

SATELLITE DANCE



AERIAL SLING

TEACHER TRAINING 2023

LEVEL 1 HANDBOOK



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OVERVIEW

Aerial Sling Teacher Training: Level 1

A multi-disciplined and collaborative approach for Movement Professionals.

Our 30-hour* introductory training program will deepen your understanding of aerial and prepare you to teach successfully. By integrating three Sling disciplines with your existing knowledge, you'll provide your students with a class experience that is supportive, creative, and challenging.

This Teacher Training is for Movement Professionals with

- basic knowledge of pedagogy, anatomy, and class structure.
- a desire to expand their movement practice.
- a passion for creative class planning.
- an interest in a collaborative environment.

Teachers will walk away with

- tools to safely teach Introductory Aerial Fitness, Yoga, and Dance with the Aerial Sling.
- techniques to teach across ages and ability levels.
- cueing and music best practices.
- resources for continuing education.
- a community fostering support and knowledge sharing.

*Certification of completion is issued upon completion of the 3-day training (24 hours), independent study (4 hours), open-book test (1 hour), and teaching practical (1 hour).

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WHY SLING?

The Aerial Sling (Hammock) is a beginner-friendly, multi-functional apparatus. With body wraps and various conditioning exercises, the Sling can be a safe and adaptable introduction to Aerial Dance or an enhancement of Fitness and Yoga.

With the Sling, you can use the floor to your advantage and move in various directions with relative ease. The lower ceiling height requirements provide a more accessible and affordable aerial practice than other aerial apparatuses.

INTEGRATIVE APPROACH

Aerial Fitness, Yoga, or Dance, we believe all formats are created equal. Aerial Fitness harnesses weight and gravity for full-body conditioning. Aerial Yoga elevates an existing practice while introducing Sling positions and transitions. Aerial Dance cultivates the strength and coordination from these disciplines and adds artistic expression.

Understanding how these three formats can be practiced independently or together will result in a supportive, creative, and challenging experience for you and your students.

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INTEGRATIVE APPROACH EXAMPLE

Intention
Point(s) of Connection
Direction(s) of Movement



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Fitness

Core Exercise

Mid-Back

Dynamic

Yoga

Staff Alt.

Mid-Back

Static

Dance

Pike

Mid-Back

Spin

Adding dynamics during Aerial Fitness primes the mind and body to practice poses in a more challenging environment. Re-orienting Staff poses challenges an existing asana while gently introducing a Pike position for Aerial Dance, thus providing baseline knowledge and an opportunity to expand the pose into a spin.

SCHEDULE

Day 1 Theme: Prepare & Condition

FRIDAY (9:00 – 5:00 P.M.)

- 9:00 am: Introductions & Class Agreement
- 9:30 am: Aerial Fitness Class
- 10:20 am: Break
- 10:30 am: Aerial Fitness Class Format
- 12:00 pm: Break
- 12:45 pm: Lecture: Welcome to Class, Cueing
- 1:30 pm: Mini Class Workshop Pt. 1
- 2:45 pm: Break
- 3:00 pm: Mini Class Workshop Pt. 2
- 4:15 pm: Lecture: Class Rhythm

Day 2 Theme: Intention Setting

SATURDAY (8:00 – 4:00 P.M.)

- 8:00 am: Aerial Yoga Class
- 9:00 am: Break
- 9:10 am: Aerial Yoga Class Format
- 11:00 am: Break
- 11:45 am: Lecture: Yoga Principles, Creative Planning
- 12:30 pm: Mini Class Workshop Pt. 1
- 1:45 pm: Break
- 2:00 pm: Mini Class Workshop Pt. 2
- 3:15 pm: Lecture: Environment, Safety, and Risk

Day 3 Theme: Integration & Beyond

SUNDAY (10:00 – 6:00 P.M.)

- 10:00 am: Aerial Dance Class
- 11:00 am: Break
- 11:10 am: Aerial Dance Class Format
- 1:00 pm: Break
- 1:45 pm: Lecture: Class Levels, Kids and Adults
- 2:30 pm: Mini Class Workshop Pt. 1
- 3:45 pm: Break
- 4:00 pm: Mini Class Workshop Pt. 2
- 5:15 pm: Lecture: Integration, Next Steps

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TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Aerial. Fitness. Yoga. Dance. We treat all formats equally and honor their origins.

Adaptable. We believe in Universal Learning. We teach with primer exercise, primary exercise, and then advancement cues with the option to opt out at any time.

Shared. We invite students and instructors to engage with our community beyond classes.

With Care. We honor the instructor and student's unique history, needs, and goals.

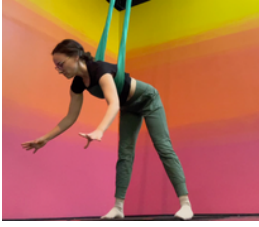
CLASS AGREEMENT

This agreement is a collaboratively created framework for expectations in the training. Participants and the Facilitator will work together to design an agreement for classroom norms, rules, and consequences.

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Try it: Inhale – initiate, Exhale – execute

Using Points of Connection, find all the Variations of Warrior poses.



FINGER FLICKS



CHAIR POSE



WARRIOR I

Find Backpack. Inhale, send the left leg behind, arms overhead. Exhale and hold. Align front foot over ankle, ground edge of back foot into the Earth. Draw tailbone under. (Warrior I)



WARRIOR III



PYRAMID



CHAIR

Inhale, raise arms into a big 'T,' and shift weight to the front foot with the back leg extended. Exhale and hold. Inhale, return to Warrior I, exhale, and raise arms overhead to Wrist Wrap. (Warrior III, prep into Pyramid)



CHAIR TWIST



WARRIOR II



REVERSE WARRIOR

Send the left foot into the fabric. Open the fabric and draw the fabric from ankle to hamstring. Flex the flying foot and bend the knee. Hold on and shift weight forward, flying ankle aligned with the ground foot. If comfortable, take arms to a big 'T.' Hold here and breathe.

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GRUNDED

AERIAL DANCE

DEFINITION

Aerial Dance is a performance art integrating aerial acrobatics and (primarily) Western classical dance (ballet, modern, postmodern, and jazz). Aerial Dance uses myriad apparatuses, can be choreographed solo or in a group, and is typically set to music.

BRIEF HISTORY

The concept of vertical dance originated in the 1950s and 60s during the postmodern dance movement, where Alwin Nikolais and Trisha Brown experimented with fabrics, shapes, and height in a dance context. Isabelle Vaudelle and Isabelle Chasse are credited for the art of Aerial Silks when 1998, they premiered an act for the Cirque du Soleil's show, *Quidam*. Frequent Flyers Productions is considered to be the first aerial dance company to integrate the art form.

BENEFITS

In addition to the physical benefits of aerial, Aerial Dance provides an opportunity for experimentation and exploration of movement. With the Sling, Aerial Dance can be an adaptive form of movement for those who have difficulty with conventional dance techniques.

RISKS

Due to its use of the hard floor, Aerial Dance (i.e., aerial with grounded elements) has a higher rate of injury compared with other aerial practices (Greenman and Stuckey 2021).

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INTEGRATION

Over this training weekend, we dedicated each day to a discipline: Aerial Fitness, Aerial Yoga, and Aerial Dance.

When studying Aerial Fitness on day one, we focused on executing exercises in the Sling that promote strength, flexibility, alignment, coordination, and adventure. We addressed structuring an aerial class with formatting, cues, and your relationship with the Sling.

On day two, we learned about Aerial Yoga and the greater importance of transitions. We addressed the intention of movement and breath and how our role as teachers can promote an environment of kindness and accommodation.

At first glance, it appears we've 'scaffolded' formats to culminate in Aerial Dance. While there are benefits to practicing Aerial Fitness and Aerial Yoga before participating in Aerial Dance (such as understanding multi-disciplinary concepts in a slower-paced environment), all three formats can be practiced independently and with great benefit.

With that said, explore integrating other disciplines into your classes. Take a Spin-in-a-Straddle break in Aerial Fitness to promote play and curiosity. Dedicate the first 20 minutes of Aerial Dance and lead practitioners through an Aerial Yoga sample class to demonstrate how movement has a rich, long, and multi-disciplined history. Introducing and integrating alternative perspectives enriches our classrooms, promotes community, and challenges our personal growth and development.

Teacher training is a life-long journey. Don't stop learning; celebrate progress, take breaks, and share the experience with others!

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RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Suggested Reading

- **Science of Yoga** by Ann Swanson, 2019.
- **Applied Anatomy of Aerial Arts** by Emily Scherb, a.k.a., the Circus Doc, 2019.

Suggested Participation

- **Hall Rigging Academy:** hallriggingacademy.com
- **Born to Fly Curriculum by Rebekah Leach:** <https://www.aerialdancing.com>
- **American Circus Educators Association:** <https://www.americancircuseducators.org>

Online Resources

- **Social Media:**
 - Dr. Melanie Irene Stuckey: **@melirene13** (Holistic Risk Management in Aerial Arts)
 - Maria Haralambis M.Ed.: **@the.dancescientist** (Dance Science & Pedagogy)
 - Dr. Emily Scherb: **@thecircusdoc** (Physical Therapy in Aerial Arts)
 - Arundhati Baitmangalkar: **@arundhati_baitmangalkar** (Yoga Educator)
- **Apps:**
 - Sanskrit – all in one
 - The Under Belly App
- **Sites:**
 - Beats Per Minute: **beatsperminute.com**
 - Yogapedia: **yogapedia.com**
- **Facebook Groups:**
 - “Aerial Instructors and Studio Owners”
 - “Safety in Aerial Arts (but nice)”

References

- Whitney Kirk, Aerial Yoga Master Instructor.
- Linnea Boulger, Aerial Fitness & Yoga Master Instructor.
- Cara Bourdage, Aerial Fitness & Yoga Master Instructor.
- Linda Lehovc, Professor Emerita, UIUC.
- *The Kaivalya Yoga Method®*, Alanna Kaivalya, Ph.D.
- *Neurodiversity Affirming Handbook* by Mott and Rodwell, 2023
- *Untangling risk factors, including discipline-specific exposure for injuries in preprofessional and professional circus artists in the USA.* Lecture and Study by Greenspan and Stuckey, 2023.
- *Risk vs. Hazard: The Value of Risk in Playtime for Children* by Children’s Museum of Sonoma County, 2020.
- *Exercises to Avoid During Pregnancy* by Colleen Bellefonds, 2021.
- *Coach on Fire* Lecture by Jessica John, 2023.
- *Holistic Risk Management* Lecture by Dr. Melanie Stuckey for ACE, 2023.
- *EveryBODY* Lecture by Ashley Robinson for ACE, 2023.
- *Social Emotional Learning* Lecture by Mary Jessica Hammes for ACE, 2023.
- *Aerial Dance* by Dance Spirit Magazine, 2019.
- *Exploring the Origins of Aerial Silks* by Vertical Wise, 2023.
- *Alwin Nikolais: From Prop to Performance – Aerialist in Motion* by Kianna Lynch.

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