



Energize Your Hands With Nia!

Each of the three movement arts on which Nia is based—martial arts, dance and healing arts—brings a unique inspiration for creatively engaging your hands throughout your day. Using your hands to “tune in” to the space around you not only conditions your upper body; it allows you to move with more physical awareness. How is this possible?

Your hands hold a great concentration of *proprioceptors*, sensory receptors found in your muscles, tendons, joints and inner ear. Stimulated by motion, these receptors detect the position of each part of your body in relationship to the whole, as well as to the space around you—thus providing orientation, balance and coordination as you move. This is the gift of *proprioception*. In Nia, we magnify this innate awareness by not just reacting to stimuli, but by

consciously *listening* and responding to the messages our bodies send via *sensation*. This is what we call “awakening to Sensory IQ.” By closely observing the sensory messages—the *voices*—of our bodies, we can make active choices about our movement and lifestyle for greater fitness, health and well-being.

So how do you awaken your Sensory IQ? By dancing your proprioceptors all day long! Like all parts of your body, movement and variety keep your proprioceptors alert and activated. The more you use them, the more sensitive you become to their messages—and thus, the more information you receive about the world inside and around you. As you go about your day, use the different foci and personalities of Nia’s three movement arts to inspire new and creative ways of activating your hands. As always, seek the sensation of pleasure—this is your body saying, “*This movement is good for me—keep it up!*”

Energize with Martial Arts—Precision

Embody martial arts to move with *mindful intent*. ie: In Outward Block, direct energy with your elbow and come to a precise “stop.” Or as you open a spice jar, use your hands, wrists and fingers with delicate precision, as if performing a sacred ceremony.

Energize with Dance Arts—Expression

Embody dance arts to express yourself through every movement. ie: As you wave to a neighbor, sense the space around your hand as if it is cool water, sending ripples of friendship into the world.

Energize with Healing Arts—Self-Healing

Embody healing arts to enjoy the *self-healing* benefits all movement offers. ie: Use the movement of changing your shirt to relax and stretch your neck, shoulders and back. Also, change palm directions as you walk to open and heal your wrists and forearms.

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.



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