



Centering Knob

Skippy Blair © 7-02, 8-04, 8-07

When it comes to **Centering** - in addition to all that has previously been said, the discovery of the "Centering Knob" (where the base of the neck connects to the spine) is the latest, fastest concept for elevating someone's posture and level of dance.

My recent annual 4 hour Workshop at the Phoenix Convention was a sight to behold. I actually got goosebumps, observing about 70 people walking back & forth across the ballroom floor, with great timing and precision, AND in time to the music. This was a "Drill" to bring together the different elements in the dance that we had been working on. We had already covered *Sending Foot - Measured Movement* - and *Rolling Count*. It was exciting to see the postures rise, the heads centered (and not hanging forward). I wish I could have filmed this "happening." What a great group of interested & hard working people. They took my breath away.

I frequently spend hours dissecting & rearranging information in order to find the easiest & fastest way to assist a dancer in developing better dance habits. We look for discoveries that can **immediately impact the progress of a dancer**. The "Centering Knob" does exactly that!

The *Universal Unit System*® and *Dance Dynamics*® maintain that although we work with only one *Center*, there are actually **four separate body zones included in technique strategies**:

Head Zone is confined to the head and neck only. The "Centering Knob," located where the base of the neck and the spine connect, (C-7) controls the forward & back placement of the head for optimum balance and control. Pressing that knob straight back as you go into a new move, controls your posture, adds power to the start of each new move, and allows the opportunity for facial expression and styling.

Shoulder Zone: Includes the area from the top of the shoulder to the bottom of the rib cage.

Hip Zone: Starts at the top of the hip bone and ends where the legs connect to the hip.

Center Zone: Covers the **lower edge** of the rib cage down to the **upper edge** of the hips. The Center Zone provides stability by tying three of the Zones together. The head stays free for balance, rotation in the proper direction and styling.

For several years, we have only listed THREE Zones and did not include the head as a Zone. With the impact of the Centering Knob, it has become evident that the head, as well as the neck, needs to be acknowledged as being a separate Zone. For years we relied on the statement: "Press the top of your head toward the ceiling." It worked for many people, but did not work for everyone. Pressing that knob back actually tilts the chest cavity into a different posture. It gives you a feeling of tightening and shortening the muscles around the center spine area. It also feels like you are lengthening the front part of the chest, which allows greater breath control. This process also helps center the head directly over the spine. It's amazing!

The **Number of Centers** in a dancer is no longer the problem that it was a few years ago. More & more people have made the discovery that the CPB (Center Point of Balance) for a dancer, or a skater, is in the Solar Plexus (Core). In my study of the "Psychology of Learning" I was also fascinated with the details on how one determines what is a "Rule" and what is a mere "Suggestion." A Rule works every time, in every situation. A Rule produces predictable results. Pressing the Centering Knob back has become a Rule. It works for everyone. Whether you are moving forward, backward or to the side, the direction of the Centering Knob - is always BACK. Give it a try - and let us know your results.

Thank You,

Skippy Blair, Education Coordinator WSDC