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Online Wellness with Sayaw PD and Novy Bereber

May 14, 2020. By Chi de Jesus. AF May 15 (/edition/af-may-15).

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After 5 months of COVID-19, the curve is slowly flattening giving everyone breathing space to look at matters on hindsight. Unfortunately, the majority of the casualties from the pandemic is from the age range 42-96 years old – most of whom are immunocompromised because of pre-existing medical conditions. From this demographic also comes people who suffer from Parkinson's Disease (PD).* (<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/parkinsons-disease>)

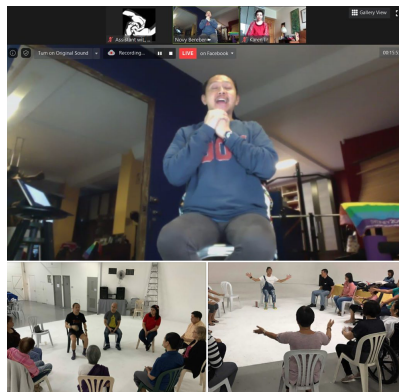
Parkinson's Disease or simply Parkinson's is a progressive, degenerative neurological condition that affects a person's control of their body movements. Evidence from research suggests that exercise can improve some symptoms of Parkinson's disease and improve their quality of life. This has prompted the group, Dance for Parkinson's Australia (<https://www.danceforparkinsonsaustralia.org/about-dance-for-parkinsons/>) in 2001 to provide the necessary activities to make the lives of people suffering from Parkinson's a lot better gathering dancers from all over Australia who have a profound vocation to help through the art of dance.



One of these dance crusaders is former Ballet Philippines choreographer and principal dancer, Novy Bereber. Novy was one of the pioneer dance instructors who lent his expertise in helping people with "*shaking palsy*" (another term for Parkinson's) feel better physically, mentally and emotionally. Before the lockdown, Novy would travel an hour and a half to meet his "students" in Penang Hills thrice a week. However, with the past strict lockdown laws, seniors were relegated to the four corners of their homes.



This prompted Novy to begin teaching the dance online through his FB page Bereber Sayaw* PD (https://www.facebook.com/pg/sayawpd/videos/?ref=page_internal) at the onset of the novel corona virus scare in January. Hundreds of viewers await his dance classes reaching a record breaking high of 7,000 views in April. Though recent news has shown signs of the government easing up on the lockdown laws, Novy maintains that he would continue his online classes due to the vulnerable physical state of most of his students. "I am very excited with the possibilities of the easing of the lockdown laws but I am very careful not to endanger the health of the public in any way," says Novy.



Apart from the practice that he has started in Sydney, Novy has also begun his advocacy in the Philippines in 2018 sharing the knowledge that he has learned from David Leventhal, the main man behind Dance for PD. But in the meantime, interested parties living with PD can experience his classes through Bereber Sayaw PD. "Everyone can look forward to a chance to live a normal satisfying life through dance. So keep on dancing," smiles Novy.



 *Approximately four people per 1,000 in Australia have Parkinson's Disease. With the incidence increasing to one in 100 over the age of 60. In Australia, there are approximately 80,000 people living with Parkinson's disease, with one in five of these people being diagnosed before the age of 50. In Victoria, more than 2,225 people are newly diagnosed with Parkinson's every year

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/parkinsons-disease>
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*Sayaw is a Filipino word for dance.

*images c/o <https://www.facebook.com/sayawpd/> (<https://www.facebook.com/sayawpd/>) and PhilStar.

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