

## Teaching the Living

My Tango teacher said something to me recently that really stuck in my mind. During a class she commented that people should not be talking while they were practising. She said that it's pretty difficult to listen to the music while chatting to your partner.

The lady that I was dancing with at the time looked at me and said, "She is definitely talking about me, she is always telling me off for that". What struck me was that even though this lady had been told repeatedly that she should not talk during practice the first thing she did was talk about the not talking instruction!

Now funnily enough this lady was not very good at Tango. Obviously some people are better than others but, when I thought about how this lady behaves in class, I realised she seemed to be talking most of the time. So I guess the teacher and Elvis were right: "A little less conversation, a little more action please" is a good motto when it's time to get on with things.

Later on that same evening another student and I asked the teacher if she had time to help with something we were not sure about. The teacher replied in her Russian accent, "Of course, I always have time to teach the living".

Now in 20+ years of teaching I have never heard that expression but I loved it. A teacher loves to teach people who really want to learn and do whatever they can to apply themselves. It is common that the not so gifted student can surpass the initial natural 'star' because of the way they knuckle down and practise.

I like my teacher's style because she is very direct and to the point. She wants you to improve but you had better listen.

So some people will do well when they are learn something new, others don't get close to what they can achieve because they are not really totally present in the class and let distractions get in the way of their ability to focus, but most are not even available to be taught because they never sign up in the first place.

So I'll take the compliment from my teacher that I'm 'living' and long shall I endeavour to remain that way.

Best wishes

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