

Ladies: let's cut the guys some *slack*... and make our own dance nights more fun!

Every lady adores a clear, confident lead that makes us look and feel our best on the floor. Pure heaven!

The reality? You won't get that magical lead nearly as often as you wish! Only a very small percentage of men who social dance can or want to invest all the practice time, money and coaching necessary to make them as good as the ones you love to watch or dream of dancing with.

Most of your dances will be with average people, with their share of flaws. All are trying their best to make sure you have a good time, *even if what you're feeling doesn't exactly match their best intentions!*☺

While ladies don't verbally criticize as often as men tend to, they do have other little "habits":

- **When looks can kill:** Ladies sometimes fail to realize how *revealing* their facial expressions can be when dancing with men whose lead they find frustrating or disappointing! Many a man's ego has plummeted past the wood floor beneath his feet...past the concrete beneath the wood floor... past the dirt beneath the concrete beneath the wood floor....the second they get *that look*.

-The disgusted one aimed at her friends who are watching from the sidelines...

-Or the wandering gaze that clearly shows she'd rather be dancing with anyone else...

Remember how hurt you felt when that rude guy criticized you? This hurts him just as much. A glum face won't do much for you either. The more miserable you look, the less others will want to ask you.

- **Before complaining to your teacher about all the "bad leads" are you SURE it's not YOU? (Not even a little bit?)** Many of the same followers complaining to teachers about all the guys "who can't lead" are actually *causing or at least contributing* to many of the problems they mention.

Many rank themselves as intermediate or advanced dancers, but don't realize they still carry bad habits never corrected. Highly-skilled leaders can often compensate or cover up for followers' mistakes. This can give lesser-trained ladies an inflated sense of ability when they dance with those men. Other leaders can't compensate as well - but it doesn't necessarily mean they didn't lead it right.

- **"I can follow ANYONE if he knows what he's doing and puts me exactly where he wants me".** So many ladies love to brag about this! (And leaders run for cover when they hear these words!)

Ladies: do you realize it is NOT the man's job to "put" you anywhere?

-YOU are at least 50% or more responsible for creating connection in ANY dance - and have PRIMARY responsibility (80% or more) for connection in many stationary dances like West Coast

-YOU are responsible for POWERING yourself through turns, your slot, and the patterns as smoothly as a sleek Porsche powers down the Autobahn!

- While some men will lead you through every physical step, (if that's what you require to get through it,) it's much more work and not nearly as fun for them.

- A man's lead should be an *invitation* - not a command. (Make sure you know your responsibilities before evaluating his ability – he may actually be a better leader than you think!)

So what can YOU do to become a better dance ambassador, have more fun and be someone everyone loves to dance with?

See next page...

Become a better dance ambassador and have more fun!

- **“Make the most of the hand you’re dealt”** Winning gamblers never waste their time dwelling on a bad hand or wishing for a better one. They’re too busy making the most of what they’ve got. So should you. If your partner is physically hurting you, STOP dancing and tell him. But if his lead is less than magical, smile graciously for those 2-3 minutes you’re with him! It’s really not that hard:
 - Sell the basics, baby!*** A sexier, more grounded walk; better eye contact, smoother steps: little touches go far to make you look great on the floor -and YOU control that.
 - ***Experiment*** with new footwork or arm/hand styling you’ve been wanting to try.
 - ***Or just relax and appreciate*** the music, the exercise (beats a dreary treadmill,) and the friendly company. (Do you realize: MILLIONS of people watch dancing on TV and wish they could do exactly what you’re doing right now? Less than 5% can.)
- **Invest in your own skills.** Take a technique class or a private lesson once in a while – stay current on what’s going on. It’s amazing how much “better” other people suddenly get once you fix a few bad habits of your own! You’ll not only give the better dancers a more enjoyable dance, (which – bonus - may earn you MORE dances with him another night,) but you’ll also have better skills to make the most nervous newcomer look and feel like a pro! That’s truly a reward all its own.
- **Venture beyond the boundaries.** While there are many good - and a few great - leaders right here at home, you’ll find hundreds, even thousands of dancers at regional/national events to challenge and thrill you. Look for events that host competitions - they tend to draw the cream of the crop. Just realize: lots of followers congregate there too! (So be ready to do plenty of asking or you’ll sit a lot!)

Remember while every lady craves a great lead to make her look and feel great –your leaders love dancing with the best followers that make THEM look/feel great.

If everyone waited around for “better” dancers, clubs and ballrooms would invest a lot more money in couches and new seat cushions!

Resolve to have fun with every partner - and you may go home at the end of the night with a whole new perspective - or at least, tired feet instead of a tired seat! ☺