



DANCE HAPPY INITIATIVE

PROMOTING THE MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS
OF DANCE & FITNESS

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INTRODUCTION

From its conception, BOOGIE EFFECT® has put the mental, emotional and brain boosting benefits of dance and fitness at the very heart of our philosophy. BOOGIE EFFECT® is not simply a dance fitness programme that changes your body. It changes you mentally and emotionally too. It is so crucial to our philosophy and aims that it forms an important part of our BOOGIEpro Instructor Training programme. Our BOOGIEpro Instructors are encouraged to always be mindful of the wider benefits of our programme and not to focus only on the physical.

The aim of this BOOGIE EFFECT® DANCE HAPPY INITIATIVE, is to reinforce our commitment to promoting dance as a powerful tool in dealing with Mental Health. It enables us to put practical steps in place to support the amazing work charities and other organisations are doing to get the Mental Health message out there. And it allows us to reach out to people who may feel daunted or intimidated by dance or fitness, and let them know that BOOGIE EFFECT® is a place that cares about WHO they are and HOW they feel and can support them on their journey to physical AND mental wellbeing.

We aim to:

- Actively promote the Mental Health benefits of dance through social media promotions and sharing knowledge with our clients.
- Provide a warm and inclusive community for sufferers of Mental Health issues to feel welcome & supported.
- To share research & knowledge with our BOOGIEpro Instructors in their training & CPD in order to share our philosophy and deliver support to their own clients.
- Work with other health professionals and organisations to support the work they do and provide alternative options when dealing with Mental Health.

To coincide with World Mental Health Week (13th May 2019) and over the next 6 months, we will use our DANCE HAPPY INITIATIVE to actively promote our mental health message through the services we provide and the messages we share with our Instructors, participants, followers and the wider public.

SCOTTISH ASSOCIATION FOR MENTAL HEALTH

Founded in 1923, the Scottish Association for Mental Health (SAMH) has been working in various locations and communities across Scotland providing mental health social care support, homelessness, addictions and employment services, among others. With funding from Comic Relief, *Scotland's Mental Health Charter for Physical Activity & Sport* works to improve equality and reduce discrimination for anyone with mental health issues looking to participate in sport & physical activity.

"Since launching in 2018, we've been joined by everyone from grassroots clubs to elite sporting bodies, using their collective power to ensure that there is no barrier to engaging, participating and achieving in physical activity and sport." SAMH

In March 2019, BOOGIE EFFECT® became official signatories to *Scotland's Mental Health Charter for Physical Activity & Sport*, further reinforcing our commitment to promoting the amazing wellness benefits dance fitness has for everyone. We commit to sharing their message and supporting them in delivering their goals.



THE SCIENCE

WHY BOOGIE?

Dance is a primal instinct, and anyone can do it. Although, let's admit it, some a little better than others! This rhythmical and gestural instinct, some argue, dates to primitive forms of communication and may have served as early forms of language before vocalisation took over. It is inherent in every single one of us. Whether you are tapping your feet to your favourite tune, rocking it out at parties or performing in front of hundreds on stage, it is IN you!

Countless research over the years has proven time and time again the endless benefits of dance and how it can do wonders for the Body, Mind and Soul. In an article published in Psychology Today¹, Steven Brown Ph. d states "*dance is probably the single most complex form of movement that humans engage in*" (Brown, 2011). And this "complex form of movement" we engage in not only has physical benefits, but it does amazing things for our cognitive wellbeing (the Mind) and our emotional wellbeing (the Soul) and as a result, dance is being used more and more within the field of therapy. Its benefits transcend many levels.

BOOGIE EFFECT® and the Mind

Dance creates MAGIC that goes beyond the physical and Neuroscientists have been astounded by the results of research which prove this. A 2003 study by researchers at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine² looked at the effects of various leisure activities such as golf, tennis and swimming on the risk of dementia and discovered only Dance lowered this risk. Harvard Medical School Dept. of Neurobiology stated in their article 'Dance and the Brain³ "*the complex mental co-ordination that dance requires has such benefits on the brain it is now being used to treat people with Parkinsons*" (Edwards, 2016). According to Harvard, dance is now considered a form of Rhythmical Auditory Stimulation (RAS), a technique where rhythmical movement is presented as a form of therapy to improve movement control. Studies of the effects of this technique found significant improvements in gait and upper extremity function in stroke patients and Parkinsons sufferers.

By co-ordinating our movements to music and working alongside the rhythm of those funky tunes we tap into the power of Rhythmical Auditory Stimulation (RAS) to create movement pathways in the brain leading to improved and increased functionality of the body. This muscle memory or SMART MOVEMENT is then transferred into everyday life where functional movement and proprioception (the body's ability to know where & how to move with correct alignment and force) is improved. So, whether you are at your BOOGIE EFFECT® class, doing the weekly grocery shop or simply playing with the kids, you can do so safely, with increased mobility and a reduced risk of injury.

Other proven benefits of Dance-based training include improved short-term memory, development and strengthening of new neural connections, long term memory gain, concentration and spatial recognition. The rhythmical and co-ordinated movements of BOOGIE EFFECT® not only work the body but they work the brain too.

BOOGIE EFFECT® and the Soul

There is no denying that feel good factor we experience when having a good Boogie! Whether we are rocking it out on the dance floor, bopping our head to our favourite tune or dancing in the kitchen with the kids, there is something about dancing that sparks a feeling of positivity and wellbeing.

A study by researchers at York & Sheffield Universities showed, according to Dance Psychologist Dr Peter Lovatt⁴ "*dancing along to music for even 5 minutes can boost happiness and improve creative thinking. It is scientifically proven that dancing helps with social bonding*" and is "*a powerful way for humans to connect*". He goes on to say, "*you appear to get a much greater release of endorphins when you dance than during other forms of exercise*" (Lovatt 2016).

Going back to that primal instinct for rhythm and movement that permeates every culture and society on our planet, **BOOGIE EFFECT®** creates a fun, sociable atmosphere that taps into that deep cultural feeling of being accepted and belonging. The client surveys **BOOGIE EFFECT®** has undertaken over the years all state that sociability, bonding and a warm, friendly atmosphere are big draws to our classes. They say **BOOGIE EFFECT®** leaves them feeling happier and more positive than before coming to class. It is through the creation of this inclusive and welcoming community that we aim provide a place where people suffering mental health issues can feel they belong and are accepted. Tapping into the power of community and support is key.

Further scientific research can prove this. Bronwyn Tarr of the University of Oxford⁵ studied 264 young people and the effects of *high exertion* (whole body moves), *low exertion* (seated moves), *synchronized* (rhythmical movement in time with others) and *unsynchronized* dancing (rhythmical movement performed alone) on bonding and the production of endorphins. The results found '*high exertion synchronized dance*' had the greatest most positive effect on bonding and pain threshold (endorphins).

This is exactly what is created in every **BOOGIE EFFECT®** class. The combination of high energy, synchronized routines and up lifting music and rhythm provide an atmosphere where the potential to relieve stress, combat depression, lift spirits and promote bonding and social connections is at its best.

*"I cannot imagine life without **BOOGIE EFFECT®**. It not only keeps me physically fit but mentally fit too...I LOVE IT!"*

Amy

THE 'DANCE HAPPY' PLAN

Launching on 13th May 2019, to coincide with World Mental Health Week 2019, we are outlining the steps we will take over the course of the next 6 months to promote BOOGIE, and dance and physical activity as an important and powerful tool in dealing with and looking after our Mental Health.

These steps come under four main headings:

- Instructor Training and ongoing awareness.
- Sharing of stories through Social Media channels.
- Building partnerships with health services and organisations.
- Introducing **BOOGIEvibe**

Over the next 6 months and beyond, we commit to promoting and providing an open, inclusive and supportive community in which people suffering Mental Health issues feel they have a place they can go without judgement or expectation.

INSTRUCTOR TRAINING & ONGOING AWARENESS

INITIAL INSTRUCTOR TRAINING

From its creation, Mental Health and the Power of Dance for the Brain has been an integral part of our BOOGIE EFFECT® programme and forms a key element of our BOOGIEpro Instructor Training package.

During the Instructor Training process, potential BOOGIEpros are educated on the science behind BOOGIE and the EFFECTS it has on our cognitive and emotional wellbeing. It is also made very clear at our trainings that we DO NOT associate ourselves with any kind of weight loss guarantees. We feel, to go down this route would emphasise the PHYSICAL as a priority in our programme which goes against our philosophy. We believe in PHYSICAL & MENTAL wellness in EQUAL measure.

BOOGIEpros are discouraged from:

- Offering 6 or 8-week bootcamp style packages where weight loss is the driving force.
- Offering weigh ins or measuring to track weigh loss progress.
- Promoting particular or named Diet plans (e.g. Atkins, Keto, Cambridge, Weight Watchers etc).
- Posting or promoting Transformation Pictures where weight loss is the driving force.

BOOGIE pros are expected to:

- Promote the PHYSICAL benefits of the programme in terms of improving cardiovascular fitness, metabolism, stamina, strength, lean muscle, bone density, posture, alignment, gait (NOT weight loss).
- Promote the MENTAL benefits of the programme in terms of improving long & short-term memory, balance, control, coordination,
- Promoting the EMOTIONAL benefits of the programme in terms of building social interactions & connections, dealing with stress and anxiety, using uplifting music to lift mood, releasing endorphins.

We will continue to reinforce this important element in all our up coming BOOGIEpro Instructor Training Workshops.

10% of profits made from all BOOGIEpro Instructor Training in 2019 will be donated to SAMH.

ONGOING CPD & AWARENESS

Over the coming 6 months, our 'Dance Happy' initiative will continue to build on the knowledge of our BOOGIEpro Instructor by providing them recent research and science that specifically relates to the benefits of dance on the brain and mental health.

This will include:

- Benefits to cognitive development – long & short-term memory, balance, control, co-ordination & gait.
- Benefits to emotional wellbeing – stress busting effects, social interactions & connections and how these improve feelings of mental wellbeing & happiness.

BOOGIEpros will be expected to use this knowledge in the delivery of their classes and how they promote the BOOGIE philosophy with their clients.

They will do this by:

- Sharing little snippets of this knowledge with their clients in class when a move or exercise directly links to this scientific research e.g. "As you work those arms and legs in different directions and coordinating those movements, your brain is creating and strengthening neuropathways, improving your memory and building balance & control".
- Sharing snippets of this knowledge in the form of Social Media posts.
- Sharing client feedback relating to emotional & mental wellbeing in the form of social media posts using the Hashtag **#danceHAPPY** or **#dancehappy**.
- Sharing social media posts from the BOOGIE EFFECT® HQ social media accounts to reinforce the BOOGIE philosophy.

During MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS WEEK (13th May 2019), BOOGIEpros are encouraged to share BOOGIE EFFECT® social media posts EVERYDAY of that week to reinforce the BOOGIE philosophy.

All social media postings relating to mental health will carry the hashtag #danceHAPPY or #dancehappy

SHARING STORIES

It is important to us at BOOGIE EFFECT® that we can prove our philosophy really does make a difference to real people and that the proof is in the pudding, as they say.

Every day, during MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS week 2019, we will share personal stories from our BOOGIE community detailing the benefits they have felt from our programme regarding their own mental & emotional wellbeing.

We encourage our community to share their stories, to show how:

- BOOGIE helps them destress after a difficult/busy day at work.
- it has helped them make social connections with people. Seeing the happy friendly faces at class each week lifts their mood.
- when the kids (or the hubby) are driving them up the wall, going to BOOGIE helps to calm their mind and take time out for themselves
- Or can be something deeper where BOOGIE has helped them get out of a dark place and reconnect with themselves and those around them.

During this time and over the course of the coming months, we also aim to share important research and science with our online community to highlight the importance and benefits of dance and physical activity in the ongoing quest for better mental health. Key to this aim is to also promote BOOGIE EFFECT®'s openness to support those facing Mental Health issues and how BOOGIE EFFECT® can facilitate that journey.

All social media posting relating to our commitment to improving mental health will carry the Hashtag #dancehappy, #danceHAPPY or #happyfriday

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

There is a lot of great work already being done by charities, organisations and health professionals within our communities to provide services and support for those dealing with mental health issues. This can only be made better and stronger by forming partnerships with these organisations to expand the range of support they can offer.

One of the Key aims of this 'Dance Happy' initiative is to encourage all our BOOGIEpro Instructors to create partnerships with their local GP practices and mental health support groups to view BOOGIE as a form of therapy for some of their patients dealing with mental health issues.

We encourage our BOOGIEpro Instructors to do this in several ways:

1. **Health Referrals**

Having a dialogue with local GP practices to inform them of the science & philosophy behind our programme and the work we do in encouraging people to see dance as a form of mental fitness and not just physical fitness. Forming a partnership with local GP practices and Mental Health Support groups to offer BOOGIE EFFECT® classes as a form of emotional therapy, mainly (but not exclusively) through our **BOOGIEvibe** classes.

2. **Mental Health Charities**

Making contact with Mental Health Charities by running 'One-Off' Charity dance-a-thon events or volunteering to run occasional BOOGIE EFFECT® /BOOGIEvibe classes at their HQ or Drop In centres.

3. **Sharing Their Work**

Sharing the work of Mental Health Charities via BOOGIEpro and BOOGIE EFFECT® HQ social media platforms.

INTRODUCING BOOGIE VIBE

BOOGIEvibe is our new uplifting, soulful workout launching in May as part of our 'Dance Happy' Initiative.

BOOGIEvibe follows a similar format to our flagship class, BOOGIE EFFECT® but with less emphasis on the physical element and more emphasis on the HAPPY. This is a BOOGIE for the SOUL class!

What do I get from a **BOOGIEvibe** class?

- An opportunity to stop for a moment to focus on yourself, your body and your mind. To make deep, mindful connections with your body and how you feel through our Check In at the beginning of class, our slow-paced conditioning element and our relaxing, extended cool down & stretch at the end of class.
- Uplifting, soulful BOOGIE tracks that allow you to forget the trouble of the day and just have some fun while getting a good low impact workout at the same time.
- Easy to follow, co-ordinated movements developing balance, control, co-ordination, muscle memory, neuromuscular pathways, strength and good postural habits.
- Making social connections with like minded people in a supportive and inviting environment.

OUR COMMITMENT

At BOOGIE EFFECT® we passionately believe that dance can make such a positive impact on people lives, even those of us who think we can't dance or don't like to dance. Whether we are bopping our head to a tune on the radio, grooving with the kids in the kitchen or busting out the moves on the dance floor and your best friend's wedding, dancing in its simplest form has the power to stir a feeling or create a memory that is raw and in that moment.

At BOOGIE EFFECT® we aim to capture those moments and provide people with an opportunity to create a little bit of happiness in their day despite all the other chaos or drama or stress that may be going on round about them. If only for those 50 minutes they can forget and focus on themselves, this can do powerful things for our sense of wellbeing and hope. Our commitment over the next 6 months is to promote this message and do all we can to educate and facilitate the journey to better mental health.

MORE INFO

You can keep up to date with all our progress via our Social media channels on Facebook and Instagram or via our website www.boogieeffect.com

SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health)

You can also find out more information about the important work SAMH (Scottish Association for Mental Health) are doing within communities across Scotland and learn more about Scotland's Charter for Physical Activity and Sport via their website www.samh.org.uk

FURTHER READING

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/the-athletes-way/201805/the-powerful-psychological-benefits-dance>

<https://www.ids.co.uk/blog/the-benefits-dancing-has-on-mental-health/>

<https://www.calmmoment.com/wellbeing/how-dancing-can-improve-your-mental-and-physical-health/>

<https://www.mindwise.org/blog/mental-health/dancing-and-mental-health/>

<https://www.bupa.co.uk/newsroom/ourviews/health-benefits-dancing>

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2. The New England Journal of Medicine (2003), Leisure Activities and the Risk of Dementia in the Elderly (online). <http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMoa022252>
3. Edwards, S (2016), Dancing and the Brain (online). <http://neuro.hms.harvard.edu/harvard-mahoney-neuroscience-institute/brain-newsletter/and-brain-series/dancing-and-brain>
4. Devin Culham, (2016), (Dr Lovatt, P) There's a Reason Why Dancing is Good for the Soul, (online) <http://edm.com/articles/2016/5/1/theres-a-reason-why-dancing-is-good-for-the-soul>
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