M·M

BIOHACKING

FOR SOCIAL DANCERS

the body that carries your dance

YOUR FESTIVAL SURVIVAL GUIDE

For everyone who trains hard, dances all night, and travels to do it. Festivals, congresses, socials, retreats, and the training weeks in between.

michael · mayra

WHO WE ARE

Michael *y* Mayra.

Life partners. Dance partners. International bachata artists, based in Barcelona, and the creators of Conscious Bachata.



BARCELONA · DANCING WORLDWIDE

65+
COUNTRIES DANCED

10
YEARS ON THE ROAD

6+
RETREATS A YEAR

Mayra grew up surrounded by dance, art and healing. Her grandmother was a curandera, and brought her close to intuition and to the body very early. Michael found the stage as a child and never left it.

We met, became a couple, and became M&M. We have spent years travelling the festivals of the world. What we teach was never really about the steps. It is about how you feel, how you show up, and how fully you let yourself be seen.

OUR METHODOLOGY

Conscious Bachata.

We do not replace technique. We expand it, bringing together the parts of dancing that are usually taught separately, so your movement becomes clear, connected, expressive and truly yours.

THE FIVE PILLARS

- Technical clarity and movement intelligence
- Breath, body awareness and embodiment
- Dancer mindset and emotional intelligence
- Conscious connection and polarity
- Authentic expression and artistry

THE BACHATA CONSCIOUS MOVEMENT

More than a method, a community. Dancers who want technique and depth, who would rather collaborate than compete, and who believe a conscious community makes a more conscious world. Our retreats, our mentoring and this booklet all live inside it.

Dancing is a mirror.
So is the way you treat your body.

START HERE

Why biohacking found *us.*

Biohacking is a big word for a simple idea: small changes to how you sleep, eat, breathe and move, so your body works better. Nothing extreme. Nothing expensive. Mostly free.

IT CAME FROM OUR OWN LIFE, NOT FROM A TREND

Life taught us both that a working body is not a given. Michael survived the Beirut port explosion and lost his father in it, and lived for years with panic and a breath he had to learn again. Mayra came through a uterine illness and its operations, and had to rebuild her relationship with her own body from the inside.

Different stories, one lesson: the present moment is the only one we have, and we live it through the body. That is where our whole approach begins.

WHAT WE STUDIED, AND WHY IT IS HERE

Mayra trained as a medical student, then moved towards holistic medicine, and holds a master's degree in holistic women's health. She has also worked with breath, somatic practice and women's health for years.

So this booklet is not a collection of internet tips. Everything in it went through that filter first, and everything in it we use ourselves.

THE LIFESTYLE THAT MADE IT NECESSARY

We are on the road almost every weekend of the year. Airports, hard floors, short nights, food we did not choose, and six or more retreats a year that we run ourselves.

You cannot survive that on willpower for ten years. We had to build a way of living that holds it, and that is what these pages are.

HOW IT CONNECTS TO CONSCIOUS BACHATA

Conscious Bachata already says that the whole dancer must be developed, not only the visible movement: technique, breath, body awareness, mindset, emotions, connection. Biohacking is simply the next honest step in that same line.

Breath gives movement life, and breath also calms your nervous system at four in the morning. The body makes the invisible visible, and it also makes visible whether you slept, drank water and ate. Connection begins within, and it begins with a body that has enough left to give. **Same principles, one layer deeper.**

THE QUESTION WE GET ASKED MOST

Other teachers and artists ask us how we still look fresh after a full season on the road, and how we keep the energy year after year. There is no secret and nothing dramatic. It is the small things in this booklet, done most days, for years.

Your body carries your dance.
Take care of what carries you.

HOW TO USE THIS

Four things, *not forty tips.*

Everything in this booklet sits under one of these four. Read them all, then choose one.

Sleep

Sleep, daylight, jet lag, caffeine. This decides whether you keep what you learn in Saturday's workshop, or only sit through it.

Recovery

Joints, muscles, rest. One bad moment is rarely what hurts a dancer. It is many weekends of dancing with nothing in between.

Food

Water, salt, food, alcohol. A social is four hours of sport, and almost nobody eats and drinks like it is.

Breath

Breath and calm. Technique gives you the tools. Your breath decides how much of you actually shows up with them.

WHAT MATTERS MOST

Sleep and food are most of this. Supplements, cold showers and watches are the small part. If the big part is missing, the small part changes almost nothing.

So pick one thing for your next festival. One thing you keep for twenty weekends will help you more than twenty things you keep for one.

Four things.
Pick one, and keep it.

Sleep is where your *dancing is saved.*

What you learn in a workshop gets saved into your body while you sleep. Without the sleep, you paid for the class but you did not keep it.

PICK YOUR SLEEP WINDOW

At a festival you will not get eight hours, so stop trying. Pick **four hours you protect every night**, for example 5:00 to 9:00, and keep the same hours all weekend.

A short night at the same time each day is much easier on your body than a long night at a different time. Anything on top is a bonus, taken as naps.

NAPS, AND HOW LONG THEY SHOULD BE

- **20 minutes.** Light sleep only. You wake up clear. Good before the evening social.
- **90 minutes.** One full cycle. You wake naturally at the end. Good for the afternoon break.
- **45 to 60 minutes** is the one to avoid. You wake inside deep sleep and feel worse.

THE CAFFEINE NAP

Caffeine does not work the second you drink it. It needs about **20 to 30 minutes** to reach your brain.

So drink your matcha, tea or coffee, lie down immediately, and sleep for 20 minutes. You sleep through the wait, and the caffeine arrives exactly as you wake up. Set an alarm: sleeping longer takes you into deep sleep and ruins it.

DAYLIGHT SETS YOUR CLOCK

Ten minutes of daylight in your first waking hour sets your body clock for the day. Even with clouds, outside beats any room. Do it on the balcony with your tea. Flying east, get morning light. Flying west, late afternoon light.

CAFFEINE, WITH A PLAN

Caffeine loses half its strength every five to six hours, so a cup at 6pm is still half strong at midnight. Choose each day: tonight's social, or tomorrow's workshop. One cup cannot do both.

YOU DO NOT NEED COFFEE FOR ANY OF THIS

Espresso	about 60 mg
Matcha	about 60 mg
Green tea	about 30 mg

Matcha carries about the same caffeine as an espresso, so everything here works with it. Matcha and green tea also have **L-theanine**, which makes it arrive more slowly and gently: less shakiness, a softer landing.

Rest is part of the *training.*

Ankles, knees, lower back, feet. One bad moment is rarely what hurts a dancer. It is twenty weekends of dancing with no rest in between.

FIVE MINUTES BEFORE YOU DANCE

Warming up, not stretching. Long stretches before dancing make you weaker for a while, so keep those for the end of the night.

1. Ankle circles, both ways. 30 seconds each foot.
2. Calf raises, slow up and slow down. 20 times.
3. Hip circles, as big as you can. 30 seconds each side.
4. Upper body twists, arms open, eyes following your hand. 10 each side.
5. Soft body rolls, then 20 small jumps on the spot.

SHOES

- Never the same pair all weekend. Change heel heights.
- Bring one flat pair and **really wear it** for the last two hours.
- Hard floor? Fewer drops and jumps, more breaks.

THREE MINUTES BETWEEN SOCIALS

- Legs up the wall, two minutes.
- Foot on a ball, under the arch. 30 seconds each.
- Lie down, knees twisted to one side. 30 seconds each.

TIRED MUSCLES AND REAL PAIN ARE NOT THE SAME

Tired muscles	Spread out, both sides, dull, better once you move, gone in two or three days. Keep dancing, gently.
Real pain	Sharp, one small spot, on a joint, comes with one movement, worse the next day. Stop. Knee pain, or back pain going down your leg, should be checked by a professional.

THE PART NOBODY WANTS TO HEAR

The best protection for a dancer's body is not a massage gun. It is **two short gym sessions a week**: one leg at a time, calf raises, something for the back, some core, something for the shoulders. Twenty-five minutes, twice.

Cold water helps you feel recovered, which is real. Just not straight after the gym, where it cancels out some of what you trained for. Compression socks are worth the space in your bag.

A social is *four hours of sport.*

You would never run a half marathon on a late kebab and two beers. That is more or less what a Saturday looks like.

WATER ALONE IS NOT ENOUGH

In a full ballroom you lose half a litre to a litre and a half of sweat every hour, and sweat is salty. Litres of plain water on top of that leave you with even less salt. The headache and heavy legs we blame on tiredness often come from here.

- **Before.** 500 ml with electrolytes, thirty minutes ahead.
- **During.** About 250 ml every hour, in small sips.
- **Make it yourself.** 500 ml water, a quarter teaspoon of good salt, lemon, a little honey.

THE ONLY WATER CHECK YOU WILL REALLY DO



MORE SALT | GOOD | GOOD | DRINK NOW | BEHIND | WELL BEHIND

Light yellow is the target. Completely clear, and running to the bathroom every twenty minutes, means plenty of water and not enough salt.

EATING AROUND A SOCIAL

- Main meal **two to three hours before**.
- During the night: banana, dates, rice cakes, a small sandwich.
- Heavy fatty food sits in your stomach and stays there.
- Bring real food. Four days of buffet is its own jet lag.

ALCOHOL

It dries you out, takes your balance before you notice your turns getting worse, and ruins the deep sleep where today's learning was going to be saved. One drink is part of a social weekend. Three is a quiet decision about how Saturday will feel.

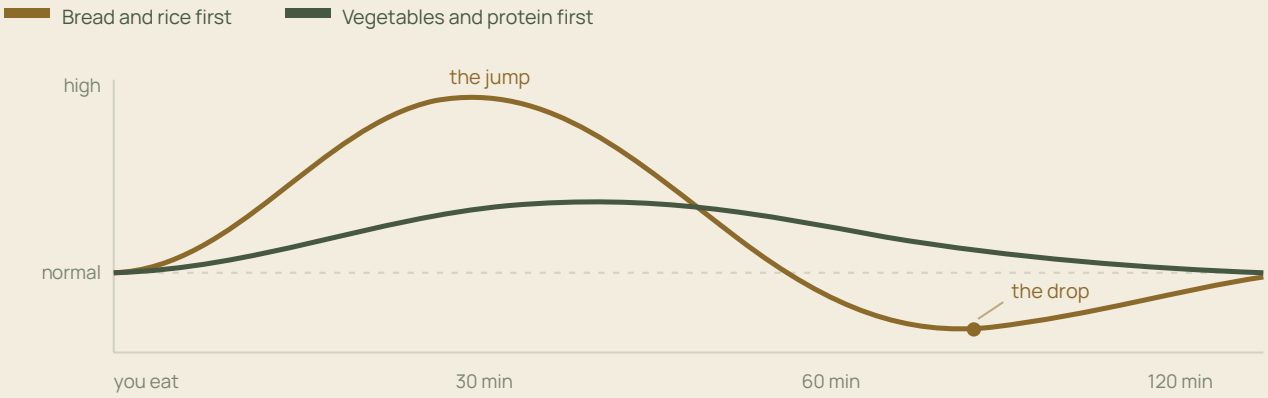
THE BASICS, IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE

Electrolytes	The most important one here. Before and during every social.
Magnesium	In the evening. Sleep quality and night cramps.
Creatine	3 to 5 g a day. Power, and repeating effort again and again.
Vitamin D	Northern Europe, October to March. Probably yes.

Sugar, energy and *ageing.*

The second workshop feels harder than the first. Usually that is not fitness. It is what your food did to your blood sugar an hour earlier.

Bread, rice, pasta or sweets on their own send your blood sugar up fast. Your body answers with a lot of **insulin**, the hormone that clears sugar out of your blood, and it usually brings you down too far. That drop is the heavy, foggy hour in the afternoon, and the same one that hits you at two in the morning.



THE PART THAT GOES FAR BEYOND ONE AFTERNOON

When there is a lot of sugar in your blood, some of it sticks to the proteins around it. Two of those are **collagen and elastin**, which keep your skin firm and your tendons and joints springy.

Sugar sticking to them makes them stiff. Scientists call the result AGEs, and the nickname fits: it is a slow kind of cooking. It is one of the known processes behind skin ageing and stiffer tissue.

FOR A DANCER, THIS SHOWS UP TWICE

- **In how you move.** Springy tissue gives you bounce and easy range. Stiff tissue makes you feel older on the floor than you are.
- **In how you look.** The same proteins hold your skin.

NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF

You cannot avoid this completely, and you should not try. Sugar is normal and your body needs it. What you can change is **how big the jumps are and how often**. Fewer big jumps, year after year, is the whole idea.

The order you eat in changes *the line.*

Same plate, same food, nothing removed. Only the order.

THE ORDER

1. **Vegetables first.** They make a kind of net in your stomach that slows everything down.
2. **Protein and fat second.** Meat, fish, eggs, cheese, tofu, nuts.
3. **Bread, rice, potatoes and sweet things last.**

THREE MORE, FOR A FESTIVAL BUFFET

- Something green before the bread or rice, even a few bites of salad.
- **Never bread, rice or sweets on their own.** Bread alone makes your blood sugar jump. The same bread with olive oil, cheese or eggs rises much more slowly, because fat and protein slow it down.
- **Walk ten minutes after eating.** The strongest one here. Working muscles take the sugar straight out of your blood, so it never has to peak.

APPLE CIDER VINEGAR

One tablespoon in a big glass of water, ten to twenty minutes before a meal with bread, rice or pasta, makes the jump smaller. Small effect, but real, and almost free.

- **Always mix it with water.** Never pure: the acid damages teeth and burns the throat.
- Use a straw if you take it often, then rinse.
- One tablespoon is enough. More is not better.
- Not with reflux, an ulcer or a sensitive stomach. Ask your doctor if you take medicine for blood pressure or blood sugar.

AT A FESTIVAL, IN ONE LINE

Salad before the pasta. Never bread on its own. Walk to the next room instead of sitting down.

Studied most in people with diabetes, so for healthy dancers the effect is smaller. It is free to try. If you have diabetes or any problem with blood sugar, this does not replace what your doctor tells you.

Breath gives *movement life.*

Technique gives you the tools and the choices. Your breath decides how much of you really shows up in the dance. And you can use it in three seconds.

TO CALM DOWN

The double breath. In through the nose twice, one big and one small on top, then a long slow breath out through the mouth. Five times.

Four and eight. In for four, out for eight, for two minutes. The long breath out does the work.

TO WAKE UP AT TWO IN THE MORNING

Twenty quick breaths through the nose. Cold water on face and wrists. Thirty seconds of jumping and shaking out your arms.

Sit or lie down for fast breathing, never in water. Dizzy means stop.

THREE BREATHS BEFORE THE DANCE

1. Feel your feet. All four corners on the floor.
2. Let the breath out drop your shoulders and soften your jaw.
3. Soften your eyes and let the room into the corners of your vision.

Narrow, searching eyes tell your body it is under stress. Softening them calms you down. Soft eyes make you a clearer lead, an easier follow, and much safer on a full floor. Three breaths, before every dance.

COMING DOWN AFTER THE LAST DANCE

1. Lights down. Phone face down, because scrolling is light and excitement.
2. Water with electrolytes.
3. A warm shower.
4. Legs up the wall, five minutes of four and eight breathing.
5. Bed. You can think about the night tomorrow.

And one nobody says out loud: twenty minutes alone in your room at a festival is rest, not rudeness.

Connection begins within.
It also begins rested.

PUTTING IT TOGETHER

Your festival *plan.*

One page to photograph and keep on your phone.

The week before	You cannot save up sleep, but you can arrive without a debt. Crossing time zones? Move your bedtime one hour a night. Buy the electrolytes. Break in your shoes.
Travel day	Compression socks. Water and salt every hour. Move every ninety minutes. On landing, ten minutes of daylight. Sleep at local time, not your own.
Every morning	Ten minutes of daylight. Real breakfast with protein. Decide your caffeine cut-off before the first cup.
Before workshops	The five-minute warm-up. Water with salt. Eat two hours before.
The break	Nap twenty minutes or ninety, nothing between. Legs up the wall. Feet on a ball. Main meal here.
Before the social	500 ml with electrolytes. Warm up again, quickly. Three breaths before the first dance, and every dance after.
During the night	250 ml every hour. Something small to eat halfway. Change shoes for the last two hours. Sit down once an hour, even if you feel fine.
After the last dance	The ten-minute wind-down. Protect your sleep window. Earplugs and an eye mask.
Monday, Tuesday	Sleep. Walk. Vegetables. Nothing heavy. Expect to feel flat, and let that be normal.

YOUR BAG, PACKED ONCE AND KEPT READY

- Electrolytes
- Magnesium for the evenings
- Filtered earplugs
- Eye mask
- A small massage ball
- Compression socks
- A second pair of shoes, lower heel
- Blister plasters and toe tape
- Small towel and a spare shirt
- Nuts, dates, bars, fruit
- A refillable bottle
- Good salt in a tiny jar

THE ONE NOBODY MENTIONS: YOUR EARS

Festival music runs at 100 to 110 dB. At 100 dB it is safe for about fifteen minutes, and we stand in it for five hours, twenty weekends a year. Hearing damage does not heal. **Musicians' earplugs** (around −15 or −20 dB) make it quieter without making the music muddy. Most dancers say the bass sounds cleaner.

EXTRA READING · NOT COVERED IN THE WORKSHOP

If you want to go *further.*

None of this is necessary. The four things come first, always. This page is here because people ask us, and we would rather you had honest information than a sales page.

THE LONGEVITY SHELF

These are the ones people ask about most. The research is younger and thinner than for the basics on page 8, so treat them as optional extras, not as a foundation.

NMN or NR	Building blocks for NAD+, a molecule cells use for energy and repair, which falls with age. Promising in animals. Human results are still early and mixed.
Resveratrol	The compound from red grape skin. Popular, but poorly absorbed, and human studies have been disappointing so far.
Astaxanthin	The red pigment in wild salmon and krill. A strong antioxidant, with early evidence for skin, eyes and muscle recovery.
Probiotics	Useful after antibiotics, and for some digestive problems. Strains matter, so a random supermarket tub is not the same thing. Fermented food does much of this for free.
Collagen	Modest evidence for skin and joints, usually with vitamin C. Slow, and it takes months.

Our honest view: sleep, food, sunlight and strength will do more for how you age than everything on this list combined. If you want to try one anyway, choose one, give it three months, and see.

BLUE LIGHT GLASSES, FOR THE NIGHTS YOU SCROLL

You know the moment. It is four in the morning, you are lying down and finally still, and you open your phone. Bright screens at night tell your brain it is daytime and delay the hormone that helps you fall asleep.

The best answer is not to scroll. The realistic answer is **red or amber lens glasses**. They cut most of the light that keeps you awake. Clear "blue light" lenses block far less. Rules that make them work: put them on about ninety minutes before you want to sleep, and turn your phone brightness right down anyway.

General information, not medical advice. Please check with a doctor or a pharmacist before starting anything, especially if you are pregnant, taking medicine, or living with a health condition.

EXTRA READING · FOR WOMEN, AND FOR THE PEOPLE WHO DANCE WITH THEM

Your cycle and your *dancing.*

Half the dance floor lives on a monthly rhythm, and almost nobody plans around it. Knowing your own pattern is one of the most useful things you can learn about your dancing.

WHAT TENDS TO CHANGE, AND WHEN

Days 1 to 5 bleeding	Energy is usually lowest. Many women feel more inward and more sensitive to sound and touch. A good week for gentler practice, body work and musicality rather than big physical goals.
Days 6 to 13 rising	Energy climbs. Strength, coordination and confidence usually feel best here. This is your window for hard training, learning new material and performing.
Around day 14 ovulation	Often the most open and social point of the month. Also the point where joints can feel a little looser, so land your turns with care.
Days 15 to 28 before the bleed	Body temperature runs slightly higher, so you may sweat more and need more water and salt. Sleep can get lighter, and mood can dip in the last few days. Nothing is wrong with you.

WHAT THIS MEANS ON THE FLOOR

- A bad practice in the last week is often a phase, not a plateau.
- Plan performances and hard weekends in your rising week when you can choose.
- Drink more water and salt in the second half.
- Track two or three cycles and you will start to see your own pattern.

FOR PARTNERS AND TEACHERS

This is not fragility and it is not an excuse. It is a rhythm, the same way jet lag is a rhythm. Knowing it exists makes you a kinder partner and a better teacher, and it is one more way of dancing with a real human being rather than an idea of one.

Every body is different, and hormonal contraception changes this picture completely. This is general information, not medical advice. If your cycle brings pain that stops you dancing, or changes suddenly, please see a doctor.

BEFORE YOU CLOSE THIS

Your *one thing.*

Not four things. One. Pick the smallest change you are sure you will still be doing at the next festival, and write it down. Writing it is part of it.

AT THE NEXT FESTIVAL, I WILL

MY SLEEP WINDOW

Four hours. The same four, every night.

MY CAFFEINE CUT-OFF

Six hours before your sleep window.

NOTES FROM TODAY

AND THEN

Tell one person here what you wrote. Out loud, once. That is most of the difference between a nice idea and something that really happens.



COME AND DANCE WITH US

Bachata *Conscious* Retreats.

More than a retreat, an experience.

A few days in nature with dancers like you. Deep training, real connection, and space to become the artist you already are. Small groups of eighteen, so everyone is really seen.

ALL RETREATS, DATES AND BOOKING

www.mmbachata.com

linktr.ee/mmdance.retreats

If you feel the call, this is your invitation.

2026 AND 2027

Choose *your* retreat.

Every retreat has a different focus. Tell us your level, what you want to work on, and if you are coming alone or with a partner, and we will help you choose.

2026

Inner Artist Edition
23 to 27 September 2026 · 5 days, 4 nights
Barcelona Mountains · €888 all inclusive

Creativity, musicality, real expression, and finding more of your own identity inside your dance.

Bachata Conscious Women Retreat
14 to 18 October 2026 · 5 days, 4 nights · women only
Barcelona Mountains · €888 all inclusive

Feminine energy, following, technique, sensuality, body awareness, confidence and real expression.

Technique Retreat
4 to 6 December 2026 · 3 days · Spain
About 24 to 26 places · intermediate and up · €888

Level up your bachata technique and learn the magical M&M style. Three intensive days on the foundations.

2027

Bachata Couples Retreat
Valentine's Edition · 10 to 14 February 2027 · 5 days
Real couples and dance couples

Love and connection, sensuality, respect and safety, trust, honest communication, feminine and masculine dynamics. Each couple works together throughout.

Women Retreat 2027
5 to 9 March 2027 · 5 days · women only
Basic level needed

Feminine energy, sensuality, connection with the body, cycles, confidence, technique and expression. Also the first part of a longer journey.

Feminine & Masculine Energy Retreat
10 to 14 March 2027 · 5 days · women and men

Giving and receiving, structure and flow, leading without pushing, letting go without losing yourself, boundaries and trust.

M&M Bachata Vacation
July 2027 · about 7 days · all levels
Ibiza or Formentera, to be confirmed

Island life, beach, social dancing and community. Less training, more time to enjoy the place and each other.

Bachata Confidence
September 2027 · dates to be confirmed

Confidence, creativity, perfectionism, fear of being watched, fear of mistakes, improvisation and presence.

Inner Artist Professional Couples Mentorship
1 to 5 December 2027 · maximum 10 advanced couples
Advanced level

Our most exclusive experience. Your identity as artists, your own style, your image, and how to build a professional career.

BOOK AND SEE EVERYTHING AT

www.mmbachata.com

KEEP GOING WITH US

Dance *your magic.*

Everything in these pages is for one thing: having enough of yourself left to be fully there when the music starts.

Your body carries your dance.
Take care of what carries you.

website

www.mmbachata.com →

Retreats, mentoring, private classes, and where we are teaching next.

instagram

@michaelymayra →

Come and say hello, and tell us which one thing you chose today. We answer every message ourselves.

M·M

Michael y Mayra · International Bachata Artists
Creators of Conscious Bachata