
CHA-CHA – DE LA SALA DE DANS LA O CREATIVĂ ACTIVITATE FIZICĂ ADAPTATĂ

CHA CHA – FROM BALLROOM DANCING TO A CREATIVELY ADAPTED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

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Key words: visual impairment, adapted physical activity, dance

Cuvinte cheie: deficiență de vedere, activitate fizică adaptată, dans

Abstract: People with visual impairment should not be deprived of any physical activities. They need it to gain in other senses so they can maintain a state of well-functioning in society or at home. It is stated that the visually impaired develop a greater dexterity by practicing physical activities. They also gain a mental comfort and a level of independence, and blindisms are diminished or they can even disappear.

Another positive aspect of physical activities for the visually impaired is that they get the opportunity to socialize and meet new people. By practicing physical activities with a group of people they can also develop a sense of altruism as they need to work side-by-side with others.

In this article, a different kind of adapted physical activity for people with visual impairment is dancing, to be more precise, Cha Cha. The goal of this activity is for the subjects to socialize, communicate, to develop a better sense of coordination and not in the least to develop or improve their sense of rhythm.

Rezumat: Persoanele cu deficiențe de vedere nu ar trebui să fie private de activitățile fizice. Mișcarea este cu atât mai importantă acestor persoane cu cât ei trebuie să câștige în celelalte simțuri pentru a putea menține sau îmbunătăți o stare de funcționare relativă în societate sau acasă. În același timp câștigă un confort psihic și un nivel de independență și „blindismele” sunt diminuate sau pot chiar să dispară.

Un alt aspect pozitiv al practicării exercițiilor fizice pentru cei cu deficiențe de vedere este posibilitatea acestor persoane de a socializa și cunoaște alți oameni. Totodată prin activități fizice în echipe se dezvoltă și un sentiment altruist născut din dorința și nevoia de a lucra cot la cot cu alții.

În acest articol un alt tip de activități fizice adaptate pentru persoane fizice adaptate este dansul, și anume Cha Cha. Scopul acestei activități este ca persoanele cu deficiențe de vedere să socializeze, să comunice, să își dezvolte și îmbunătățească coordonarea și nu în ultimul rând să își dezvolte simțul ritmului.

Considerations

Cha Cha is flirtatious and playful in character; some even call it 'Cheeky'. The chasse on 4&1 is used to emphasize the step on beat 1, which may be held a moment longer than the other steps to match the emphasis of the '1' beat in the music [4].

As in most Latin dances the steps are taken on the beats, with a strong hip movement as the knee straightens on the half beats in between (on the 1/2-beat). The weight is kept forward in the balls of the feet. Cha Cha exhibits minimal torso movement.

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This dance evolved from Mambo in about 1950-1954, primarily in New York City. Cuban musicians and orchestras played Mambo after Mambo and although some authentic Cubans danced a 'triple-step' in their mambo, it was far too fast a dance (think 50 bar per minute Cha Cha) for the 'Ballroom crowd' and didn't have the "Latin feel" they expected from Cuban Music.

When the Cuban orchestra, "America" (among others) started playing a mambo with a slower beat in New York City, Cha Cha as we know it took off. It was slower, allowing the dancers to use a slight hip movement that was difficult in Mambo (this eventually became our 'Latin Motion', after several adaptations).

At first, this slower Mambo where the dancers took the extra time to dance a 'Triple-Step' on the 4,1 beat was called the 'Triple Mambo', but eventually this dance earned its own name and was called Cha Cha. One 'Cha' for each shake in the syncopated '4, & ,1' of the bean-filled gourds Cuban musicians used as metronomes in their bands.

As the Cha Cha music evolved, a more musically accurate description name of 'Cha Cha' was adopted to indicate that one 'Cha' is a 1/2-beat of music. Since the timing of the '4&1' is danced to a beat timing of 1/2,1/2,1 the name Cha Cha is more accurate and descriptive, but 'Cha Cha' sticks with dancers for historical reasons.

The goal

It was only normal that physical education, sports and physical activities in general would find their way as being applicable for realizing these greater tasks. There are no crippled, only other people just like us which think that they are like that thanks to our educational mistakes[2].

Adapted physical activities are based on exercises or physical activities modified to the individual's resources and possibilities.

For achieving the final and most important goal, improving the quality of life, through this kind of physical activity it's best to have in mind that: the subjects are healthy and that they can actually perform this activity with no exposure to any risks; the environment in which the activity is held is a friendly and properly equipped for any such activities; the instructor and subjects among themselves try to stimulate and build their self-confidence; the program and the group is one in which positive emotions are rising and a sense of pleasure for the program is evolving.

Through these activities people are finding a place where: they can be understood and respected; they can feel safe while they are physical, sensitive and emotional stimulated; they can communicate freely; they can improve and gain in other senses and intellect as well; they can improve their physical qualities but best of all they can improve coordination a great deal; the purpose and the greater good of these activities is for the subjects to just socialize and forget about depending for aid on others, and have a good time while doing them.

After all, the purpose of applying in adapted physical activities regards, either engaging in as many and more diverse social events, either to come in aid or assistance to social groups or associations for integrating those with social adjustment difficulties.

Methods

Poise

Stand with feet together in a normal, relaxed manner, lift rib-cage, straighten spine but do not raise shoulders, take a step to side on either foot and straighten supporting leg. Transfer full weight to this foot allowing the pelvis to move sideways and back so that the weight is felt to be near the heel of the standing foot. The knee of the supporting leg must not be locked back. The degree that the pelvis is moved back must only be such that the position of the upper part of the body is not affected.

Amounts of turn

In Cha Cha feet are never parallel except when they are closed. This “foot-turn” is always outwards and can be associated with the foot carrying weight or part weight, the foot without weight or both feet. These foot positions can be due to “inherent-turn” or foot placement.

Rhythm: 4/4 time (Emphasis on 1. beat as a percussive accent)

Tempo: 30-32 Bars per minute (Competition), 28-34 Bars per minute (Social)

Phrasing: 4 Bar Phrasing most common 8 Bar Phrasing also possible

Abbreviations:

Timing and beat value

1 ; 2 ; 3 - 1 beat of music each.

4 ; & - 1/2 beat of music each

Foot Position

RF= Right Foot

LF= Left Foot

T=Toe

Fwd= forward

Bwd= backward

Foot-Work

T=Toe

LF= Left Foot

T=Toe

B=Ball of foot

F= foot (flat foot)

LF= Left Foot

RF= Right Foot

Action used

F=foot

Wt=weight

Body Position

R=Right

L=Left

Turn

R=Right

L=Left

Turn

R=Right

L=Left

1/8= prepares body for quarter turn by slightly turning

¼ =quarter turn

The following tables are taken from [3,4] and adapted to suit the goal of this program.

Chasse to left (LRL)

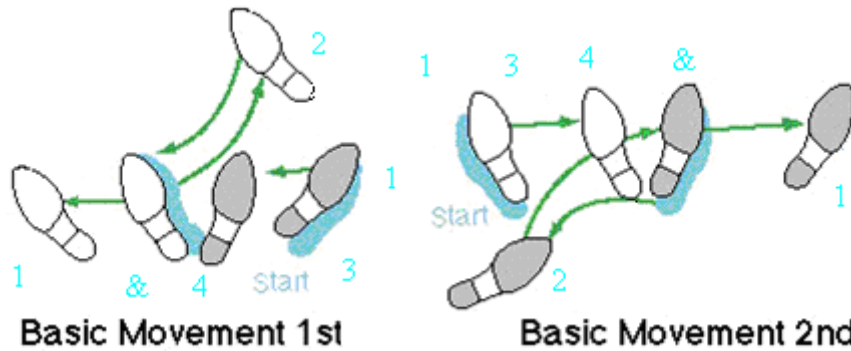
Step no.	Timing	Beat value	Foot position	Foot work	Action used	Body turn
1	4	½	LF to side	B flat	L knee compressed. Hips commencing to move to L	Depends upon fig. during which chasse is danced
2	&	½	RF half closed to LF	B flat	Both knees compressed. Hips central	
3	1	1	LF to side	B flat	Both knees straight. Hips to L	

Chasse to right (RLR)

Step no.	Timing	Beat value	Foot position	Foot work	Action used	Body turn
1	4	½	RF to side	B flat	R knee compressed. Hips commencing to move to R	Depends upon fig. during which chasse is danced
2	&	½	LF half closed to RF	B flat	Both knees compressed. Hips central	
3	1	1	RF to side	B flat	Both knees straight. Hips to R	

Basic movement

Step no.	Timing	Beat value	Foot position	Foot work	Action used	Body turn
1	4	½	Chasse to right (RLR)			-
2	&	½				-
3	1	1				-
4	2	1	LF Forward	B flat	LF close to RF and fwd step and wt change	-
5	3	1	LF in place	B flat	Wt transfer from LF to RF	-
6	4	½	Chasse to left (LRL)			-
7	&	½				-
8	1	1				-
9	2	1	RF backward	B flat	RF close to LF and bwd step and wt change	-
10	3	1	RF in place	B flat	Wt transfer from RF to LF	-
11	4	½	RF to side	B flat	RF close to LF and side step to R	-



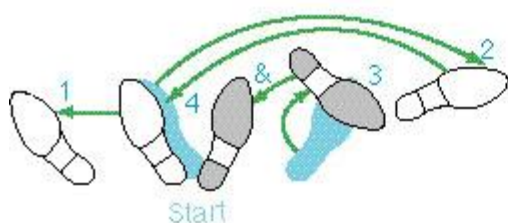
Time step

Step no.	Timing	Beat value	Foot position	Foot work	Action used	Body turn
1	1	1	RF to side	B flat	Side step	-
2	2	1	LF closed to RF	B flat	F close with wt change	-
3	3	1	RF in place	B flat	Wt transfer in place	-
4	4	½	Chasse to left (LRL)			-
5	&	½				-
6	1	1				-
7	2	1	RF closed to LF	B flat	F close with wt	-

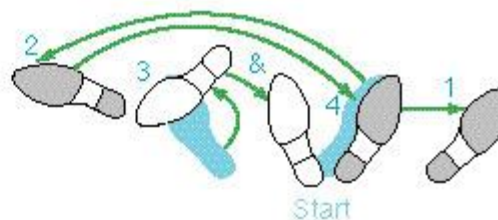
					change	
8	3	1	LF in place	B flat	Wt transfer in place	-
9	4	½	Chasse to right (RLR)			-
10	&	½				-
11	1	1				-

New York

Step no.	Timing	Beat value	Foot position	Foot work	Action used	Body turn
1	1	1	RF to side	B flat	Side step	1/8 to R
2	2	1	LF fwd in Open position, T turned out	B flat	F close with wt change	¼ to R
3	3	1	RF in place	B flat	Wt transfer in place	-
4	4	½	Chasse to left (LRL)			¼ to L
5	&	½				-
6	1	1				1/8 to L
7	2	1	RF fwd in Open position, T turned out	B flat	F close with wt change	¼ to L
8	3	1	LF in place	B flat	Wt transfer in place	-
9	4	½	Chasse to right (RLR)			¼ to R
10	&	½				-
11	1	1				1/8 to R



New york 1st



New york 2nd

Suggested Amalgamation:

Chasse (LRL) → Chasse(RLR) → New York → Basic movement → Time step → Restart

Learning principles are still followed so exercises being taught should start with basic elementary music auditions with hand clapping, and after that feet stomping to better understand the rhythm. Some sideways, forward, and backward steps are in order then, so the poise can be exercised in movement. After mastering those, partners should be introduced so they can get used to the exercises in pairs. Then, learning the basic figures (chasses, basic movement, time step, new york) can start.

Of course the figures can be changed by the ones that are dancing them. After mastering them, they can be used however it is pleased or in a manner that makes them feel more comfortable while dancing.

Methodological considerations

Workspace should and must be cleared of any obstacles which could cause accidents for the subjects. They should be instructed in a verbal manner first about this dance, about its character, about the music, about its rhythm

Subjects need to know exactly where they are in space, how many steps they have to the nearest wall and who is beside them

For blind subjects it would be relatively easier and safer to learn with a partner which still has a visual residue or which has good vision

Corrections are extremely important once the program has started but should be only one at a time and should be the one that matters first; corrections to the body poise and music is last. The body poise has priority in this case, because our concern is for the subject to be safe first and only after they had reached.

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