

March 2008

Vol 1, Issue 2

Sharing the Joy: The Nia St. Louis Newsletter

In This Issue

Finding a Pack by Tracy Stamper
Richness of Community by Karol McNutt
Stepping Into Community by Sue Wilhelm

Dear Friend,

Allow us to toot our own horn and yours as well, as we focus on community in this Spring issue of Nia St. Louis's e-newsletter. We all (teachers and students) have co-created a Nia community to be proud of and we should celebrate that accomplishment!

A sense of community, though perhaps not unique to Nia, is certainly specific to Nia. Many newcomers report being very pleasantly surprised by the camaraderie they find in class; they immediately notice a special bond among the other participants.

What is it about Nia that encourages a sense of community? When we show up for Nia our whole self shows up--Body, Mind, Emotions and Spirit. Calling together all aspects of ourselves invites connection; connection with self and connection with others. We're more than just bodies taking a fitness class; we're whole beings expressing ourselves in unique ways. We get to play and see others do the same.

That usually doesn't happen in other classes! We dance together in the space, moving around and through other bodies. Sharing the Joy of Movement can bring us into a state of bliss often experienced at concerts where the audience shifts from moving to the music to being moved by the music as one. The sense of community becomes palpable. It's not unusual for those who meet in Nia class to get together for field trips, outings for coffee and brunch, book clubs, and on and on! Nia has much more to offer than just a physically fit body.

Care to join us as we celebrate our Nia community? You are cordially invited!

Invitations into Community...

Come Jam with us! The Spring Jam will be Friday, March 14th from 6:30 to 8:00 at the Center of Clayton. Come play with us as area instructors co-teach a fun and frolicking class. Details are posted on our website. <http://www.niastlouis.com>

Consider getting your White Belt! White Belt is the first level of professional and personal training in The Nia Technique, designed both for those who wish to teach and those who want to deepen their personal practice. It is an amazing week of self-discovery and this summer the fabulous Winalee Zeeb will be in St. Louis for a White Belt Intensive. Now is the perfect time to register--you will have plenty of time to explore the White Belt pre-training materials. (Later registrations are also welcome). Want to know more? Read about it [here](#).

Master Classes with Winalee Zeeb

Winalee will be offering Master Classes when she is in town in July and they are open to the public. We'll provide further detail in our next newsletter as well as post the schedule on the website.

Connect with Nia Headquarters

Visit <http://www.nianow.com> to connect with the larger Nia community. Take a tour of the site. You can also subscribe to HQ's Newsletter, look into monthly mentoring telecourses (free) or order your own copy of Unplugged so that you can dance with the Nia founders in your own living room!

Join us for classes

As always, visit us at <http://www.niastlouis.com> for up to date information on area classes. Hope to see you soon!



Finding a Pack by Tracy Stamper

Nia community...one of my favorite topics!

When I first returned from Portland as a brand-new White Belt 12 years ago, I was all sorts of excited about dancing and playing with Nia here at home. I talked up Nia enthusiastically to everybody who would listen...only to find that not one person I spoke to had ever heard of it! As the only White Belt in the state of Missouri, I felt like a lone wolf, isolated. Teaching back then seemed a daunting endeavor.

Six years later in 2001, I was just itching to share Nia with others, and called Nia Headquarters for support. Serendipity! I learned that two Instructors (Robin and K.C.) had begun teaching local classes a couple of months prior!

Fast-forward to today's INCREDIBLE local teaching community, nearly 20 strong. We learn together, collaborate, support one another, have developed deep friendships, and have gathered an amazing student community. Now when I mention Nia, oftentimes folks excitedly tell me about a class they just took with one of my colleagues. I am so deeply grateful to have found my pack, and feel blessed to be in community with you all.



Richness of Community by Karol McNutt

Having women friends has never been optional for me. I do love men, but having women in my life brings such richness! When I moved to St. Louis from out of state, I had to build a new community of friends. To my dismay, over a period of just a few years all of my closest female friends moved out of town. Such loss! I kept up with them through phone calls, etc., but it's not the same as being together and spending time together.

I developed a few new friends over time, but when I became involved in Nia, my world of friends opened up dramatically! I couldn't believe it! I worked out at the YMCA, for more than 6 years and never met a single person who I could call a friend. After class everyone would quickly scatter to the rest of their lives. In Nia, I found community in such a wide variety of women (and men too) in terms of ages, backgrounds, professions and interests. We go for coffee after class sometimes, get together for celebrations and celebrate and mourn one another's joys and sorrows. Nia has provided incredible richness to me in more ways than I can count, but the Nia community of students and teachers is one of the richest.



Stepping Into Community by Sue Wilhelm

'I'm just trying to grow up!' I said to Winalee Zeeb, Nia black belt and trainer extraordinaire. With a grin she held up her hand for me to give her a high five. I felt lighter, just from that small gesture of support.

Until I found Nia, I never actually knew what community meant. Living in an isolated house, with an isolationist family- “one of many” was not a feeling I experienced often. “Alone” or “outsider” was more common. I had dreams of finding such a thing as a community and becoming part of it, belonging. To me, it was miraculous, finding out what a true community is.

Webster's Collegiate Dictionary says community is 'a unified body of individuals' with 'common interests,' also 'social activity,' and 'fellowship.' It is more than a group of people. It is people who have a purpose in being together. In Nia, we are mindful not only of our physical bodies, but of the body of individuals that we become as Nia St. Louis. This mindfulness is powerful and transformative. It has allowed us to grow easily in number, and gracefully in maturity – not just in age, but in action. From the beginning of my Nia intensive, I have felt the sure hand of the entire Nia organization behind me, supporting me just where I was, and always encouraging me to take the next small step toward my goals, toward integrity, toward self-mastery. Some steps were harder than others, but I always had a new Nia friend nearby with something encouraging and kind to say. I never knew so many nice things about myself, or so many strong and beautiful women. We are a true community – unified, with common interests, social activity, and fellowship. I am so glad to know, now from experience, what community means. It has been essential to my development as a individual who is just trying to grow up.

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Cheers,  
The Nia St. Louis Community