



Deborah Hay: My Practice Now



Deborah Hay is a choreographer, performer, teacher, author, and founding member of Judson Dance Theatre: “*What my body can do is limited. This is not a bad thing because how I choreograph frees me from those limitations. Writing is then how I reframe and understand the body through my choreography.*”

**TOP EMBODIMENT TIP:** Turn your fucking head!

Context: **Non-discriminatory Learning**

- I could no longer accept the values of an art form that shaped the trajectory of my life. I knew I was not being nourished by my experience of movement and performance so I spent several years trying to let go of the learning, and choreography that took place in my head in relation to the rest of my body.
- I began by imaginatively reconfiguring my choreographed body into a plethora of potentially alert cellular receivers not bound by shape, location, or identity. My experience of this plethora of cellular particles can move quickly and be alert to change, without weight, and is not fixed.
- Dancing, not fixing, can be defined as non-discriminatory learning.

A Quest for Questions: **From what I'm doing and how I'm seeing, I form questions that I have no answers for**

1. What if every cell in my body at once has the potential and ability to perceive beauty and surrender beauty?
2. What if every cell in my body at once has the potential to perceive time passing, a willingness to let go, holding ourselves up as this moment is passing and the next moment and the next?
3. What if where I am, wherever I am, everywhere I am, is what I need? It's about the question, not about what I need.

The Three Elements: **My Practice Now**

- *Essential tool for navigating the three elements:* Turn your fucking head! When I turn my fucking head, I have this perspective on reality. And when I turn my head again, I have this one, and how effective it is in immediately transforming my cellular body.
  - *Element 1:* associate it with perseverance. I reject the idea that space is empty, or that the word empty describes what is not visible to the naked eye. The belief that a studio is empty if no one is here with me is a missed opportunity.
  - *Element 2:* associate with permission. Consider a single blade of grass in the pavement, what keeps it alive? Everything surrounding it is necessary for its survival. When I dance I model myself on that single blade of grass, its sharpness and clarity. I don't want to imitate it or illustrate it in any way, it's a metaphor. Its survival is dependent on the wind, the rain, the earth.
  - *Element 3:* associate with liberation. You don't have to see particle reality. I know, I trust, in the ever-expanding eternity of the universe that is holding us all together.

Resources

- ❖ **Books:** *Lamb at the Altar* (1990), *My Body, the Buddhist* (2005), *Using the Sky: a dance* (2019)
- ❖ **Website:** <https://dhdcblog.blogspot.com>



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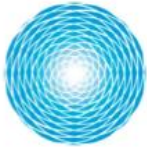
Amara Pagano, [PathOfAzul.com](http://PathOfAzul.com)



**Amara Pagano** is a leader and innovator in the world of conscious dance. She is the creator of the [School of Azul](http://SchoolOfAzul.com) and the co-founder of the global conscious dance community [OneDanceTribe](http://OneDanceTribe.com). Azul is a path of personal transformation that supports the awakening of consciousness and recognizes that, as we transform ourselves we create the conditions for our world to transform.

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