

Carlo Colajanni

# *Milongas of Light*



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*To Michela*  
*and all the Beings of Light!*

## Summary

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Introduction .....</b>   | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>Chapter 1 .....</b>  | <b>7</b>  |
| <b>Meditation: From Individual Practice to Collective Power .....</b>                           | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>Meditative Dances as Examples of Connection, Expression, and Tradition .....</b>             | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>Meditative Dances in the World .....</b>   | <b>10</b> |
| <b>Collective Meditation: A Transformative Power for Noble Intentions.....</b>                  | <b>12</b> |
| <b>Scientific Evidence on the Effectiveness of Collective Meditation .....</b>                  | <b>13</b> |
| <b>A Specific Case: Scientific Analysis of Meditation during the Lebanon War .....</b>          | <b>14</b> |
| <b>Collective Meditation Events Worldwide for Social and Spiritual Change .....</b>             | <b>16</b> |
| <b>Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and World Peace .....</b>  | <b>17</b> |
| <b>Chapter 2 .....</b>  | <b>19</b> |
| <b>Argentine Tango: A Therapeutic Meditative Dance .....</b>                                    | <b>20</b> |
| <b>A Journey of Awareness and Connection through Tango .....</b>                                | <b>21</b> |
| <b>Two Bodies, One Heart: The Collective Power of Meditative Tango .....</b>                    | <b>22</b> |
| <b>Dancing the Good: Meditation and Intentions through Tango.....</b>                           | <b>23</b> |
| <b>Scientific Evidence and Tango: A New Frontier in Collective Consciousness Research .....</b> | <b>24</b> |
| <b>Chapter 3 .....</b>  | <b>27</b> |
| <b>From Traditional Milongas to "Milongas of Light" .....</b>                                   | <b>28</b> |
| <b>The "Milongas of Light" Project: A Possible Approach.....</b>                                | <b>29</b> |
| <b>Milongas of Light: Example Structure of an Event .....</b>                                   | <b>30</b> |
| <b>Interconnected Milongas of Light .....</b>   | <b>31</b> |
| <b>Milongas of Light: A New Ethical Paradigm in Tango .....</b>                                 | <b>32</b> |
| <b>Conclusions .....</b>  | <b>34</b> |
| <b>Bibliography .....</b>   | <b>35</b> |

## Introdtion

This book is intended for all lovers of Argentine tango who are curious to explore, without prejudice, the non-material aspects of this dance. The goal is to propose and share a new project on tango that, rather than focusing solely on the art and technical details of this wonderful dance, highlights a possible, further, and noble use of it.

“Milongas of Light” is the name of this project, born from the observation that milongas—the places where tango is danced—are repositories of extraordinary energy, consumed exclusively by the dancers who attend them during evenings, events, festivals, and marathons, at any hour and in every part of the world. So why not consider directing this enormous energy store, normally confined to the embrace of two tango dancers, toward a broader audience for beneficial purposes, such as peace, global justice, health, or other sensitive issues, using tango as a form of collective meditation?

The elevated vibrations generated during a *tanda*, when well channeled by dancers ready for the experience—those who have set aside their ego and are able to invite and be invited by anyone without the desire to perform—could influence the surrounding environment and contribute to a healthier, more relaxed social atmosphere. “Milongas of Light” could be events proposed from time to time alongside or parallel to the regular tango calendar, engaging, in some aspects, a “new” type of dancer.

In this work, which particularly stems from my research on the effects of Transcendental Meditation, I aim to give value and support to this project, hoping to pique the curiosity of as many people as possible who can assist me in spreading an initiative that, however interpreted, is directed towards the greater good.

Finally, a necessary note for the reader: the topics discussed in this writing are solely intended to share an idea and do not claim to detail the vast and complex themes related to spirituality and meditation. The project “Milongas of Light,” undoubtedly complicated in its implementation, is presented from a purely descriptive perspective regarding both the meditation aspects and those related to tango. Anyone interested in delving deeper into these topics can contact me via my Facebook page or my email address ([percorsotango@yahoo.com](mailto:percorsotango@yahoo.com)), and I will be

happy, within the limits of my knowledge and expertise, to open discussions and collaboration on this initiative.

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# Chapter 1

## Meditation: From Individual Practice to Collective Power

As is well known, meditation is an ancient practice that involves a set of techniques aimed at promoting awareness, relaxation, and introspection. Its essence lies in the ability to focus the mind, letting go of distracting thoughts and achieving a state of "presence."

Meditation takes various forms, each offering distinct and profound benefits. Firstly, individual meditation focuses on personal well-being and introspection. This type of practice is generally characterized by moments of silence and stillness, during which attention is directed inward. In this phase, the practitioner seeks to calm the mind, observing thoughts and emotions without judgment. Although techniques may vary—from the use of mantras to mindful breathing—the goal remains constant: to develop greater self-awareness and enhance psychological well-being. This practice allows individuals to explore their inner depths, fostering a sense of connection with themselves and strengthening emotional resilience.

Conversely, group meditation introduces a dynamic and shared element, promoting the enhancement of collective well-being through social interaction. In this context, participants have the opportunity to explore their emotions and bodies together, creating an environment of support and cohesion. Techniques such as meditative dance, which we will discuss in the next paragraph, combine movement and music, allowing dancers to immerse themselves completely in the experience. This form of meditation not only fosters interpersonal connection but also amplifies collective energy, leading to experiences of unity and transcendence that can surpass the limits of individuality.

Finally, there is collective meditation, which transcends the simple group to embrace larger, beneficial intentions for global or worldly situations. When a group gathers with a common intention—such as peace, social justice, or healing—it generates an energetic resonance capable of elevating the spiritual vibrations of all participants. This interconnection has been highlighted by figures like Paramahansa Yogananda, who emphasized how the proximity of spiritual vibrations can accelerate both personal and collective evolution. In this way, meditation becomes a powerful tool for transformation, capable not only of enhancing individual well-being but also of contributing to positive change on a global scale.



Collective meditation is often associated with Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's Transcendental Meditation (TM), but today there are various meditative techniques with similar goals. However, TM has likely garnered greater interest within the scientific community, partly due to the substantial participation recorded at Maharishi's events or those of his followers.

Other forms of collective meditation may have received more empirical support, but still offer significant and transformative experiences that could be analyzed, if deemed necessary, at a scientific level.

## Meditative Dances as Examples of Connection, Expression, and Tradition

In the context of meditation, movement proves to be a powerful tool for releasing accumulated tension in the body, facilitating an energetic flow that promotes well-being and harmony. When the body moves consciously, it becomes a means through which we can explore and deeply experience meditation. In particular, dance emerges as an art form capable of evoking emotions and moods, creating a space where the movement itself becomes an act of meditation.

When integrated into meditation, dance allows participants to enter a state of flow, characterized by deep engagement in the act of dancing. This state not only facilitates connection with oneself but also with others, fostering a sense of unity and communion. During meditative dances, participants engage in movements that can be repetitive and coordinated, enhancing concentration and inner focus. The chosen music, which typically ranges from classical to folk, plays a fundamental role in guiding the experience, helping to create an atmosphere of harmony and unity among the dancers.

Dance as a tool for meditation offers numerous benefits. Firstly, physical movement helps to release accumulated tension, promoting a sense of relaxation and well-being. Additionally, interaction with music and rhythm stimulates a profound body awareness, allowing participants to recognize and address their emotions. This process of internal exploration not only promotes psychological health but also creates an environment of empathy and social connection among participants. Collective dances, in particular, encourage interaction and the sharing of experiences, transforming the moment into an opportunity for mutual learning.

Through dance, we can also stimulate creativity and spontaneity, freeing the mind from rigid patterns and allowing for authentic self-expression. This active approach

to meditation encourages a dynamic exploration of being, where the body becomes a vehicle for achieving greater awareness and a deep inner connection.

To highlight its nearly global geographical spread, we can cite various peoples and cultures that utilize meditative dance as a strong expression of their social identity.

In Afro-Brazilian cultures, for example, dance is a central element in ritual and spiritual ceremonies. These dances, often accompanied by music and singing, create collective experiences that foster connection with ancestors and the spiritual world. They serve to celebrate significant events such as births, weddings, and rites of passage.

In Native American traditions, ritual dances are frequently used to celebrate the connection with the earth and spirits. These practices may include movements that imitate animals or natural phenomena, creating a deep bond with the surrounding environment.

In Hindu tradition, dances not only tell mythological and spiritual stories but also reflect a profound connection with deities and cosmic energies through elegant movements and hand gestures.

In certain Taoist practices, such as Tai Chi and Qigong, slow and controlled movement is used to promote energetic balance within the body. These practices are considered forms of meditation in motion, where attention is directed toward breathing and the flow of vital energy (Qi).

The mystical Jewish movement of Hasidism also emphasizes collective and ecstatic experiences through music and dance. This tradition, developed among Ashkenazi Jews in Eastern Europe, promotes a deep connection with the divine, encouraging practices that transform mysticism into everyday experiences of joy and spirituality.

In Zen Buddhism, the concept of *satori*, or sudden enlightenment, can also emerge during moments of mindful movement. Dance can become a form of *zazen* in motion: as dancers focus on their breath and the fluid movements of their bodies, they may experience moments of realization akin to *satori*. This fusion of dance and Zen meditation creates a unique space for inner exploration

## Meditative Dances in the World

The theme of dance as a gateway to meditation is, as seen, an exploration that intertwines various spiritual traditions and highlights the crucial importance of

movement as a tool to facilitate reaching a meditative state, particularly relevant for modern humans.

*Trance Dance*, for example, an ancient practice used by shamans, harnesses the free movement of the body to connect with the spiritual world. Accompanied by percussive music and breathing techniques, this dance allows practitioners to reach a trance state similar to meditation, fostering a deep connection with their inner world and the energies of the earth and the divine. Closed or blindfolded eyes help focus on the inner experience, allowing the body to express itself authentically and release tensions and traumas.

*Sufi Dance* and the *Dervishes* represent another form of meditation in movement. This tradition uses whirling dance as a form of prayer and connection with God. The continuous circular movement symbolizes unity and divine perfection, with the dancer becoming a channel between heaven and earth. The goal is to transcend the body and mind to reach a state of ecstasy and union with the divine, shifting consciousness from the head to the heart.

*The Sacred Dances* of Gurdjieff offer a structured approach to movement. This system of movements requires concentration and presence, with precise sequences that have specific meanings. The use of sudden "stops" helps to quiet the mind and develop focus. The aim is to reunify the three centers of the human being—physical, emotional, and intellectual—to reclaim one's essence and live in the present moment.

*Latihan* is a spiritual practice based on the spontaneous movement of the body, guided by inner energy. In this case, there are no predefined steps or choreographies; the practitioner is led by bodily sensations, allowing energy to express itself freely through movement. The goal is to reconnect with one's vital energy and achieve a state of relaxation and harmony.

*Burn Meditation* is an active technique that focuses on exploring the inner world and expressing emotions. Here, the free and spontaneous movement of the body allows participants to intensely and cathartically express and release repressed emotions. This process creates a safe space to explore one's inner world and connect deeply with others.

Osho created numerous active meditations that include dance as a central element. These practices are designed to dissolve physical and emotional tensions, stir vital energy, and transcend rational thought. Through dances such as *Dynamic*, *Kundalini*, *Nataraj*, and *Whirling*, participants can express repressed emotions, awaken Kundalini energy, and experience a sense of unity with the cosmos.

*Circular Dances*, like those of the Moon or the *Hora*, represent forms of community dance where participants dance in a circle. This practice is present in many cultures and is often used to celebrate significant events or strengthen social bonds.

*Bharatanatyam*, a form of classical Indian dance, is not just an artistic expression but also a form of meditation. Dancers tell sacred stories through precise movements and hand gestures (*mudras*), creating a connection between body, mind, and spirit; the practice of Bharatanatyam is often considered an act of devotion

## Collective Meditation: A Transformative Power for Noble Intentions

As mentioned, collective meditation represents an advanced form of group meditation that goes beyond individual well-being and focuses on higher, shared purposes. During a session of collective meditation, participants can perceive a sense of unity that transcends individual differences. Creating a safe and welcoming space allows everyone to express their vulnerability, facilitating an emotional openness that is essential for the process. The energetic resonance generated by a common intention acts as a catalyst for co-creation experiences, where every movement and thought comes together in collective harmony.

I believe that collective meditation is the most important form of meditation precisely because of the noble intentions it carries, which is why I wanted to associate it with the “Milongas of Light” project. It is not just about improving one’s mood or addressing personal challenges; it is an act of altruism, a way to contribute to the well-being of the entire community. The energies united in a shared intention can awaken a collective consciousness (which we will explore further), capable of positively influencing the social fabric. In a world often marked by conflict and division, collective meditation thus becomes a powerful tool for change, a way to envision and manifest a fairer and more harmonious future.

In this sense, meditating together—and thus, meditating while dancing—is an act of hope and transformation, inviting each individual to become part of something greater than themselves. Through collective meditation, we can not only explore the depths of our being but also elevate our common aspirations, working together for a better and more connected world.

## Scientific Evidence on the Effectiveness of Collective Meditation

As mentioned, numerous scientific studies demonstrate the effectiveness of collective meditation in promoting psychological well-being and social cohesion. In a recent 2024 paper published in *Frontiers in Public Health* (H. Scheider, M.C. Dillbeck, G. Yeola, T. Nader: "Peace through health: traditional medicine meditation in the prevention of collective stress, violence, and war"), the authors argue that collective meditation, particularly the Transcendental Meditation (TM) program derived from Ayurveda and Yoga, could be key in mitigating collective stress and preventing violence and war. The authors cite over 30 scientific studies supporting this thesis and report experiments conducted in conflict zones such as Israel and Lebanon, as well as in India, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and the United States, where group practice of TM led to significant decreases in indicators of violence, such as homicides, assaults, and traffic accidents. The study bases its findings on various neuroscientific theories. For example, population neuroscience suggests that group meditation synchronizes individual mental states, creating a form of collective "resonance" of peace. Another model, distributed cognition, posits that cognitive processes extend beyond the individual to encompass the entire community. In practice, the inner peace generated by meditation is thought to "spread" like a positive wave, influencing collective behavior.

On the Maharishi Foundation's website (<https://fondazionemaharishi.org>), the so-called "Maharishi Effect" is discussed as a scientifically proven phenomenon, suggesting that individual consciousness can influence collective consciousness. The underlying idea is that a group of people practicing Transcendental Meditation and its advanced programs synchronously can generate coherence and positivity that radiates throughout the population. This effect is based on the principle that the square root of 1% of a population practicing TM in groups is sufficient to neutralize negative trends and promote positive ones at the social level.

The meditative technique is believed to be particularly effective in reducing individual stress, a factor recognized as the root of every conflict. Stress, in fact, damages the brain by inhibiting the prefrontal cortex and activating the "fight or flight" response. This mechanism leads to impulsive, aggressive, or fear-driven behaviors, hindering rational and foresighted thinking. Meditation, by allowing individuals to reach a fourth state of consciousness distinct from wakefulness, dreaming, and sleeping, effectively counters stress, reducing the activity of the fear and aggression-related nerve centers while enhancing the prefrontal cortex and its communication with other areas of the brain.

Now, let's highlight some significant examples of collective meditation where documented studies have been conducted on the effectiveness of the experiments carried out.

In the summer of 1983, a group of about 200 people gathered in a hotel in Jerusalem with the aim of reducing fighting in Lebanon through meditation. During the two-month experiment, there was a significant reduction in crime, incidents, and fires in Jerusalem and Israel, along with a decrease in the intensity of fighting and deaths in the war in Lebanon. The experiment was replicated six times in the following two years, confirming the initial results.

Another example involves an experiment conducted in Washington D.C. in 1983, where a group of 4,000 people from 73 countries came together to demonstrate the effectiveness of TM in reducing violent crime. During the experiment, the rate of violent crime in the city decreased significantly, surpassing participants' expectations.

The longest experiment was conducted at Maharishi International University (MIU) in Fairfield, Iowa, from 2007 to 2010. A long-standing meditation group at the university reached a size that could theoretically influence the entire country. During these four years, there was a significant decrease in various negative indicators, including homicides, rapes, assaults, robberies, drug-related deaths, traffic accidents, and infant mortality.

## A Specific Case: Scientific Analysis of Meditation during the Lebanon War

### **A Specific Case: Scientific Analysis of Meditation during the Lebanon War**

To better understand the scientific study of collective meditation, let's refer to the aforementioned episode of the Lebanon War and the related report analyzing the data: J. Davies, C. N. Alexander: *Alleviating Political Violence through Reducing Collective Tension: Impact Assessment Analyses of the Lebanon War*, 2005.

The goal of this study was to assess the impact of the collective practice of the TM-Sidhi program, an advanced meditation technique, on the events of the Lebanon War. The collected information aimed to determine whether the collective practice of Transcendental Meditation and the TM-Sidhi program could positively influence peace, specifically regarding the Lebanon War. In practice, the researchers sought to

find out if group meditation, by creating a sort of "coherence field" in collective consciousness, could lead to a reduction in conflict and an increase in cooperation among the warring parties.

To achieve this, they first had to create a database documenting the events of the Lebanon War day by day. As there were no pre-existing databases, they built one from scratch. They collected information from various international and Lebanese news sources, such as the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, and the Foreign Broadcast Information Service, which translated news reports from Lebanese and neighboring countries.

A Lebanese expert, unaware of the study's purpose or meditation techniques, then analyzed all these news articles and coded every significant event related to the war. Each event, which could be a gunfight, a bombing, a diplomatic meeting, etc., was classified by date, location, involved parties, number of casualties, and its level of cooperation or conflict according to Rasler's scales. These scales, specifically designed for this type of analysis, allowed for an objective measurement of conflict and cooperation intensity.

In parallel, the researchers organized several "World Peace Assemblies" in various parts of the world, where groups of people practiced Transcendental Meditation and the TM-Sidhi program. The size of these groups and their proximity to Lebanon were calculated based on a formula that, according to theory, should ensure a measurable impact on the war.

By combining the database data with the dates of the assemblies, the researchers could analyze whether there was a correlation between periods of collective meditation and changes in the levels of conflict and cooperation in Lebanon. The objective was to demonstrate that even though the meditators were far from the theater of war and did not interact directly with the conflicting parties, their practice could positively impact the situation, reducing violence and promoting peace.

(\*) Note for the curious: To determine the minimum number of people necessary to practice TM-Sidhi collectively and have a positive impact on the Lebanese population, the sources use the previously mentioned formula, which states that the minimum group size ( $n$ ) is the square root of 1% of the influenced population. In this case, the influenced population included not only the population of Lebanon but also individuals practicing Transcendental Meditation (TM) individually in Lebanon and the population of nearby areas within the assembly's reach.

In the study, Lebanon's population in 1983 was estimated at 3,300,000 people. This number was supplemented by about 2,000 Lebanese practicing TM individually. For

simplicity, let's assume that the TM-Sidhi assembly was located to influence only Lebanon and not surrounding areas.

In this scenario, the minimum group size was:  $n = \sqrt{0.01 * (3,300,000 + 100 * 2,000)}$   
 $n = \sqrt{35,000}$   
 $n \approx 187$

Therefore, according to the formula used in the sources, about 187 people practicing TM-Sidhi collectively would be necessary to have a positive impact on the Lebanese population.

It's important to highlight that this formula is an approximation and that the actual impact of a TM-Sidhi assembly can vary based on several factors, such as the geographic location of the group, the duration of the assembly, and the coherence level of the participants. Sources emphasize that the influence of TM-Sidhi propagates through collective consciousness, primarily localized within community boundaries. Thus, an assembly located in a country close to Lebanon could have a greater impact than one situated in a more distant country, even if the number of participants is the same.

## Collective Meditation Events Worldwide for Social and Spiritual Change

Collective meditation events are a powerful tool for promoting social and spiritual change, uniting people with common intentions and transforming pain into positive energy. These gatherings range from simple meditation sessions to large-scale festivals, characterized by an atmosphere of connection and sharing. During these practices, participants are encouraged to set aside individual concerns and focus on collective goals, fostering a sense of community.

A prominent example is the gatherings for social justice in the United States, historically linked to the civil rights movements, where meditation has often accompanied moments of deep reflection and activism. These events frequently take place in public spaces, such as parks and squares, creating a symbolic meaning related to the struggle for human rights and the visibility of social injustices.

At the beginning of the sessions, moments of sharing allow participants to express their experiences regarding social injustices, fostering connection among them and preparing the ground for the meditation itself. The practices may include deep breathing, guided visualizations, and artistic elements such as singing or dancing.

Events like the International Days of Peace see organizations promoting collective meditations worldwide, creating atmospheres of tranquility and connection with nature. These gatherings often include thematic workshops and lectures led by



experts and spiritual leaders, providing educational opportunities that link spiritual practices to urgent social issues.

Manifestations such as the “Philadelphia Interfaith Walk for Peace and Reconciliation” encourage interfaith dialogue through meditative practices, offering an opportunity for people of different faiths to unite on a common path toward peace. These events not only foster mutual understanding but also promote active engagement toward social justice and reconciliation.

In post-conflict contexts, such as Rwanda, collective meditation events have been crucial in promoting reconciliation among divided groups. During celebrations like “Pride Month,” events utilizing meditation are organized to build more cohesive and welcoming communities, celebrating cultural differences and promoting equality.

Among the most significant recent events, the World Culture Festival 2016 in New Delhi saw the participation of over 3.5 million people in meditations to promote world peace. Other initiatives, such as those for mental health in Denver or events led by Sadhguru in Milan, have gathered thousands of participants to reflect on collective well-being. Additional events are promoted by organizations like the “Dances of Universal Peace International,” the “Peace Corps,” and the “World Dance Alliance,” just to name a few.

## Maharishi Mahesh Yogi and World Peace

At this point, it may be interesting to reflect on some insights that Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, the founder of Transcendental Meditation (TM), offers regarding the issue of world peace (from *“The Science of Being and the Art of Living,”* Astrolabio-Ubaldini 1970, Chapter 12). According to him, the problem of peace can only be resolved by reaching a state of “divine consciousness” or “consciousness of God.” True peace, he continues, is not achieved merely through the absence of activity or mental silence, which produce only a superficial and temporary peace. In fact, “the peace obtained by emptying the mind of all thought and suspending it is due solely to the lack of pressure from thought.” Maharishi criticizes practices aimed at “silencing the mind” because, in his view, they render the mind passive and “as if turned off.” The true solution lies in “leading the conscious mind to the subtle states of thought and finally transcending the subtlest state to arrive at the actual state of Being.” The key to achieving this state is the “consciousness of bliss.” Bliss, indeed,

forms the foundation of self-assurance and fulfillment, essential elements for attaining lasting peace.

Maharishi emphasizes the interconnectedness between the individual and the cosmos, asserting that "every individual influences the entire cosmos with every thought, word, and action." Consequently, those who experience bliss radiate peace, while those engulfed in unrest and unhappiness generate negativity that contributes to "collective calamities."

Supporting this thesis, the text cites ancient Indian physicians Charaka and Sushruta, who believed that human behavior influences the balance of nature. When people act unjustly, the atmosphere becomes charged with negative vibrations, causing disasters and suffering.

Therefore, resolving international conflicts without addressing the root problem—the lack of inner peace in individuals—is a venture destined to fail. The efforts of the United Nations, while commendable, "barely touch upon the problem of world peace" because they focus on external and superficial solutions, such as fostering cultural relations between nations.

Maharishi concludes with an appeal to world leaders to promote meditation as a means of attaining inner bliss and building lasting peace. Only then can a better world be created for future generations, a world permeated by "love, compassion, kindness, gratitude, and mutual respect."

## Chapter 2

## Argentine Tango: A Therapeutic Meditative Dance

Argentine tango emerges as a unique practice of meditative dance, capable of connecting body, mind, and soul in a profound experience of awareness. Its essence lies in the intimate connection between partners, where the embrace transcends mere gesture, becoming an authentic emotional dialogue. In this context, each movement requires mutual attention and sensitivity, inviting dancers to be fully present and to listen to each other's emotional nuances. Breathing plays a crucial role in this process, serving as an anchor that facilitates the connection between body and mind. A mindful and synchronized breath allows for resonance with the partner, deepening the shared experience. This focus on the present moment enables total immersion in the dance, creating an atmosphere where the outside world fades away, leaving space only for connection and expression. In this way, tango is not just a dance but a form of meditation in motion, where each step is an opportunity to explore and cultivate awareness.

The music of tango, imbued with passion and melancholy, plays a pivotal role in facilitating this experience. During a *tanda*, dancers learn to read the rhythm not only through their bodies but also through emotional intuition, transforming each dance into a shared personal journey. Improvisation is fundamental: dancers allow themselves to be guided by the music and the emotions of the moment, enabling the dance to become an act of inner exploration. In this sense, Argentine tango and meditative dance share the intent to deeply engage body, mind, and soul, fostering an authentic expression of self.

This meditative experience finds concrete expression in *Tango Therapy*, a holistic approach that integrates elements of tango dance to enhance physical and psychological well-being. *Tango Therapy* offers a safe space where participants can explore and express often-repressed emotions, contributing to the strengthening of interpersonal relationships and personal growth. Due to its inclusive nature, it not only promotes body awareness but also creates a sense of community, encouraging interaction and mutual support among participants.

In recent years, tango has gained increasing attention in the field of medical research. Numerous studies (see bibliography) have demonstrated how it can significantly contribute to cardiovascular health, improving circulation and reducing blood pressure due to its nature as a moderate physical activity. Furthermore, tango helps to develop mobility, flexibility, and coordination, proving particularly

beneficial for elderly individuals, as it can reduce the risk of falls. It has also been observed that tango can support patients with neurodegenerative diseases.

The benefits of tango extend to the psychological sphere as well: dancing tango can decrease symptoms of anxiety and depression, thanks to the social aspect and interpersonal connection it promotes. The practice of tango also stimulates cognitive functions, helping older adults maintain active memory and concentration.

## A Journey of Awareness and Connection through Tango

While traditional tango in the milongas is characterized by a well-defined social code and relational dynamics, meditative tango focuses on intention and presence. The fundamental difference lies in the approach to experiencing the dance. The *tandas*, while maintaining their musical and temporal structure, are enriched by an inner preparation that allows dancers to enter a meditative state, creating an environment of sharing and personal growth.

In meditative tango, the gathering before the evening or between the *tandas* becomes a crucial moment. This can occur through various meditation techniques that participants can adopt and adapt, from practices like transcendental meditation, zen, and tantra yoga to forms of ecstatic dance or dynamic meditations. What matters is that everyone can find a method that resonates with their experience, creating a space for introspection that fosters connection with others and oneself.

A fundamental aspect of this approach is the intention with which one dances. It is not just about executing steps and movements, but about "dressing" the dance with a meditative practice. This implies a particular attention to the presence and energy that each dancer brings into the room, transforming every movement into an act of awareness. An important step in this process is the introduction of walking meditation, a practice that is not only accessible to beginners but also integrates perfectly with tango, establishing a deep connection between movement and awareness.

These concepts are well expressed, for example, by Chan Park in his book *Tango Zen: Walking the Path of the Heart*, where the author borrows ideas from Zen and relates their significance to tango, such as the correct mental attitude, "dancing here and now," "letting go," the release of the ego, exploring the nature of the

Buddha, the "2 bodies 4 legs and 1 heart," music, practice, trust, and the absence of sensual consciousness, experience, and entanglement.

In the context of the *Milonghe di Luce*, the meditative dimension becomes a binding element among participants, who can also choose to dance alone or in small groups, further enriching the experience. Every choice, every movement, thus becomes an opportunity for personal and collective exploration, allowing one to embrace dance not only as artistic expression but also as a practice of spiritual growth.

Ultimately, meditative tango offers a new lens through which to experience dance, transforming the act of dancing into an inner journey where intention, awareness, and respect for the present moment intertwine deeply, creating an atmosphere of harmony and unity among dancers.

## Two Bodies, One Heart: The Collective Power of Meditative Tango

In tango, meditation is enriched through the dynamic between the leader and the follower, creating an experience of connection and synergy that transcends individual practice. In the tango embrace, four legs become two, hearts unite in a single pulse, and minds align in a shared dimension. Unlike traditional group meditation, where attention is often divided among individual participants, in tango both partners immerse themselves in a continuous flow of non-verbal communication, establishing a deep bond that transcends words and facilitates a unique collective harmony. Each movement of the leader is interpreted and responded to by the follower, giving rise to a dance that is simultaneously individual and collective, where the entity meditating "doubles," amplifying the transformative power of this meditative art.

This dynamic interaction not only enhances each dancer's awareness but also generates a shared energy that is highly "contagious." Meditation in tango thus becomes a powerful experience, thanks to the emotional and physical connection between partners, elevating the sense of unity. In group contexts, the effectiveness of tango as a meditative technique becomes even more apparent. While in traditional meditation practices participants may remain isolated in their experiences, in tango the presence of the other creates emotional support and vulnerability that encourages openness and cohesion. Each dancing couple contributes to an atmosphere of shared energy, further amplifying the beneficial and transformative effects of collective meditation.

This synergy between leader and follower, combined with the energy of a group of dancers, makes tango particularly suitable for promoting collective meditation. The vibration created by multiple couples in motion not only fosters unity and harmony but can also generate significant transformative impact, both personally and socially. In tango, therefore, the entity that meditates is plural; the "two becoming one" allows for a fusion of energies that amplifies the power of each individual dancer. Dance thus becomes a powerful tool for collective transformation, celebrating not only the beauty of the art but also the profound human connection. The strength of this reciprocal connection offers all dancers the opportunity to explore their inner selves in meaningful ways, making tango a unique form of shared meditation and a path of personal and communal growth.

## Dancing the Good: Meditation and Intentions through Tango

In this section, we will explore how tango can serve as a powerful tool to convey global intentions such as peace, social justice, collective healing, human rights, poverty alleviation, diversity, violence reduction, economic equity, environmental sustainability, and more. The dance, with its inherently connective nature, has the ability to amplify messages and values that transcend the individual, becoming a true vehicle for social and spiritual change.

With its intense emotional charge and deep connection between dancers, tango emerges as an extraordinary means to express shared intentions. This phenomenon, as noted, does not only manifest on an individual level but gains strength in a collective context, where the synergy among participants becomes a catalyst for transformation. Here, the individual intentions of each dancer intertwine with those of their partner and the group, creating a common energetic fabric that enriches the experience.

Intentionality plays a crucial role in “tanghèra” meditation. Each dancer brings their desires and dreams; when joining a group with a common goal—whether seeking peace, celebrating life, or pursuing collective healing—these intentions merge, generating a powerful collective energy. Dance thus becomes a physical manifestation of these intents, translating emotions that are often difficult to express in words.

The harmonies and rhythms of tango music not only accompany the movements but guide them, amplifying emotions and facilitating the expression of shared

intentions. When a group of dancers gathers to dance, a sacred space is created, a protected place where vulnerability and authenticity can be expressed. This environment is characterized by acceptance and respect, where every participant is encouraged to be authentic and open. Vulnerability becomes a valuable resource, allowing individuals to explore often unexpressed emotions and genuinely connect with others. In this dimension, each participant is encouraged to let go, allowing their energy to blend with that of the group, transforming dance into an act of trust and connection.

The synergy that emerges during the dance becomes palpable. Each movement transforms into a dialogue, a non-verbal communication between the two dancers, who respond to each other, amplifying the shared intention. This energetic flow enriches the individual experience, creating a deep bond between partners. When switching partners, the moment of exchange becomes an opportunity to integrate different energies and intentions, enabling participants to perceive how their personal aspirations intertwine with those of others.

During a meditative tango event, intentions can manifest in various ways, expressed through movements that reflect, in always subjective ways, the central theme of the evening. This variety of physical expressions enriches the emotional fabric of the event, transforming each dance into an opportunity to convey messages of hope and change.

## Scientific Evidence and Tango: A New Frontier in Collective Consciousness Research

Since there are currently no studies supporting the hypothesis of tango as a meditative technique for guiding collective meditation events, we will try to highlight the similarities with Transcendental Meditation (TM), frequently referenced in scientific publications, including the study we are about to describe, to provide a more rigorous approach to these themes. The event in question brought together three large groups of practitioners: in Fairfield, Iowa (USA), from December 27, 1983, to January 6, 1984; in The Hague, Netherlands, from December 28, 1984, to January 6, 1985; and in Washington, D.C. (USA), from July 9 to July 17, 1985, to meditate on international conflicts and terrorism.

This event is discussed in "*Preventing Terrorism and International Conflict: Effects of Large Assemblies of Participants in the Transcendental Meditation and TM-Sidhi Programs*" by David W. Orme-Johnson, Michael C. Dillbeck, and Charles N.



Alexander (Routledge, 2004). We will first summarize the findings of the study and then consider whether similar results could have been achieved through the approach of meditative tango rather than TM.

To analyze the impact on international conflict, the researchers examined articles from the New York Times and the London Times, using a scale to measure the severity of conflicts based on negative events such as verbal hostilities, armed clashes, and wars. The results showed a significant reduction in international conflict during the assemblies: in Iowa, a reduction of 36.4% was recorded; in the Netherlands, 24.05%; and in Washington, 34.9%. To study the effect on international terrorism, the researchers used a database from the Rand Corporation, analyzing the total number of casualties (deaths and injuries) as a measure of terrorism. It was found that there was a 72% decrease in acts of international terrorism starting five days after the assemblies began.

The cited work focuses on the concept of collective consciousness (which we mentioned in the previous chapter) and how TM and TM-Sidhi programs may influence it to promote world peace. Before delving into details and proposing an analogy with meditative tango, it is essential to define collective consciousness. Simply put, it represents the totality of individual consciousnesses within a society, creating an interconnected field that affects the well-being and quality of life of the entire population. The study suggests that TM and TM-Sidhi programs, through meditation, allow access to a deep level of pure consciousness, identified as the unified field of natural laws, a source of order and harmony in the universe. This unified field can be compared to the universal matrix of all natural laws, a concept found in theoretical physics and the theory of everything, which aims to unify the fundamental forces of nature. Collective consciousness, on the other hand, emerges from the interactions and quality of consciousness of individual members of a society, imaginably as an energetic field that permeates society and influences collective thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

According to the study, the practice of TM and TM-Sidhi allows access to this unified field, experiencing a state of pure and transcendent consciousness. When a significant number of individuals practice these techniques, a coherence effect is generated, positively influencing collective consciousness and promoting a climate of peace and harmony on a global scale. The influence of this cohesive group is proportional to the square of the number of participants, according to the principles of the theory. Therefore, the practice of TM and TM-Sidhi can act as a bridge between the unified field (the source) and collective consciousness (the social field),

promoting a wave of coherence that spreads from the individual dimension to the collective.

With this premise, we ask how tango or other forms of meditative dance might reflect these same foundational principles defined in the context of TM, thereby supporting the validity of the study and others like it. The answer is straightforward: those who dance tango know that it is possible to experience a deep state of consciousness, in which everyday tensions dissolve and an intimate connection with oneself, one's partner, and others is rediscovered. This state, deeper the more one is rooted in the fundamental concept of the Universe's unity, can be likened to the experience of entering the unified field, where the couple dances in harmony with the whole. Furthermore, the milonga can already represent a form of collective consciousness, where the group's energy contributes to creating a multiplicative effect: from the unity of the couple expands a sense of cohesion to the entire present community, extending like a domino effect across society. Thus, even when explained in simple terms, meditative tango could serve as a bridge between the unified field and collective consciousness, potentially validating the findings obtained from this and other studies in the context of "Milongas of Light."

## Chapter 3

## From Traditional Milongas to "Milongas of Light"

When a conducive environment for collective meditation is created, traditional milongas can transform into true "Milongas of Light." These special events offer a unique opportunity to integrate dance and meditation, where tango becomes a vehicle for deep connection.

Beyond the comprehensive approach we will describe in the next paragraph, there are two main pathways to participate in this experience: on one side, those who are already tango dancers can expand their practice by acquiring experience in meditative techniques; on the other, those who have already embarked on a meditative journey can seek to "dress" their practice with the expressiveness of tango.

For those who already dance tango, the meditative approach may involve a renewed attention throughout the dance. Each step and movement, already known, should transform into an experience of deep listening and genuine mutual connection. Learning to be "present," as meditation teaches, savoring each moment, and tuning in to others' emotions is essential to enrich not only one's own practice but also the entire collective experience. In this way, the milonga can truly become a place of harmony, where shared energy amplifies the intention to create a space of peace and serenity.

On the other hand, for those who have already pursued a meditative path, tango offers an engaging way to express and manifest their intentions. This community of meditators may discover in tango a form of physical expression that facilitates the transmission of emotions and values explored during meditation. Dressing meditation in tango means bringing the awareness and intentionality learned into the dance, transforming each tanda into a ritual of connection and collective healing.

In all cases, whether coming from a purely tango background, a meditative journey, or having studied both separately, it is crucial to be introduced to an interdisciplinary path that integrates the necessary elements to form a good meditative dancer. In my vision for the "Milongas of Light" project, access to these spaces should be "protected" and, thus, "demonstrated" by each participant. The event organizer should be, in my opinion, the responsible figure ensuring that access to these spaces is not granted to those who wish to participate simply because they "dance tango and have, in some way, some meditation experience." The aspect of

training, whether starting from scratch or simply integrating, is, in fact, the most delicate and important phase of the entire project.

## The "Milongas of Light" Project: A Possible Approach

I envision the foundational training for group meditation through tango as a comprehensive experiential journey that unites dance and awareness, aimed at forming collective meditators ready to contribute to global well-being.

From the very beginning, I believe it is essential to integrate body awareness practices, such as gentle yoga and mindful breathing exercises. These tools help participants attune to their physical sensations, creating a solid foundation for the meditative experience. This is complemented by the basics of meditation, utilizing techniques such as mindfulness and deep relaxation (or any other valid technique) to prepare each participant for a meaningful experience.

Once these foundations are established, the focus could shift to accessible forms of meditative dance, such as free dance and circular dance, or others mentioned in the first chapter. These practices encourage bodily expression and foster social interaction, creating an environment of sharing and emotional connection, free from the pressure of learning complex techniques.

A crucial first step should be, I believe, the "internal" group meditation, which allows participants to focus on the group itself while dancing, establishing a sense of cohesion and unity. This helps attune to shared emotions and creates an atmosphere of mutual support.

The integration with tango would happen gradually, with dedicated sessions for learning the basics of the dance, emphasizing non-verbal communication and partner connection. Each movement, starting from the "walk," can thus become a meditative act, where participants dance with intention, maintaining awareness of their breath and mutual connection. This approach would create an energetic dialogue, further intensifying the meditative experience. At this stage, a preparatory path of Tango Therapy could be particularly beneficial.

The culmination of the journey would occur with the "Milongas of Light," events where collective meditation is practiced through tango. During these events, each participant is encouraged to explore their inner self and contribute to social well-being, fostering an environment of support and openness towards their partner and the entire group.

Moments of silence, reflection, and gratitude between dances (which could serve as “curtains” separating the “tandas”) would allow for the integration of emotions and intentions that have emerged, transforming the event into an opportunity for personal and collective growth. It is essential to emphasize that the entire journey is not necessarily aimed at training specialized tango dancers, but rather at creating skilled meditators capable of forming meaningful and deep connections.

This example of a training path is flexible and adaptable, allowing various teachers to contribute their skills and approaches, further enriching the participants' experience and promoting a holistic vision of well-being and peace.

## Milongas of Light: Example Structure of an Event

Below is an outline of how an event could unfold, ideally encouraging participants to engage from start to finish, avoiding staggered arrivals.

**Pre-Event Meditation:** Before the evening begins, participants could dedicate time to formal meditation, sitting in a circle to focus on their breath, followed by walking meditation to connect with bodily sensations and reflect on qualities such as kindness, patience, and determination. This mental and emotional preparation would undoubtedly enrich the dance experience.

**Introduction:** At the end of this phase, a guide could introduce the purpose of the session, explaining the significance of meditation concerning the chosen theme. The intent of the meditation doesn't necessarily have to focus on a social issue; it could also address more specific situations where help is needed.

**Dance Practice:** During each tanda, the leader of the dance would strive to maintain empathetic contact with their partner, transforming every step into a meditative act. Depending on the chosen meditative technique, the focus could shift to the breath, heartbeats, or non-verbal communication, allowing dancers to flow together in an experience that transcends mere technique. Each movement should express collective intentions, creating an energetic dialogue that enriches the meditative practice. Dancers would concentrate on physical sensations, such as muscle movements and the contact of their feet with the floor. If difficult thoughts or emotions arise, they would simply observe them without judgment, embracing each moment with kindness, regardless of imperfections.

**Partner Changes and Reflection:** At the end of each tanda, during the cortina, dancers would switch partners. A guide could encourage participants to gather in circles after a predetermined musical cycle or at the end of the evening to share emotions and insights that emerged from the dance. These moments of dialogue not only facilitate the processing of experiences but also strengthen the emotional bonds between dancers. It's an opportunity to practice mindful breathing exercises or engage in a brief silent meditation, allowing participants to reflect on and integrate what they've experienced. After dancing, individuals should feel a natural urge to express gratitude for the opportunity to dance and to consider how meditation influenced their movements and emotions, as well as their contribution to the evening's benevolent intent.

**Inclusive Participation:** In the Milongas of Light, there should never be an issue with anyone being unable to participate in the meditation. If pairs cannot be formed due to numbers, individuals should always have the option to dance alone or even in groups of three, as technique should not be a decisive factor. It is understood that those with significant tango experience, finding similar qualities in their partner, can employ any movements they deem appropriate to express their emotions and intentions, knowing that the art emerging from this would stem from a "new" and heightened awareness, revealing its most authentic and profound beauty.

**Community and Connection:** The structure as conceived would not only provide space for personal reflection but also foster a sense of community and connection that characterizes the benevolent intentions of the Milongas of Light. The dance would become a truly shared journey, a fusion of movements and awareness culminating in a collective experience of growth and transformation.

## Interconnected Milongas of Light

With the advancement of technology, the concept of Milongas of Light can evolve to embrace an interconnected dimension that transcends physical barriers. Imagine meditative tango events that, through digital platforms, connect participants from various cities and countries, creating a global network of connection and meditation. This innovation would not only increase the number of participants but also enrich the collective experience, allowing individuals from diverse cultures and backgrounds to visually unite in a common intent.

Picture an evening where multiple Milongas of Light occur simultaneously in different locations, all linked through live video calls. In this scenario, various DJs share the same playlist, allowing dancers to virtually join from their respective dance venues. They can share the energy of the moment even while physically apart, listening to a single guide who introduces the intent of the session and leads the evening. The shared energy, even when mediated by technology, would create a truly global sense of connection that cannot be replicated in other forms of meditation.

While it's possible to share a common intent without a virtual connection, I believe that collective meditation through video calls creates a more intense and immediate experience. This approach not only makes the event more 'tangible' and 'felt,' but also channels the guided intentions through a single voice in real-time. When everyone listens to the same music at the same moment, a unique vibrational wave is generated, amplifying the group's energy and fostering an even deeper connection among participants. Moreover, these virtual links allow those who, due to health issues, distance, or loneliness, cannot physically attend a Milonga of Light to join without barriers. This way, individuals who are ill, disabled, or residing in isolated areas can connect and experience something extraordinary together.

At the end of each tanda, technology could facilitate moments of sharing and dialogue that transcend local boundaries, allowing participants to express their emotions and insights in a broader and more diverse context.

In essence, these meditative tango events (which could take place in a variety of settings, from “Milongas of Light” to “Festivals of Light” to “Marathons of Light”) not only represent a new frontier for group meditation but also celebrate the power of dance as a tool for healing and human connection, breaking down any organizational boundaries or limitations.

## Milongas of Light: A New Ethical Paradigm in Tango

Milongas of Light emerge as distinctive spaces within the tango scene, characterized by a relational and behavioral approach that diverges from traditional milongas. While the latter develop an unofficial behavioral code—often only partially respected—Milongas of Light integrate dance and meditation, promoting values of respect and authentic connection.



In these events, the attitude towards others is not dictated by norms to follow, but rather by a collective awareness that fosters inclusion. There are no longer situations where dancers select only the more skilled or attractive partners; instead, invitations to dance become gestures of openness and availability, encouraging active participation from everyone without exclusion.

The vision of Milongas of Light is one of shared celebration of movement and emotion, rather than competition. An atmosphere of mutual support is created, allowing each dancer to explore their expressiveness within a context of acceptance and understanding. This approach transcends the limitations of traditional milongas, offering a deeper and more meaningful experience.

To maintain their essence as spaces of respect and authentic connection, Milongas of Light require a kind of “charter” that ensures a safe and welcoming environment. Access to these events should be contingent upon a process of “acceptance,” whereby the hosting organization can validate the participants’ training, whether partial or complete.

This structure not only ensures that participants share ethical values and principles but also fosters a sense of community among those committed to an experience of personal and collective growth. Thus, Milongas of Light represent a powerful tool for human connection and personal transformation, making the tango experience a shared journey toward well-being and inner growth.

## Conclusions

We are living in a time of profound spiritual transformation, marked by a growing collective awareness. More and more people are coming together to meditate and reflect on the Common Good, seeking ways to contribute to a better world. In this context, the "Milongas of Light" could represent events of significant potential.

Even though we face challenging times, many evolved and spiritual souls are ready to lead this change. It is through this momentum, this connection among conscious individuals, that this project could take shape.

Thus, in the delicate intertwining of steps and notes, tango could become a bridge of light, where each dance contributes to weaving together the dream of a renewed humanity, in which Love and Beauty open the doors to a new era of understanding and harmony.

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