

The Joy of Dance

Music has a special power. I had a weekend that was well below average. I was alone for most of it - and lonely. The only person I spent time with was a friend with addiction problems. My time with him just made me sad.

On Saturday I reluctantly dragged myself out the door to go and teach a ceroc (modern jive) dance class. When I arrived there were five men keen to get their groove on. And no women. Not optimal in a partner dance.

As we considered whether to fold the class, enough women trickled in to change our minds. We kicked off.

From the minute the music started, the room came alive. Every person became animated, given the freedom to express themselves. Of course I taught everyone the same moves, but every dancer injected themselves into that dance, changing it to become their own.

Before I knew it, 90 minutes had passed. I'd laughed, chatted, joked and forgotten my deadlines, my worries, my loneliness and my boredom. I became alive again, just by moving my body in time with someone else's.

In that room, there were people from six different countries. The ages spanned at least twenty years. We worked in different fields, at

different levels. But together, we danced. It was magic.

There is something inside us that is drawn to rhythm. It takes us and twists us, making us turn and stomp and whirl. And for just a little while, the world stops, in a moment of perfect happiness.

When we are done, we are free.

I left that room on a high. Inside I had connected with each of these people, not through words; through movement. We fudged moves and missed beats and we laughed. For a frozen moment in time the world disappeared.

On the train on the way home a woman sitting opposite catches my eye. She smiles at me. She can see the dance inside me. And I am happy. That is the magic of movement.

