

## Paul's Five Call Guarantee

To help me keep the floor moving and follow the 80/80 Rule I mentioned in a previous article, I offer dancers my "Paul's Five Call Guarantee". Dancers break down...it's part of a dance. Getting them up and dancing again quickly can make the difference between a good night and a bad night of square dancing. How many times have you been in one of those squares that broke down and just simply can't get their act together? I've been in my share...and I hate it.

Dancers are taught (or SHOULD HAVE BEEN taught) from the very beginning that if their square breaks down during the patter portion of a tip that they should make lines and be ready to jump back in. Technically, from a squared set the head man is supposed to join hands with his corner and form the center of lines facing in. Sadly, lines seem to be easier said than done at some dances. In the words of the immortal Lady Ga Ga, WHO CARES if you get your partner back..."JUST DANCE!" (Ok, so only the last two words were hers, but she makes my point!)

If I'm calling a dance and find some squares struggling to regroup, I stop, and make a big announcement offering "Paul's Five Call Guarantee". I tell the dancers that if they break down, make lines, and I GUARANTEE them that I will have their square dancing again within FIVE calls.

They already know they are supposed to make lines, but by offering this guarantee, I accomplish several things:

1. By personalizing it as "Paul's Five Call Guarantee" I show the dancers that are struggling that I care, and want to get them back dancing with the rest of the floor as quickly as possible.
2. Offering the dancers a "guarantee", it becomes a game or a challenge for the dancers to prove me wrong. The dancers are much more motivated to form those lines quickly.
3. Dancing continues much more smoothly both for those who have broken down as well as for the successful squares who get to keep moving the entire time.

Truth be told, it is a bit of "schtick" but it works. Most dancers don't realize how quickly a decent caller can maneuver the floor back to lines. Realistically, even once challenged, it will take a broken down square 3-5 calls to actually form those lines. With that in mind, "Paul's Five Call Guarantee" is still fulfilled even if it takes me 8-10 calls to get the rest of the floor back. And if I don't get them dancing again quick enough, the worst that happens is that I have given my dancers the opportunity to say "WE GOT YOU", and I say "aw, shucks". Either way...the dancer still wins.

I strive for that 80/80 Rule balance, and the quicker they get dancing again, the higher that percentage is. As the evening goes on, I try to refine the balance of challenge so that fewer squares are breaking down. "Paul's Five Call Guarantee" is a big part of my dancers success.