

## PURSUING A GYMNASTICS FOR ALL AND BY ALL

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*Case study*

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### **Abstract**

*Gymnastics can promote the improvement of body awareness and better mastery of movements and has potential to go beyond the physical aspects by enhancing the socio-affective factors that permeate its practice. In disciplines organized by the Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG), Gymnastics For All (GFA) is the foundation for all others. It is a unique form of gymnastics that seeks harmony, creativity, freedom, and diversity inside heterogeneity, always having regard for the physical, psychological and social well-being of its practitioners. Written in a predominantly pedagogical perspective of GFA, this paper aims to share and reflect on the work and philosophy of Gymnastic Group LABGIN, based in Souza(1997). This university extension project involves the initial training of Physical Education students. The training includes a social practice that is inclusive, democratic, and able to infuse these individuals with elements of the body culture, which hopefully influence their future teaching practice. Through training practice it seeks to promote experiences with social values to them.*

**Keywords:** *Gymnastics for all; Gymnastic Group; Teaching-learning Methodology.*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

*Gymnastics is universal. It is educational, sportive and it is, in some way, life, with its shadows and lights. It is equally an example, a life model for all (Bruno Grandi in Ahlquist, 2000, p. 177).*

Above mentioned speech by former President of the Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique (FIG) signals the character and the worldwide scope of Gymnastics For All (GFA). Through its different nuances, GFA is capable of exerting a significant benefit to the life of its practitioners.

Gymnastics is capable of promoting improvement of physical abilities and body awareness, as well as providing better control and mastery of the body. It has the potential to enhance the complete development of human beings, since it goes beyond physical aspects into socio-affective factors that permeate the practice environment (Nunomura, Ferreira-Filho, Duarte, Tanabe, & Oliveira2016).

Among the different disciplines of gymnastics, GFA is consolidated as the foundation for the other forms of Gymnastics. Other than the joy of practicing

it, the core of this discipline is the gymnastics Foundations (Russell, 2010), which constitutes the common basis of all gymnastics activities. In this sense, Stanquevisch and Martins (2010) affirm this gymnastics discipline allows individuals to acquire a base that permits them to continue in other sports, being competitive or not.

In addition, Souza (1997) alludes GFA as a rich physical activity full of different forms of work, style and trends, which are influenced by a wide range of cultural values, traditions and symbolism, always having as premise the inclusion. Ahlquist (2000) cites one of the most significant characteristics of GFA that it can be practiced by any individual regardless of age, size, sex or skill level. According to Ayoub (2003), GFA can be addressed as a gymnastics discipline

*[...] accessible to all people, open to participation; As a group gymnastics, with groups; As a simple gymnastics, without rules restrictions and, therefore, creates space for diversity and for creativity. In particular, as a gymnastics of pleasure, happiness and fun (p. 48).*

In search of definition for this physical activity, Gallardo and Souza (1995) define GFA as

*[...] a manifestation of body culture, which brings together the different interpretations of Gymnastics (Natural, Constructed, Artistic, Rhythmic, Aerobics, etc.), integrating them with other forms of physical expression (Dance, Folklore, Games, Theater, Mimic, etc.), in a free and creative way, according to the characteristics of the social group, and contributing to the increase of social interaction between the participants (p. 292).*

This gymnastics discipline focuses on the individual who practices it, and seeks to promote interpersonal relationships which favors integration and inclusion (Ayoub, 2003). Furthermore, this gymnastic discipline enhances interest for regular practice of physical activity and healthy habits via pleasure, fun and creativity.

Santos and Santos (1999) state that one of the objectives of GFA is to promote healthy leisure and enhance physical, psychological, and social well-being of gymnasts. FIG (1993) itself indicates that the practice of GFA should be permeated by a cheerful and carefree spirit. And, therefore, the individual becomes aware of the value of sport and physical activity while acquiring the feeling of being part of this gymnastics universe. Souza (1997) reflects that the act of meeting people, communicating, feeling part of the group, making friends and reducing stress are goals of GFA, and affect human existence.

Definition and characteristics of GFA, mentioned above, show a way of practicing gymnastics, so that it provides a more humanistic approach with emphasis on social relations. Therefore, Ayoub and Graner (2013) argue that GFA can broaden other body practices through interweaving physical education and different areas of knowledge, such as dance and art.

In this context, GFA presents particularities that can contribute, in a significant way, to development of physical education students at University. It happens mostly through physical experiences allowing them to give meaning to their actions (Paoliello, 2008). Barbosa-Rinaldi and Paoliello (2008), when reflecting about teachers training in physical education, allude that gymnastics knowledge must be mastered by the future teachers. And, for this to be possible, it is necessary to focus efforts in this level of academic development. In summary, grounded on Barbosa-Rinaldi and Paoliello (2008) statements, we consider that physical education students must acquire technical-scientific knowledge with didactic-methodological foundations aiming to have tools to select, organize, and systematize the gymnastics knowledge in their classes.

In order to facilitate the contact of undergraduate students in physical education with gymnastics knowledge, the Gymnastics Laboratory (LABGIN) created, in 2010, the Gymnastics Group LABGIN at the Centre for Physical Education and

Sports of Federal University of Espírito Santo. A project that transits between extension, teaching, and research aiming to contribute to (re)thinking and understanding of gymnastics.

This article aims, through an experience report method, to share and reflect on the work of Gymnastics Group LABGIN, describing its characteristics and methodology developed over the seven years of its existence. This discussion can help (re)thinking GFA, and also support the emergence of groups or university extension projects with a pedagogical approach of this gymnastics discipline.

The work philosophy of Gymnastics Group LABGIN is based on the proposal from Gymnastics Group of University of Campinas (UNICAMP). The group from Campinas, Brazil, is pioneer in diffusion of a pedagogical approach of GFA (the UNICAMP Gymnastics Group is coordinated by M.Sc. Larissa Graner and Ph.D. Marco Antonio Coelho Bortoleto, a member of Gymnastics For All Committee of International Gymnastics Federation FIG). Therefore, this article will point out aspects that Gymnastics Group LABGIN developed and based on the principles of Souza (1997), in which GFA excels as social practice, integrating, democratic, and transforming of the individual and hopefully, his/her immediate society.

## METHODS

The study object was the Gymnastics Group LABGIN that consists of a university extension activity composed by thirty (30) undergraduate physical education students from the Federal University of Espírito Santo (Brazil), which is coordinated by two professors with doctor degree.

For the study development, we chose the path of qualitative research, which allows the analysis of phenomenon without losing sight of its subjectivity and, primarily, the perception and personal perspective of researchers. Minayo (1994, p. 22) points out that qualitative research

involves "a deeper space of relationships, processes, and phenomena that cannot be reduced to the operationalization of variables". Thomas and Nelson (2002, p. 322) add that "the most significant feature of qualitative research is the interpretive content instead of an excessive concern about the procedure" and it "focuses on the "essence" of the phenomenon".

In this direction, the experience report was selected as methodological procedure to describe and discuss the work of Gymnastics Group LABGIN, unfolding its characteristics and methodology developed over the seven years of its existence (2010-2017). It is important to highlight that experience report consists of a descriptive research (Triviños, 1987) that enabled a descriptive-reflexive analysis of a real situation discussing experiences, results, and reflections related to the association between theory and practice.

To support discussion, the indirect documentation technique was selected for collecting information linked to the subject of interest. This form of documentation can be done in two ways: documentary research, and bibliographical research (Marconi & Lakatos, 1991).

The bibliographic research consisted of selecting, indexing, and archiving topics of interest to the research based on information, knowledge, and data that have already been collected by other people, in previous research, presented in books, articles, abstracts, and audiovisual media. The documentary research involved the use of private texts and documents related to training plans and evaluation reports of Gymnastics Group LABGIN.

For data processing the Content Analysis technique proposed by Bardin (2010) was used, following the main steps: pre-analysis, encoding, thematic categorization, and interpretation.

## RESULTS

### ***Gymnastics group labgin: research, education, and extension***

Over the years, the CEFD / UFES has established itself as an institution for training teachers and researchers through activities related to education, research, and extension in Physical Education. Currently it offers two undergraduate programs, and at the graduate level it offers master and doctorate degrees.

In order to broaden and consolidate the relationship between the institution and society, the CEFD follows the policy of sharing knowledge, ideas, projects, and experiences in university extension projects.

The Forum of Deans of Extension of the Brazilian Public Universities (2016) conceptualizes extension as educational, cultural, and scientific process that has as its premise to articulate teaching and research in order to achieve a transforming relationship that is established between the University and society. In this sense, the

*[...] extension is a two-way street, with assured traffic to academic community, which will find the opportunity to elaborate the praxis of an academic knowledge in society. Upon returning to the University, teachers and students will bring an apprenticeship that will be referred to theoretical reflection, and will be added to that previous knowledge (Forum of Deans of Extension of the Brazilian Public Universities, 2016, p. 11).*

It is possible to infer that University extension programs have become an instrument that allows the interrelation between University and society, catalyzing the democratization of academic knowledge. Moreover, it could serve to refresh the idea and the system of University itself through the exchange with the community in which it is inserted (Forum of Deans of Extension of the Brazilian Public Universities, 2013).

According to the Institutional Extension Development Plan of UFES, the extension

*[...] is based on the principles of reciprocity, emancipation, interdisciplinarity, transdisciplinarity and multiprofessionalism. It is an academic activity identified with the purposes of University, developing educational, artistic, cultural, and scientific processes articulated with teaching and research in an inseparable way. Its purpose is to contribute to promotion of dialogic interaction within University and other sectors of society, fostering the emergence of innovative responses to local, regional and national challenges (UFES, 2016, p. 30).*

The University has the responsibility to propose and develop extension activities. Because, according to Brazilian Constitution of 1988, in its article 207, the Universities "(...) shall follow the principle of inseparability between teaching, research, and extension" (Brazil, 2013). Therefore, the extension is one of the supports of the tripod on which the Brazilian Universities are sustained, together with research and education.

Analyzing the curriculum of teaching degree in Physical Education of CEFD / UFES, it was possible to observe the emergence of five theoretical axes, which give life to the curricular matrix. The "Knowledge Resulting from Experience" is one of those axes and, in turn, relates to

*[...] practices of teaching activities articulated with theoretical knowledge that corresponds to 400 hours that are experienced by undergraduate students in teaching degree, with effective involvement in the following didactic situations: projects developed within the subjects of the course; projects developed in subjects of other undergraduate courses; involvement in studies/researches that focus on school environment promoting experiences, observations and reflections of teaching practices in Physical Education; extension projects; and workshops offered by the course (Paiva, Andrade-Filho & Figueiredo, 2006, p. 224).*

As well as a teaching degree, the curriculum of bachelor degree in Physical Education of this same institution expects

student participation in extension projects and internship subjects in Leisure, Sports and Health areas. As a result, students are involved in extension activities at University. And they have the opportunity to improve their teaching practice through participation in different extension projects. In addition, some Scientific Initiation Projects and Final Undergraduate Projects are linked to University extension, which favors the inseparability between education, research, and extension.

In the list of extension activities offered at CEFD / UFES, one has been consolidated since 2010, and offers to University community the practice of GFA through the Gymnastic Group LABGIN that is organized by the Gymnastics Laboratory (LABGIN). The origin of the group precedes the year 2010, as the founder of the group was inspired by UNICAMP Gymnastics Group. Furthermore, after four years the group was strengthened by a former gymnast from UNICAMP who also has experience in teaching gymnastics, who joined forces in the development of the group activities.

In report by Paoliello et al. (2014), Paula Cristina da Costa Silva, Gymnastic Group LABGIN co-coordinator, points out that she noticed the potential of extension project in GFA when she began her teaching activities at UFES. In her analysis, it could collaborate with the democratization of gymnastics knowledge, and to contribute with initial training of undergraduate students. In order to fulfill these objectives, she grounded the project on the work proposal of UNICAMP Gymnastics Group (Paoliello, 1998).

The beginning of Gymnastics Group LABGIN was mainly encouraged by the students' interest in exploring spaces and equipment available in the CEFD / UFES gymnastics gym. And also in order to experience the different gymnastics disciplines and improve their knowledge. Beyond the compulsory curricular classes, GFA approach implemented in Gymnastic Group LABGIN aims to offer applied practices and teaching-learning experiences

in gymnastics in its different areas, which are: competitive, physical awareness, physiotherapeutic, and physical conditioning. Furthermore, theater, dance, martial arts, folklore, and circus are part of the group activities.

It can be noticed that student involvement in the activities of this project becomes important, since it complements the learning carried out in the classroom. It is a moment in which the knowledge, whether acquired in the curricular subjects and / or those obtained in the study group, is discussed and shared. And, therefore, new knowledge is acquired and exchanged through these experiences.

Agreeing with Paoliello (2008) who cites that "[...] it is interesting to observe that the experience as a gymnast is constantly transferred to his/her professional qualification" (p.210). And the opportunity of experiencing this subject of body culture contributes to the professional and scientific training of the individuals that take part in a GFA group.

It is important to highlight that Gymnastics Group LABGIN became institutionalized when it was invited to participate in the University Gymnastic Groups Festival of 5th International General Gymnastics Forum, in July 2010, held by UNICAMP and SESC / Campinas / São Paulo. Until then, there was only training twice a week with students interested in learning more about gymnastics. However, with the possibility of participating in an international event, the group mobilized and began to create a choreographic composition to be presented.

At this moment, the group gained strength by composing the choreography even though most participants had never seen a live gymnastics presentation or had been part of a gymnastics group before. For this reason, it was a challenging process to mediate the actions of 25 inexperienced gymnasts with a coordinator who also had little experience with GFA back then.

Like all human processes, this first stage of this group had successes and mistakes. But intuition was one of the

weapons used to accomplish certain goals. Grounded on Souza's (1997) proposal, the methodology used was divided into two parts: "... one aimed the increasing social interaction, the experience and exploration of innumerable possibilities of movement. And the other directed towards use and exploration of resources (materials)" (p. 05).

The group work was also based on Marcassa's study (2004), a former student from FEF / UNICAMP who had contact with UNICAMP Gymnastics Group. The author considers that the choreographic composition

*[...] configures itself as a language that has almost the same structures of written language. We often say that choreography is like a text. And if for a written text it is necessary to have content, narrative, internal coherence, "situalization", intentionality, cohesion, contextualization, intertextuality, i.e., in the body language of gymnastics some of these elements are also present (Marcassa, 2004, p. 180).*

After a series of experiences, the first choreography was prepared and it produced great satisfaction in all participants of the group. It had a plot, a "story" that was narrated to the public. This confirmed what Ayoub (2003) suggests as a constituent part of GFA which is the presentation by itself. The author highlights that presentation consists as a synthesis of what had been collectively developed. But, it is necessary to be aware that GFA is not only to be seen as "product" disconnected from a process. Instead, Ayoub (2003) says that presentation needs to be treated as an integral part of GFA education process. Moreover, the author highlights that in the development of choreography the students' experiences and interests should be encouraged. And also the group work, so cooperation, proactivity, and autonomy will support the co-authorship of the composition looking for new comprehensions, different interpretations, and new meanings previously unknown to them.

At this point, GFA becomes "a great stage" in which it's possible to share

knowledge and experiences of different practices. It is an environment where the different disciplines of gymnastics dialogue and interact with other forms of physical expressions (Fiorin-Fulgsang & Paoliello, 2008), always valuing individual and group experiences. Paoliello (2008) says that this valorization procedure enriches motor repertoire and expression of the group, since it comes from individual experiences, and not only from the teacher/coach.

On the stage of GFA, it is possible to study, experience, know, understand, confront, interpret, problematize, share, and learn different gymnastics disciplines. And, according to Ayoub (2003), based on this knowledge that emerges from the practice, it is possible to seek new meanings and also develop other possibilities of gymnastics expressions.

According to Fiorin-Fulgsang and Paoliello (2008) the possibility of seeing, appreciating, talking, opining, and creating together is what differentiates GFA from other gymnastics disciplines. And, from this perspective, the work of the Gymnastic Group LABGIN is oriented so that individual and group experiences are cherished along the teaching-learning process.

### ***A gymnastic for and by all***

*The fantasy and power of invention mixed with knowledge and the interest of getting people in motion is the answer (Ahlquist, 2000, p 172).*

Toledo and Schiavon (2008) mention that Brazilian GFA was influenced in great extent by competitive gymnastics disciplines, which are: Artistic Gymnastics, Acrobatic Gymnastics, Trampoline Gymnastics, and Rhythmic Gymnastics. But, today, it is possible to observe that GFA groups try to break free from rules, standardizations, and homogenizations inherent to these competitive disciplines. In current context, Toledo and Schiavon (2008) consider that GFA no longer shows the exacerbated quest for technique and perfection of movements required in competitive gymnastics. Toledo, Tsukamoto

and Gouvea (2009) comment that when there is no competition, the comparison between individuals or praise of the winner doesn't happen. And make possible to all groups members to participate within their own possibilities, limits, experiences, potentialities, and ideals.

The absence of competitive nature has brought relaxation and greater freedom to GFA. It is important to highlight that freedom is one of the features of this gymnastics discipline. According to Toledo, Tsukamoto and Gouvea (2009), it distinguishes GFA from other gymnastics that are delineated according to their rules, which are arranged in scoring systems. The authors consider that this ability to act freely in the context of GFA, without fixed rules, emerges in different aspects such as: the use or not of equipment; the absence of age limits; the nonexistence of rules related to group size; the lack of costumes standards; free will in the choice and use of music; and many other factors.

This freedom permits participation and autonomy in search of body liberty, as well as valuing the individual and the group experiences (Nista-Piccolo, 1995). There is a stimulus to creativity that, according to Toledo, Tsukamoto and Gouvea (2009), occurs due to diversity of concepts and different physical practices that can be developed within GFA.

A gymnastics discipline developed to and by all is essentially pedagogical, which in Gallardo's (2008) conception is characterized by the establishment of human values that foster interaction and integration between the individuals that make part of the group. Paoliello (2008) lists responsibility, discipline, patience, cooperation, trust, and freedom as examples of values that can be experienced within GFA. In addition, the author cites that it is common to share feelings inside the group, such as: joy, pleasure, satisfaction, fears, anguishes, desires, fellowship, and friendship. These are aspects related to collective coexistence that allow the knowledge and appropriation of tools important to live and act in community,

which also promotes personal and professional growth of future teachers.

It is important to mention that group work becomes an essential part in the search for human development in sport context, which in the conception of Souza (1997) is one of the pillars of GFA, because while everyone is learning, everyone is teaching. Therefore, group activities should be addressed by everyone and to everyone, with the intention of sharing responsibility in the process of planning, organizing, implementing and evaluating the training. And, consequently, contribute to the initial training of undergraduate students. Pinto and Bortoleto (2010) highlight that the sense of group is not restricted only by rehearsing, training, and presenting together, because it contemplates the act of overcoming the individual towards the group or social sake.

Gallardo (2014) explains that along the group activities and choreographic composition, the actors of the group define together "what" and "how" will be the final product, as well as the presentation of their work, which has no choreographer or teacher with autocratic characteristics. This allows the group members to perceive themselves at the core of the choreography. And also to incorporate messages, which will be communicated through a physical discourse.

The Gymnastic Group LABGIN members have their praxis through activities and experiences during approach of different gymnastics disciplines and other forms of physical practices in the perspective of the GFA. Ayoub (2008) says that the act of working together opens space for discussions, tensions, and concessions that are essential aspects for the future teaching performance. Students are invited and encouraged to experience the motor actions of gymnastics, as well as other practices to later compose the choreographic in co-authorship. The process of choreography composition creates an environment conducive to the improvement of important elements in human and professional development.

The Gymnastics Group LABGIN supports a democratic practice of GFA, in which the group members develop the activities together, in symbiosis, but without disrespecting their individualities, which favors a process of inclusion and socialization. Probably, the charm of GFA is in the encounter of individual particularities and common aspects that are shared by the group members. Toledo (2005) reflects that this characteristic has the potential to provide, through participation, the exchange of experiences based on the autonomy of its members and the establishment of group identity.

Toledo (2005) considers the encouragement of dialogue another pillar of GFA. This democratic ethos of GFA facilitates integration among the group members, and is catalyzed through the teacher-student relationship. In which the teacher act as a mediator and conciliator who, while having authority, acts in a coherent and democratic way without being authoritarian, and promotes the unity of all those who conform the group (Toledo, 2005; Fiorin, 2001).

According to Ayoub (2003) it is also important to encourage "(...) a gymnastics that is open to multidimensional teachings of body culture [...], which is not in tune with body stereotypes present today" (p. 39). And that support the establishing of spaces where the playful component of body culture are present making possible to (re)discover the pleasure, the wholeness and the artistry of body language.

The GFA based on a pedagogical-human approach emerges as a practice capable to consolidate these objectives by allowing the implementation of creative, formative, and social actions that promote autonomy and criticality of its practitioners. Furthermore, it is a gymnastic discipline that establishes the perception of being part of a historical process that is related to everything that is consolidated by the group, which concerns the relationships, choreographic creations, researches, among others (Toledo, Tsukamoto & Gouveia, 2009).

Fiorin (2001) says that GFA is a gymnastics discipline that brings in its repertory the art of exercising, which recalls the time when gymnastics was done freely and spontaneously whether in the street or in the center of a stage. Thus, the Gymnastics Group LABGIN seeks to provide a GFA that does not contradict the competitive disciplines, but that goes beyond them. Specially, going in the direction of a pedagogical and social perspective that encounter the individuals without the chains of rules and body standardizations.

## CONCLUSIONS

*Gymnastics cuts across all social boundaries and cultural backgrounds, uniting those who take part and increasing global understanding through shared experiences (Langsley, 2000, p. 11).*

This article aimed, through an experience report method, to share and reflect on the work of Gymnastics Group LABGIN developed over the seven years of its existence, describing its characteristics and methodology used on the initial training of physical education students.

Braga (2008) expresses that there is a convergence between Physical Education and GFA, in a critical perspective, since both have a methodological foundation based on the pedagogical-human perspective centered on the individual.

This gymnastics discipline is capable of catalyzing the union between different people through the valorization of diversity and the constitution of the group identity. And it is possible to identify with its philosophy the respect for human essence and dignity.

GFA is a body practice oriented to any person, in which is established an environment of freedom of gymnastics exercise that does not focus on the performance, or perfections, or that is constrained by the rules, or by defined shapes. And this freedom of movement is legitimized even more in the gymnastics universe (Bortoleto & Mateu, 2001).



Thus, the approach of GFA in the initial training of physical education students, through an extension project, contributes to the reflection and resignification of gymnastics and its values, in search of new forms of intervention that are inclusive and democratic. And this experience with GFA will serve as reference for these future teachers.

University courses have the responsibility to prepare future educators to act autonomously, critically, and always based on solid theoretical foundations. Barbosa-Rinaldi and Paoliello (2008), consider that teacher training should not lose sight of human values. This aim can be achieved with the work proposal of Gymnastic Group LABGIN, which is based on Souza (1997).

The work of Gymnastic Group LABGIN respects individualities, comprehensiveness, accessibility, group work, unlimited creativity, playful activity, freedom, valorization of individual and group characteristics, emphasis on learning and interaction, greater concern with the process than with the product, pleasure, physical expression, plurality, and general education. These characteristics constitute some of its presuppositions. It is important to highlight that GFA always has as premise the appropriation of physical activities and gymnastics forms that are important for the group members. This supports the feeling of belonging to the community and the group by sharing interests.

Finally, when analyzing the UNICAMP Gymnastics Group, which served as a reference in the format and work philosophy for the creation of Gymnastic Group LABGIN, Braga (2008) states that the possibility of participating in a GFA group contributes to the practical intervention of future professional of Physical Education, because it provides ideas, proposals, reflections, and experiences.

Gallardo (2014), former coordinator of UNICAMP Gymnastics Group, emphasizes that orientation of a GFA group, directed to students in initial training in Physical Education, should have as a premise the

education of these future teachers, who must be sensitive and committed to their community and country. From this perspective, it is necessary that the group philosophy of work is oriented to the education of these individuals that must be capable of planning and proposing cultural actions that promote the well-being of their future students and, consequently, cause social changes in the immediate society.

According to the Forum of Deans of Extension of the Brazilian Public Universities (2013), University extension projects have a pronounced role in the education of individuals emancipated and critical about their reality. In this way, initiatives that promote student praxis, such as the actions of Gymnastics Group LABGIN, can collaborate with an education guided to the plurality of content in a pedagogical perspective capable of producing significant changes in society.

It is important to highlight that Gymnastics Group LABGIN has developed a series of actions to disseminate GFA through scientific works, events, presentations, and workshops. And some of their former members are working with GFA at schools, social projects, and teaching gymnastics in other contexts. It is a sign that the experience they had during their undergraduate program was important to become professionals of this area, and they are engaged in the diffusion of gymnastics.

Venâncio (2014) cites that former gymnasts of GFA in this pedagogical perspective "are like seeds that, wherever they are, reveal their potentialities, united by action" (p. 272). Therefore, the philosophy of a GFA that privileges human development expands through sharing experiences, techniques, friendships, and solidarity in new soils.

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