

Mindful Movement With Liz

In the dynamic realm of dance, **Liz LeGrande** stands as a trailblazer, her career now lighting the way through the profound healing capabilities of dance that often remain veiled from the mainstream spotlight. Having shared the stage with icons like Usher, Beyoncé, Katy Perry, and Ciara, and featured on TV shows such as “Dancing with the Stars,” “America’s Best Dance Crew,” “Step Up Highwater,” and “Shake It Off,” Liz’s journey through the upper echelons of performance art continues to inspire and evolve.



Beyond the Beat: The Art of Healing Through Movement with Liz LeGrande

Dance Mogul Magazine Exclusive>>>>

It’s her transformative work beyond the bright lights and big stages that truly defines her legacy so we wanted to catch up with her and find out what’s going on. Moving beyond the traditional confines of dance, she has embraced the art form as a medium for emotional healing and personal evolution. In a heartfelt exchange with Dance Mogul Magazine, Liz opens up about her journey, enriching the conversation with insights and wisdom gleaned from a life deeply intertwined with the healing rhythms and expressive power of movement.

Dance Mogul: Liz, can you pinpoint a moment when dance evolved from just an artistic pursuit to a significant healing tool in your life?

Liz: Of course! Years ago, after a particularly tough breakup, the silence in my LA apartment became unbearable. You know those moments when you can feel the pain of loss in every cell of your body? It was one of those. My mentor had just told me, “wherever you go, there you are.” So, I knew there were no distractions that would make this pain go away. In that moment of raw vulnerability, I cleared a small space amidst the clutter of unresolved emotions.

In that confined space, I danced, not with the intention of performance, but as an act of emotional release. The dance became a medium through which the tangled web of feelings – pain, love, loss – found expression. With each movement, a layer of emotional weight was lifted, offering a sense of liberation from my pain. For the first time I danced for ME, this wasn’t about perfecting routines I’d performed with Thomas Rhett or Kanye West; it was about something far more primal.

That post-dance stillness was revelatory, highlighting a simple yet often overlooked truth: healing can emerge from the most modest acts of self-expression. That night, my living room transformed into a sanctuary of self-discovery, where the dance became a powerful declaration of my inner strength and capacity for joy amidst pain.

Later, as I delved deeper into the connection between movement and well-being, I learned about the profound effects certain movements have on the nervous system. It became clear that engaging in such expressive movements could lead to a more settled nervous system, which is crucial for fostering the kind of internal environment necessary for making real, lasting changes in our lives. This understanding has since reshaped my approach to dance, not just as an art form but as a vital tool for personal transformation and healing.

Dance Mogul: In your sessions, you merge movement, breath, and emotional awareness. How does this trinity work together to foster healing?

Liz: In my practice, we engage in a blend of movement, breathwork, and emotional awareness, grounded in the principles

of somatic exploration. This approach is a conscious application of neuroscience and psychophysiology, reflecting a deep understanding of the intricate connection between body and mind.

The journey begins with intentional breathwork, an essential element that transcends simple relaxation to act as a pivotal engagement with the autonomic nervous system. Through focused, deep breathing exercises, we activate the parasympathetic nervous system and bring awareness to repressed emotions within - which is essential for facilitating a deeper engagement with one’s self.

As we transition into movement, we delve into the realm of somatic movement, acknowledging the concept that experiences and emotions are not solely housed in the mind but are also imprinted within the body. This perspective is bolstered by neurobiological research, which suggests that the body holds onto memories of past experiences. Through a mix of deliberate, freeform, and mindful movement, participants are allowed to tap into these stored memories, allowing for a natural expression and processing guided by the body’s narrative potential.

This process is enhanced by the principle of neuroplasticity, the brain’s capacity to forge new connections at any stage of life. This element of our practice focuses on fostering adaptability and resilience, encouraging participants to develop new, constructive neural pathways that enable a reconfiguration of their responses to past experiences.

Every session I lead is carefully crafted, weaving together these scientific insights to not just offer moments of self-reflection but to pave the way for genuine personal evolution. Drawing upon the latest discoveries in somatic practices, neuroscience, and epigenetics, I strive to create a space that’s ripe for profound change, where each individual is supported and encouraged to embark on their transformative journey. It’s deeply personal work, rooted in a belief that within each of us lies the potential for significant healing.

Dance Mogul: Your diverse background must enrich your dance practice. How do these experiences inform your approach?

Liz: Growing up in a world where I constantly navigated between different cultures, I learned a lot about resilience and the richness of bringing diverse perspectives together. This background has profoundly shaped my approach to dance. My goal in every class is to create movements that speak to each person’s unique story, ensuring that everyone feels seen and connected in our shared space. I’m passionate about building a place where all kinds of diversity are not just accepted but celebrated, using movement as a way to bring people together and heal.

This approach is very personal to me, rooted in my own experiences of growing up with a mixed heritage in the southern US during the 90s. I often found myself in the middle, not fully fitting into any one group, which was a challenging but eye-opening experience. It taught me the value of finding common ground and the power of shared experiences to heal and unite. Now, my work in movement is more than just teaching steps; it’s about creating a space where people can reconnect with themselves and each other, turning my past challenges into a mission to foster unity and connection through movement.

Dance Mogul: Have you witnessed any transformations in your sessions that stand out to you?

Liz: In my sessions, I’ve witnessed many remarkable transformations, but a few stand out for their profound impact. One individual who joined during a time of deep grief initially moved with such caution, their dance and breath barely more than a whisper. Yet, as they continued to engage with the music and the group, a visible shift occurred. Gradually, their movements grew bolder, becoming a powerful expression of releasing pent-up sorrow. It was a deeply moving journey to witness.

Another standout transformation involved a woman who attended my workshop in Los Angeles. She was in recovery from cancer and, unbeknownst to her, was living in the shadow of fear, hesitant to fully embrace life. Through the course of the workshop, she confronted and released various hidden traumas, finding the courage within herself to live more fully.

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