

Battlefield to Ballroom entered my life at a time of transition and turmoil in my Hero's journey; as a female, I felt embraced by it in this season of life, a moment of transition and unrest on my journey as a female veteran facing significant life challenges. Having served my family, my community, and country, facing service-related disabilities, I find solace in dance, which has not only enhanced my life but also given it meaning.

I genuinely believe in the mission of Battlefield to Ballroom. Dance has been a part of my life for as long as I can remember, from my childhood raised at a local dance studio to my time at a performing arts high school. Through dance, I've experienced its incredible power to uplift: Heal the mind, body, and soul—an awakening of the consciousness in the body electric.

Participating in Battlefield to Ballroom reminded me of how essential dance is to discovering and pursuing our life's purpose-values, particularly through events like the Battle of the Branches, sponsored by Author Murray of Dance Studio in 2017. Throughout my journey, I've encountered my own struggles with injury, trauma, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder(PTSD), or, as framed by Richard Tedeschi, PhD, and Lawrence Calhoun, PhD, Post-Traumatic Growth(PTG). Dance has been a vital part of my journey's recovery and of my embrace of the healing process.

The commitment that Battlefield to Ballroom has to integrating dance research into its framework reflects a deep dedication to the healing process of using dance as therapy for the veterans' community.

Battlefield to Ballroom recognizes the profound benefits that dance offers veterans with service-related disabilities through. Research from the National Institutes of Health highlights that dance can significantly boost mood, alleviate stress, enhance emotional regulation, and foster meaningful connections with others. It serves as a beautiful pathway to self-expression, allowing the release trauma to strengthen the bond between our bodies and minds.

In the military community, we often use ceremony to honor and preserve our legacy in unity. Dance, in its many forms, is a continuity of cultural identification with personal and community values that enriches our lives and helps us celebrate the stories that shape us.

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