

<b>Lesson Title</b>	<b>BODY IN CONTACT</b>
<b>Group</b>	<b>Mixed group</b>
<b>Target group</b>	<b>adults with and without mobility impairments</b>
<b>Number of participants</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Duration</b>	<b>2 hours</b>
<b>Vocabulary</b>	<b>Limit, contact point, support point, body's centre of mass, touch, pressure, patience, communication, lead, listen to the other's body.</b>

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*Goal - Essential question:  
The creation of a dance solo.*

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### **Objectives - Aims - Inquiry questions**

Understanding the body's limits, understanding the way bodies in contact react with each other.

## PROCEDURE

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### **Introduction – Warm-up (15 minutes)**

We start in a circle, lying on our backs, keeping enough distance between us so we can later turn face down. We give the instruction for everybody to close their eyes and observe how their body changes during breathing. We ask the participants to focus on the contact with the floor, that is, to notice the contact points of the body with the air or the contact points of the body with the floor. We ask the dancers in wheelchairs who don't want to work on the floor to focus on their contact points with the air and with the wheelchairs respectively. We give the instruction to slowly start moving their limbs and their head and to observe the changes on the contact points with the floor / wheelchair and the air. We ask them to pay special attention to their joints and to insist on the movement until they realize, to the extent possible for each participant, that their joints have been mobilized as much as possible. During the movement of the limbs we ask the participants to stretch their limbs as much as they can during inhale and to relax them during exhale. We repeat the irregular movement of the limbs 3-4 times inhaling and exhaling alternating the breath rhythm from fast to slow or by introducing unexpected pauses. We repeat the process of moving the limbs described above lying on our stomachs or on the side.

### **1st Activity – Discussion (20 minutes)**

After we complete the warm-up, we ask the participants to form pairs. During this process one will be lying down with their eyes closed and the other will choose body parts they want to touch with their palm. We touch the other very gently only to explore their skin. Afterwards, we touch our partner just enough to explore their muscles and we go on to explore their bones, their vertebrae on the spine, the body's joints and, of course, the facial bones. The process of this gradual touching of each person lasts 7' and then we switch roles. A 6' discussion between the pair follows about this experience and then, in the circle, the whole group exchanges their thoughts on this experience.

### **2nd Activity – Discussion (15 minutes)**

For 10' we move around freely touching different people with fast or slow movements, dancing to loud music and ending up in intense improvised movement and, in essence, an “unscrewing” of the body. For the next 5' the group talks about the experience of this second activity.

### 3rd Activity – Discussion (30 minutes)

This activity focuses on the communication that can be developed between two bodies during contact that occurs gradually at different points. It starts during the first 10' finding a common contact point between the two dancers, back to back, as they sit with crossed legs on the floor. We try to restrict large movements and to focus on the contact point between the two bodies. We take enough time to understand the body of our fellow dancer and to develop the communication between the two bodies, focusing on our breathing. Patience is the key word. The verbs wait, lead, listen to each other's body are necessary in order to build a relationship. When communication fails to establish, when the two bodies for example cannot find a shared rhythm, when they don't lead – follow or they can't synchronize it is useful to realize why this happened. However, it is useful for communication to fail to establish because questions on why this happened arise, and this is a necessary procedure for the progress of both dancers.

In the next 10' we develop this contact point by extending it, allowing our whole body to touch performing spiral movements. We relax the head and keep our spine straight without slouching. We are still working from the lower and medium level with our fellow dancer and, using our joints gently, we use circular movements to silently glide to the floor. Now we can transfer some of our weight onto our partner and they can use it either to roll on the floor, or to support us or to support themselves. But we don't transfer our weight on the knees, the elbows, the neck or the spine when the other is at a low level. We now use our hands' strength to push away the floor and to divide our weight between our partner and ourselves. We try, for the whole duration of this exercise, to find a contact point, which can alternate mainly on our torso and pelvis. We use soft background music to better cultivate the communication between the bodies. Loudness and intensity does not help communication that is why we prefer slow music, classical or background music. For the next 10' we get to the standing level and we find contact points on our limbs as well (arms, legs, head). During the whole process we allow the pairs to talk to each other in low voices about the progress of the exercise so that they feel safe in the steps they follow and the educators may intervene if problems arise to provide solutions.

### 4th Activity – Discussion (40 minutes)

All pairs are asked to present in 30' their kinesiological material to all the participants. This procedure should not exceed, for everyone's presentation, 30'. One pair presents in the middle of the class and the rest simply observe. The pairs are free to enter or exit the circle. When a pair is in the middle of the circle and another decides to enter the first needs to leave. The visualization of the dancing experience through observation is an important tool in learning to dance and in understanding our own mobility abilities, as well as those of the people we observe. For the next 10' a discussion with the group follows.

## END OF PROCEDURE

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