joining a specific workshop. The second stage consists of the dance activities themselves and the opportunities created and accessed during class or workshop. Sometimes I have the impression of the dance space being a

⁸ Regarding the research, this marked a stop to official participant observation, as will be explained in §1.8.2.

black box of transformation, or a stew with different ingredients of which the sum is more than the parts, as it includes aspects of the unknown. Participants confirm this image by speaking of the dance floor as ‘cauldron’ where magic can happen. Finally, the third stage of the dance experience includes the integration of the experiences into daily life.

This division in three stages calls to mind the classification of rites of passage by anthropologists Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner, who divided the different stages of any ritual in preliminal, liminal, postliminal stages or, in other words, in phases of separation, margin or limen, and reaggregation (Turner, 1974; van Gennep, 1960 [1908]). We can recognise Turner’s model rites of passage in the succession of events including the phase of ‘separation’ in which the participants prepare for a *Movement Medicine* workshop and travel to the venue, followed by a ‘liminal’ phase in which ritual conditions are created for the transformation of the individual, and concluded by an ‘aggregation’ phase in which the participant returns to ordinary, daily life, incorporating his or her experiences (2007 [1969]: 94). Other concepts of Victor Turner are useful for understanding the dance experiences as well, as is also observed by other dance researchers in the field of Rave and trance dance (see for example Gore, 1997; Rill, 2006; Sullivan, 2006; Sylvan, 2005). The concept of ‘liminality’ seems especially useful, as both teachers and participants indicate that the dance floor is a space different to every day life, serving as a container in which the transformative experiences can take place. According to Turner, transformation can only happen in a ritual space because it requires freedom from the socio-structural rules of everyday life, which are temporarily abandoned in the liminal space. The individual needs to be in a state of *prima materia*, which can be “reshaped to encounter new experiences” (Turner, 1982: 84). This metaphor, the person as a “lump of human clay,” is also used in *Movement Medicine* as an invitation to work with the physical matter of the body in order to transform and create with “what is there,” rather than to avoid or deny past (possibly painful) experiences (field notes 23.09.11). Furthermore, Turner’s concepts of ‘communitas’ and ‘anti-structure’ (1974: for example p. 45-7) seem relevant for understanding the experiences on the dance floor and as possible explanation for the attraction of *Movement Medicine*. Finally, the inclusion of

seeming opposites of ‘play’ and work, the celebration of the sacred and the ordinary, can be understood through Turner’s ideas on the division between work, leisure and sacred time (Turner, 1982: 30-41).

Transformation, ‘individuation’ and rebirth were also discussed at length by psychoanalyst Carl Gustav Jung (1971 [1959]). The link between Jungian analysis and dance as possibility for transformation is apparent in the field of Dance Movement Psychotherapy (Dexter Blackmer, 1989; Noack, 1992). However, it is important to note that *Movement Medicine* is presented neither as ‘dance therapy’ nor as ‘therapeutic dance’, a distinction made by several dance therapists (Meekums, 2002; Penfield, 2001).

In terms of an anthropological theory, this study used a combination of hermeneutic and ethnographic methods, derived from Symbolic and Sensory Anthropology and the Anthropology of the Dance. Furthermore the multimodal framework (MMF) as designed by Geoffrey Samuel (1990), allows for an inclusion of the different strands and experiences within *Movement Medicine*, some of which will fit into common conceptual (i.e. rational) frameworks of understanding, others will not. As mentioned earlier on, *Movement Medicine* can be considered as a specific current within contemporary western culture and more specifically in the New Age Movement. Within this specific current exist multiple individual currents of participants on the dance floor. Both are related to each other and also to others outside the immediate *Movement Medicine* current. This indeed includes all species, beings, objects, modal states and dimensions, which can be included through the use of the MMF. Important is the ‘relatedness’ or ‘connectedness’ and ‘patterns of relationships’ between the different currents. This emphasises an interrelatedness of human beings, animals and plants, and the physical environment, and also may include non-material elements such as ‘spirits’ and ‘deities’ (Samuel, 1990: 12). The advantage of using this model is that we do not polarise the difference between *Movement Medicine* and mainstream culture or aim to understand the language and experiences of one specific current with the vocabulary of another, nor distinguish between objective and subjective reality, as these polarities coexist at any given time. Although I dare not say that I have designed my own anthropology with this framework as Samuel suggested (ibid.:

165), it has certainly helped me to incorporate different aspects of the *Movement Medicine* practice and experience that would otherwise have fallen out of the theoretical understanding. My work has furthermore taken into account the debates of ‘anthropology at home’ and ‘autoethnography’.

The difficulties of writing about a physical practice such as dance are widely documented (Fleckenstein, 1999; Gore, 1999; Kaeppler, 1999; Penfield, 2001; Peterson Royce, 2002; Deidre Sklar, 2000; Smith, 2007; Thomas, 2003; Williams, 2004). For example, dance may be regarded as ‘unlanguageable’ or even pre-linguistic, and dancers can have difficulties expressing their practice, because their experiences can only be communicated through available linguistic categories, which do not always meet the depth of the experience (Pini, 1997: 114). This study of *Movement Medicine* is, like Pini’s representation of Rave, not an endeavour to uncover the ‘true’ significance of the practice, but rather attempts an embodied representation “of the wider material and discursive assemblage which makes up the multi-layered significance” of, in this case, *Movement Medicine* (Pini, 1997: 118).

The text features many quotations on (the experience of) *Movement Medicine*. These are largely derived from four different sources: the interviews, the newsletter articles, other written sources and my field notes. Each quotation shows the source and date. Most interviewees chose to be quoted under their own name, while a few wanted to remain anonymous or use a pseudonym of their choice. I respected the individual choices, yet included first names only, even if the person consented to include their last name.⁹ With regard to quotations from the newsletter, first names are used as online. Sometimes this just may be an initial only and sometimes it is anonymous.¹⁰ If any of the quotations referred to third parties, these names have been deleted and replaced by mentioning their role in square brackets, for example [friend] or [sister], so not to include them without

⁹ There are two men with the same first name, who both wanted to be quoted with first but not last names. After consulting them, they preferred to have ‘A’ and ‘B’ added behind their names to indicate the difference: ‘A’ for the one who was interviewed first, ‘B’ for the one who was interviewed second. Hence ‘A’ and ‘B’ do not refer to their actual last names.

¹⁰ As the newsletter is a public source, I have not asked for each individual’s permission to use the articles except in one sensitive case, in which I respected the subsequent request of the participant not to use her article at all.

their consent. Where referring to websites which are mostly anonymous, I have opted for a practical approach of referencing each website in a footnote rather than including them in the bibliography, to simplify the recognition of each source.

Throughout this work it is important but not always easy to distinguish between the inherent qualities of movement *an sich*, including but not limited to dance, the characteristics of any dance floor as a contained, sometimes ceremonial space, and *Movement Medicine* as one particular practice. Although it provides a unique framework that includes different gateways to transcendence, facilitated by specific processes and exercises, and also provides a way of interpreting certain experiences and events in a coherent structure, the aspects discussed here may also be recognised in and experienced through other practices. Several other movement practices share similarities with *Movement Medicine* in background, philosophy, approach, structure, aims, setting and so on.¹¹ As discussed earlier, the fact that so many different yet closely related movement practices exist testifies, if to nothing else, to a general interest that allows many similar approaches to be developed. This thesis will explore one such approach, and dissect different elements that may throw light on the mechanisms that make dance and movement an attractive activity for many people. Why so many similar movement practices have been developed in the latter half of the 20th century, can also be understood through the MMF. Samuel wrote that the “creation of new modal states (...) and the growth and fading in importance of particular modal states, is a continuing process and corresponds to the continuing transformation of life” (Samuel, 1990: 49). The development of not just a single approach but of a body of practices that address the relationship between body, heart, mind and spirit, is a result of interests, needs and beliefs of individuals to give the body and movement a more fundamental place in human expression. Although this development is gaining momentum, it still seems to be a relatively marginal ‘cultural modal state’ (MSc). However, the

¹¹ Among those that have developed a training to instruct new teachers or facilitators are for example Authentic Movement (J. Adler, 2002; Pallaro, 1999; Taylor, 2007), Continuum (Conrad, 2007), the Halprin Life/Art Process (A. Halprin, 2002; D. Halprin, 2003), Body-Mind Centering (B. B. Cohen, 1993), Biodanza (developed by Rolando Toro, see for example Santos Viotti, 2011), the Skinner Release Technique (Skinner et al., 1979), LivingDance (Rebecca Byrne: <http://www.livingdance.com.au/index.htm>), Trance Dance (Natale, 1995), *5Rhythms*TM (Gabrielle Roth, 1998, 2004; Gabrielle Roth & Loudon, 1990) and the Open Floor Process (Juhan, 2003).

more individuals will encounter possible beneficial effects of including the body and movement, the stronger this current will become. Looking closely at one approach in particular will highlight certain aspects of and needs within our contemporary culture, and can therefore be interesting for application to a wider perspective than specific body based practices. *Movement Medicine* seems to provide people with a meaningful framework and life skills that may have previously been addressed by more conventional religious approaches, and the experiences of participants touch on what seem to be mainstream *and* New Age trends in our modern western culture (compare Glock & Bellah, 1976: 73).

This Introduction briefly outlined my motivation for doing this research and situated *Movement Medicine* within the socio-historic background of growth movements that emerged since the 1960s. Chapter 1 describes the methodological and theoretical background of this study, including the research questions and design, Anthropology of the Dance and a literature review of related publications, the fields of Symbolic and Sensory Anthropology, a hermeneutic approach and the multimodal framework (MMF). It furthermore discusses concepts of culture and the research field, and examines the implications of my insiders' role as a participant of *Movement Medicine*. The methods used for data gathering and qualitative data analysis are explained, and the chapter ends with notes on embodied, (autoethnographic) writing and representation.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 together explore the territory of *Movement Medicine*. Chapter 2 introduces the 'vocabulary' of *Movement Medicine*, including the practice's background, symbols, language and its translation to a business approach. Together with Chapter 3, which discusses the internal coherence of the underlying concepts and resources of the practice and its relationship to other cultural movements such as postmodernism, New Age, (neo-)shamanism, and neo-tantra, it outlines the *Movement Medicine* cosmology. How this cosmology is translated to the dance floor is discussed in Chapter 4. This describes amongst other things, the features of the space, the role of the teacher and the activities and exercises, including a description of movement observations. All these components together facilitate a

ceremonial or liminal space, a framework in which transformative experiences are possible.

After a brief Intermezzo the thesis continues with the second, empirical part, which focuses on the key areas that participants describe as relevant to their *Movement Medicine* experience. Chapter 5 concentrates on perceptions of the body and the concept and advantages of embodiment with regard to anchoring oneself in the world, and as starting point for personal growth and manifestation. Chapter 6 describes the possibility of learning and practicing new tools and behaviour in areas of social skills, emotions, psyche and soul. It includes material regarding the release of dysfunctional personal patterns and regarding the creation of new positive, life affirming 'stories'. Chapter 7 discusses experiences that participants classify as 'spiritual', including issues of trance and altered states of consciousness, accessing 'other' knowledge through the dance and through dancing with 'spirit beings', and experiences of oneness, interconnection and the divine. *Movement Medicine* emerges as a 'moving spirituality' in several ways. Finally, Chapter 8 examines the integration of insights in these areas back into daily life. Practitioners describe a wide range of effects or changes that affect concrete decision-making strategies, choices, actions and interpretations in external everyday situations, allowing for the acceptance and inclusion of polarities.

In the Conclusion, I return to the research questions and comment on the role and function of *Movement Medicine* in current western society. I argue that *Movement Medicine* is one of the many contemporary techniques that encourage and invite reconnection and alignment within self, and between self, community, the world and divinity, and comment on the possible contributions of dance as a medium in general, which makes this study also relevant in wider contexts.