

"Center" Redefined

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Wednesday, 18 April 2007
Last Updated Saturday, 21 April 2007

My friend Isabella asking me to write article to this site, and she ask me to write something that useful and important to Bailamos Dance School. Not an easy request as maybe many things already been told by her to students in Bailamos. But I hope that this explanation will just make clear of what she already told to many people there. I choose the topic about Center. Ever heard? I bet you had!

In Ballroom Dancing we often hear the word "Center". Actually what is the mean of Center, and what is the purpose for us to know about center? Center is an abbreviation of the complete words that should be "Center of Gravity". The formal abbreviation of Center of Gravity is COG. Center is the place of the weight of our body reside whenever we standing or poising in balance. The power of every movement we do is starting from the Center, thus Center is the most important part on how we moving with quality in our dancing.

Whenever people standing normally, the spine straighten up naturally and the feet is straight naturally and a little opened (not much further than the shoulders or about maximum the wide of our shoulders), the center is located at "Solar Plexus" of human body. If we look at more detailed explanation of this center place in normal standing position for human body, we could define that the place will almost slightly different among every people, because there are many kind of body form of human. Some are tall, some are fat, some have longer arms than the others, so the exact location of the center of human body will different each other. But we could make an approximately that the center of human body is defined at 55% of the height of human from the ground.

Thus from the center, we could separate the human body into three major parts :

- Upper body : The location above the Solar Plexus until top of your head
- Middle Body : The location of Center until the lower part of the rib cage and the lower part of our hips.
- Lower Body : Below our hips until our feet pad

All the movement of the body part will be started from Center (the middle body part). The control of weight transfer is controlled from this center. Thus we could say the quality of the movement is totally

depend on how good we control our center. Controlling the center correctly and perfectly will lead you to perfect balance and it's mean controlling your movement.

Whenever we want to do some movements, try to concentrate first on your center. Whenever we move our center upward, it means the Base of Support (BOS) will be larger, and whenever we move our center downward, it means the BOS will be smaller. And the explanation on the mobility of our body could be explained in the table below:

Stability

Mobility

Position of COG

Low

High

Size of BOS

Large

Small

This usually makes some confuse to some people. Whenever we trying lowering down our center (weight), actually we move our COG upward. And whenever we try to rising our center (weight) actually our COG is lower. The clear explanation of this is whenever we bend our knee so our weight is lowering down, actually we move our COG upward and it will make us more stable but lesser in mobility.

This is the sample on how we move our center 'physically' with changing the form of our posture. The advance dancer could change the position of the center 'without' visually change their posture. There is still some knowledge that essential to improve our quality in dancing. In the next chance of writing the articles, we could discuss more about separating the center in our body into segments, thus will improve every detail of our movement.

I 'borrow' one of the picture from Bailamos to show you the sample. I believe this picture is courtesy of Bailamos Dance School.

As we can see here, the man is lowering down his body. It's actually moving up his COG to broaden the BOS (Base of Support). That make him stable more but have less mobility. There still many things to discuss on this picture, but I left that for another chance. For some people, this will rise many question like : How to extend our body. Hope this sample of picture will make better explanation.

[END of ARTICLE]

