

Chassé

The Newsletter of Friends of Ala Wai Ballroom Dance Academy

Winter 2009 Volume Two, Number 4



On and off the floor

It takes two to tango... and waltz

By Michael Yap, Dance director

Learning any skill requires copious amounts of patience and correct repetition. What makes ballroom dancing particularly difficult is that dance skills must be acquired in cooperation with another individual. The concept that we need to embrace here is “partnership.” In a partnership, both parties involved are focused toward a common goal for their mutual benefit.

I truly believe that no one sets out to intentionally humiliate or embarrass their dance partner. However, we have all witnessed different degrees of impatience that dance partners have with one another. We have seen those who treat their partners like someone who has just committed a serious offense against them.

This type of behavior is most destructive and, at the very least, is uncomfortable to witness by others.

Let me add that there is nothing wrong with feeling impatient or frustrated. It is, however, the degree of outward expression of that frustration that determines the effect this behavior has on our partners and those around us.

We should extend the same degree of courtesy and patience to our regular partners as we extend toward other dancers with whom we occasionally dance.

However, too often that is not the case. Yet it is our primary partner who invests the most time and effort to help



us improve our dancing. They should, at the very least, be given the courtesy and patience due them.

Reward your regular dance partner and enjoy your dancing.

Most of us spend many hours learning complex dance steps and trying to perfect the proper techniques that apply to them.

Floor courtesies and a healthy attitude toward our partner and others on the dance floor are as important lessons as any technical aspect of dancing. If you hope to become the best dancer you can be, they are often the most important lessons to learn and practice. In life and on the dance floor, it does take two to tango.

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