Parkinson’s disease (PD) is a neurodegenerative movement disorder that impairs mobility, cognition and quality of life. Recent research has demonstrated the beneficial effects of an adapted form of Argentine tango (adapted tango) for people with Parkinson’s disease, including improved physical functioning, health-related quality of life, strength, balance, and walking ability. These benefits have also been demonstrated in older adults and people with other movement disorders. This workshop is designed to prepare personal trainers and dance/fitness instructors to provide safe and high quality partnered dance-based programming for older adults and people with mild-moderate PD. The workshop will be taught by a top Parkinson’s disease rehabilitation researcher, Dr. Madeleine Hackney, who is also a certified personal trainer and former professional dancer. Participants will learn the 6 sections of the Adapted tango class and a syllabus for 10 lessons. Didactic instruction will be paired with partnered dance-based exercise experiences to ensure that participants are well prepared to work with populations with special needs.

Course Objectives:

1. Explain the motor and sensory impairments experienced by adults with movement disorders.
2. Experientially learn fall detection and prevention techniques.
3. Understand the theory behind the distinct sections of the Adapted tango class (greeting & warm-up, rhythmic entrainment, partnering enhancement, new steps of the day, amalgamating patterns & closing/cool-down).
4. Learn and practice the fundamental step elements comprising the first 10 lessons (Part I) of the 24 lesson Adapted Tango syllabus. (Part II will cover lessons 11-24 and should be taken after the Fundamentals workshop).
5. Gain the skills and knowledge needed to conduct fun, engaging, and safe Adapted tango classes for older individuals with movement disorders.

Saturday Schedule

7:30-8:00  Registration
8:00-9:00  Lecture: Impairments
9:00-10:00 Practicum – Balance and Falls
10:00-10:15 Break
10:15-12:00 Lecture: Basics of Partnering and Rhythm
12:00-1:00 Lunch (on your own)
1:00-3:00  Practicum: Syllabus breakdown A
3:00-3:15  Break
3:15-4:45  Practicum: Demo of adapted tango class
4:45-5:00  Wrap-up

Sunday Schedule

8:00-10:00 Practicum: Syllabus breakdown B
10:00-10:15 Break
10:15-11:45 Practicum: Trainee led adapted tango class*
11:45-1:00 Post-course exam, wrap-up, course evaluation
*Each trainee will lead a step
Course Instructor

Madeleine E. Hackney, Ph.D., Certified ACE personal trainer; Assistant Professor, Emory University School of Medicine; Research Health Scientist, Atlanta VA Rehabilitation R&D Center of Excellence

Dr. Madeleine E. Hackney, Ph.D holds a BFA in Dance from New York University, Tisch School of the Arts, and a Ph.D. in Movement Science from Washington University in St. Louis. Dr. Hackney had a successful professional dance career and taught fitness, Pilates, yoga and dance classes before graduate school. Her doctoral work characterized the effects of gender, attention, disease and unfamiliar skills on locomotion by examining backward and dual task gait to gain insight into which tasks need the most rehabilitative emphasis. She also began inquiry into the analysis of challenging exercise programs: traditional exercise, Tai Chi and partnered dance & tango classes, designed to improve physical function and quality of life in people with Parkinson's disease (PD), older adults and those with serious mental illness. Currently, Dr. Hackney aims to determine the characteristics of physical rehabilitative strategies, in terms of movement pattern and timing, dosage, duration, and intensity to enhance balance, mobility and quality of life and reducing fall risk for older adults with low vision as well as those with PD. Her research has received media coverage in the New York Times, Scientific American, the Atlanta Journal Constitution, National Public Radio and in Musicophilia, by Oliver Sachs. Dr. Hackney has presented her work about exercise for those with PD at international meetings, such as the Movement Disorders Society, the International Society for Posture and Gait Research, the Society for Neuroscience, the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine- American Society of Neurerehabilitation Joint Educational Conference and the Gerontological Society of America.

About Us

MDT Education Solutions, LLC is an Atlanta-based company formed in 2014 to provide education opportunities that will expand access to quality exercise options for people with Parkinson's disease (PD). The founders are passionate about providing hope and inspiration to people living with PD by equipping them to take control of the disease progression. They are committed to helping as many people as possible access exercise as an important tool for managing disease progression.

“You made the training fun, interactive and personal. You shared your experiences in a way I could understand. You each have a supportive nature and made me feel I could approach you and ask questions.”

- Course participant