

Lesson Title	SPINE
Group	Mixed group
Target group	people with and without physical disabilities
Number of participants	16
Duration	2 hours
Materials	puzzle mats, headphones, pillows, mattresses, scratches, wheelchairs, chairs, smartphones, i-pods, tapes, ropes, stairs, corridors

Goal - Essential question:

This course is based on choreographic research.

Through improvisation we investigate:

choreographic devices and composition skills, choices and decision making in dance, quality of movement, repetition, accumulation and spatial organization.

Our aim is the exploration of solo work, however duo, trio, quartet and group work will take place and will lead to new creation/compositions and performance.

Objectives –Inquiries-Questions

Choreography as an art form can offer a sense of achievement and success. Since the workshops are attended by a group of people coming from different backgrounds in movement and dance, the main idea is to give the opportunity to each one of them to deepen their own work.

For beginners, that this is their first participation in an inclusive movement workshop, the research will be based on the creation of a movement phrase. In the case of more advanced students that have a stronger background (participating the last three years in the workshops, following a dance study curriculum etc.) the goal will be towards the realization of a complete idea leading to their own unique creation. The focus is on the study of movement and the presence of the performer.

A solo choreography can be a challenge for practice based research work beyond our regular weekly meetings. Moreover, through this approach we believe that the work can become more responsive, attentive and flexible to each individuals needs and as a result the workshops are effective and fully inclusive. Examples will be given of the way the workshops are planned. These are indicative of this kind of process where the focus is on a creative approach and not a technically based class.

To quote M. Tufnell and C. Crickmay 'any creative process is to this extent improvised and involves states of not knowing what comes next'.

Improvisation is used mostly during these workshops as a means to explore movement material, to train our perception and kinesthetic awareness in order to develop solo work but also to develop group relationships. 'Improvisation provides us with a means to excavating layers of experience, sensation, character, feeling that we normally rush through or suppress – to travel deeper and deeper into an ever enlarging and changing moment...As a strategy for discovering and developing images it both demands and creates a whole range of skills, the most important of which is an ability to be still and open one's attention to the present moment'. Moreover, chorographical concepts are being introduced and explored.

Through the course of our 12 encounters, our main interest is in how dance can provide the means, through which we can gain confidence through movement, can challenge ourselves and further develop our knowledge both individually and as a group.

PROCEDURE

Introduction - Warm up through breath rhythm (30 minutes)

Starting point: lying on the floor, forming a circle with the feet pointing to the centre of the circle. We close our eyes. We raise our palms to cover our eyes and we try to relax the retina. We then place our hands on the diaphragm allowing the breath rhythm to manifest fully in our bodies. We take time to relax enjoying the silence. Lighting in the room is soft letting the senses relax in here and now. The palms still rest on the diaphragm when we start moving slowly through our finger tips. This initiates a movement quality that is extremely free flow and light. We continue by letting the movement develop through the fingers, the palms, the wrists, the elbows, the arm, while allowing a dialogue to build between two points of reference e.g the index finger and the elbow.

Next step will be that of working with bound and heavy qualities of movement. This can be just a continuation of the previous situation as we are still lying on the floor and we need to initiate actions in our body. We alternate between pushing the floor with different body parts thus contracting the body and then releasing it.

Transition (5 minutes)

The second part of the fore mentioned improvisation work is demonstrated: that of pushing the floor with different body parts that concludes to a relaxation state.

Discussion (5 minutes)

Discussion takes place usually at the end of each workshop.

Questions (5 minutes)

Feedback is given on how to elaborate the tasks more clearly giving more time to the dancers to try some parts again and enabling them to gain consciousness and make their comments to be more clear and specific.

1st Activity | solo improvisation task (30 minutes)

Standing or sitting in a wheelchair. We concentrate on our spine and its curves, its vertebrae, its discs, ligaments, nerves. We start by allowing movement to travel through the spine and all of its five regions: the coccyx, sacral, lumbar, thoracic and cervical region. This task is firstly manifested in one's own kinesphere and at another stage we move into the general space. The initiation of the movement comes always from the spine. We can give enough time so as to explore the space in the body thoroughly before moving the body in to the space.

2nd Activity | group improvisation task (30 minutes)

Following the solo improvisation process a group activity is always enjoyable because it incorporates elements of play, pleasure and freedom. It can bond the group together and be an interesting example of a final stage before the workshop ends. Starting point for this is a line with all the participants standing next to each other and holding each other. The task is to cross the room. This can be approached in different stages. We can start by crossing the room moving forward in a straight line. We can allow curve pathways to build up, by moving forward or backwards, changing fronts, but always keeping a contact point between each other. This kind of contact can vary from holding hands to touching a wheelchair, but also exchanging contact points and affecting the pathway of the moving line. Central point of reference throughout this improvisation task is the initiation of the movement through the spine.

END OF PRODECURE



Bibliography

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