



Pleasure 101: Developing Body Literacy

The sensation of *pleasure* is at the heart of every Nia principle, practice and technique. Pleasure is a powerful message, a *voice* of the body, telling you when you are functioning, moving and living in a way that supports the design of your body. When you pay attention to the sensations of pleasure—closely observing when, where and how they arise—you gain valuable information about which movement and lifestyle choices are healthy for you; which cause pain, injury and discomfort; and which areas of your body and life need attention.

To recognize pleasure—and all sensations—Nia teaches us to develop *body literacy*, the ability to listen, understand and respond to the messages of our bodies. Once you recognize what your body is communicating, you have the power of *choice*—you can choose to cultivate pleasure by responding to its signals. You can also choose to notice where pleasure is not present, and make conscious

movement and lifestyle changes to invite it back in. Tracking the sensation of pleasure gives you access to a deeper level of self-knowing, which reveals the true possibilities of your physical, mental and emotional potential.

Developing body literacy requires practice and commitment. Fortunately, Nia practice is fun—for pleasure is The Body's Way! The first and most important step is simple: *choose*. Choose to notice the sensations of pleasure throughout your day, and commit to responding in ways that foster pleasure in all you do.

Use your Nia DVDs to create a "Pleasure Dance Lab" at home!

Create a regular practice at home with your Nia DVDs. Better yet, invite your friends over for "Pleasure Dance Labs," and then share your research notes afterward! Take turns hosting and work with a variety of routines. Host or hostess gets to pick the routine!

Creating Your Pleasure Lab

- Equip your "pleasure lab" with a variety of DVDs to play with different movement styles, speeds and sounds.
- Rather than pre-planning which routine to use, simply reach for the DVD that sounds most pleasurable to your body when the time comes.
- Choose a "Pleasure Focus" for each session. For example, study the sensations of pleasure in your hands as you move, and notice how these sensations affect your body, mind and spirit as a whole.
- Activate the left and right sides of your brain with imagery, words and "sounding." i.e.: Wherever you sense pleasure, visualize it glowing from your body like a radiant light. Meanwhile, practice naming each of the 52 Moves aloud as you dance.

To expand your Nia "Pleasure Lab" DVD collection, shop online at <http://nianow.com/store>

For More Information

Ask your teacher for more information about this and other Nia handouts.

Get the Nia book, *The Nia Technique* (2005, Broadway Books) <http://go.nianow.com/book>

Go online to learn more and sign up for Nia's free monthly newsletter.



NiaNow.com