Before there was the written word, there was the language of dance. Dance expresses love and hate, joy and sorrow, life and death, and everything else in between.

Dance in the U.S.is everywhere. We dance from Florida to Alaska, from north to south and sea to sea. We dance at weddings, birthdays, office parties and just to fill the time.

“I adore dancing,” says Lester Bridges, the owner of a dance studio in Iowa. “I can’t imagine doing anything else with my life." Bridges runs dance classes for all ages. "Teaching dance is wonderful.My older students say it makes them feel young.It’s great to watch them. For many of them, it’s a way of meeting people and having a social life."

So why do we dance?"I can tell you about one young couple," says Bridges. “They’re learning to do traditional dances. They arrive at the class in low spirits and they leave with a smile. Dancing seems to change their feeling completely.”

So, do we dance in order to make ourselves feel better, calmer, healthier? Andrea Hillier says, “Dance, like the pattern of a beating heart, is life. Even after all these years, I want to get better and better.I keep practicing even when I’m extremely tired.I find it hard to stop! Dancing reminds me I’m alive."