

Lesson Title	BODY AND BODY PARTS
Group	Mixed group
Target group	People with learning disabilities
Level	This class is open to people of all levels
Number of participants	15-20
Duration	1h 45min

Goal:

A first meeting with contemporary dance on the theme of Body & body parts.

Through this theme the participants will discover different principles and variations of contemporary dance both individually as well as in interaction with another body.

Practical setup

For this lesson you will need two leaders and preferably two helpers/assistants – one of them will manage the music of the workshop.

At times we provide another option or a variation of the same exercise. The room has been prepared and all four walls are covered with a paper of a different color that can be referred to rather than “left/ right, / front, /back.”

The estimated length is with explanation included.

Useful tools:

It is better to physically show, by being an example, rather than only to explain.

If explanation is needed – use pictures/ imaginary pictures.

Try to offer different ways of providing the information; it can be done verbally, through imaginary pictures, through touch, through spatial awareness, through sounds, rhythm, music etc.

PROCEDURE

Hi & welcome

Estimated time: 4 min

- We gather in a circle, introducing the leaders & helpers.
- Quick presentation of the facilities, toilets and choice of clothes.
- Presentation of the theme of the workshop, the basic structure of the workshop.
- It is good to mention that it is ok to go to the toilet at any time, remember to take care and that there is no right or wrong. This workshop welcomes everyone and together we will make sure we all are able to take part.
- We get to know the leaders & helpers.

Option:

If there is a participant with visual impairment this is a good time to take a tour of the room of the workshop using touch – a touch tour.

1. Pointy finger + name exercise

The purpose with this exercise is to get to know everybody's name and get a small glimpse of everyone's personality as well as to introduce a brief experience of touching another body/person.

Standing in a circle.

No music needed.

Estimated length: 8 min

The leader draws the attention of the participants and implies with his body language and facial expression that there is something in his pocket. Suddenly a pointy finger pops out. The leader points to himself saying his or her name - the finger takes a little journey and offers the pointy finger to the next person's finger (this person should be a helper which makes it easier to set and show an example). The next person in line uses his or her finger pointing himself or herself and says his or her name - that person's finger journey starts and seeks the next person's finger. This happens for everyone in the group and it is a way of introducing different elements just by showing (levels, tempo, mime, theatrical qualities, comical associations, connotations, associations, qualities etc).

Option:

If a person with a visual impairment is participating one option could be to make up an imaginary name for every movement or a sound so that the person can use that to create a movement (Eg. Peder with "the explosion flower with two dots"). Another option is to help the person feel the different movements the other participants are making. If a person with a hearing impairment is participating one option could be to use the exercise "Sign name", which is explained below.

2. Sign name

The purpose of this exercise is to get to know everybody's names with a sign name like the ones used in deaf culture. Just as personal as your name, but easy and accessible to dancers with a hearing impairment. This creates an easy- to-remember name, and that way it is not necessary for everyone to know sign language and it saves time.

Gathered in a circle.

No music.

Estimated length: 15 min

The leader presents the idea of a sign name. A personal name created from personal qualities, actions, habits or interests. Ideas regarding the name are welcomed but the person has to agree to his final chosen name. The leader shows his or her sign name with a movement and lip-mimicking. Next person in the circle repeats the leader's sign name and then the process of finding a sign name for that person starts. Once agreed upon this continues to the next person until everybody has a sign name.

Second part:

In order to get the sign names settled, you can start with the leader saying his or her sign name and then the next person in the circle repeats the leader's sign name and saying/says his or her sign name. The next person repeats the sign name of the previous person and says his or her sign name. This goes on until everybody's sign name has been said out loud.

Variation on the second part:

To get the sign names settled after assigning the sign names you can start again with the leader saying his or her name and then the next person in the circle repeats the leader's name and says his or her sign name.

The next person repeats the sign name of the leader, the sign name of the previous person and says his or her name. Every person repeats all the names from the beginning and adds his or hers in the end. This goes on until everybody's name has been said out loud.

3. Skin, muscles, bones - waking up the body in three depths

The purpose of the exercise is to wake up the different layers of the body from the outside as well as introduce three depths of touch- starting with your skin, moving I onto the muscles and then onto the bones. All this with the breath actively engaged.

Continue in a circle.

Music of your choice -maybe some nice background music.

Estimated length: 4 min

We breathe in and breathe out. We rub our hands together to create heat. We start with the outer layer of the body – the skin. We use one hand in a swiftly and energetic way waking up the skin on the other hand, working through the arm on all sides, shoulders, back of shoulders, neck, and chest. We must remember to use our breath. We change hand over to the other shoulder and the other arm. The two hands are now activated. Work from the chest down toward the stomach, side of our body, we try to reach the back parts our body. We move on to the pelvis back and front, one leg at a time all the way down to our feet .We go back up and start with layer two – a slightly deeper grip acknowledging the muscles, feeling the tension and the texture. We work ourselves through the body in the same way as above. The third time we go for the bones, we feel our bones and how the skeleton of our body feels and is constructed. We finish off by breathing in - we stretch our arms up and use the hands starting on our head showering down on the body swiftly through the skin - all the way down. We repeat the last shower three times.

4. Stretch, bend and twist

The purpose of the exercise is to warm up the body by stretching, bending and twisting.

Gathered in a circle.

Some nice background music with or without rhythm.

Estimated length: 5 min

Here are some suggestions of elements that can be used. We are free to add or change elements. The leader shows and everybody follows. No learning or explanation beforehand needed. If we have decided to use music with a rhythm, we then follow that rhythm; if our music is one without rhythm we don't use it.

Option:

If we are using legs we must make sure we also provide something for participants not using legs.

We start with breathing in, our arms up along our sides, palms together above our head pulling them down through our centerline. We repeat three times. We reach our arms up above our head and breathe in. We release them down and breathe out. We repeat three times. We say yes. We look down in front of us and up above us, moving our head – we repeat three times. With our head to the middle, we look from side to side, saying no a few times. We roll our shoulders front, up, back, down - we repeat four times. The opposite way back, up, front and down – we repeat four times. We bend our upper body sides and bend our legs pretending to pull up carrots from the earth on each side of our body. We repeat four times - alternating sides with a “rolling down the upper body” in between before we go again. Fast feet and fast hands together moving out from the center on both sides and in again. Out, out, in, in.

Or:

front front, middle middle, side side, middle middle, back back, middle middle, side side, middle middle. We shift our weight from side to side. We move out from the circle all together and then move in. Twists for our upper body, reaching up with one arm to opposite corner/side, other side, then down corner/side and other side. Crawling (alternate arm moving to our back and up around one at a time).

5. Freeze and investigate

The purpose of this exercise is to break the ice and move together. We will put a little focus on each and everybody while following easy, imaginary inspiring instructions. We will also practice stillness, experience proximity to others, introduce qualities and elements that will appear later.

We spread out in the room.

Music of our choice – maybe different types of music to stimulate choices.

Estimated length: 9 min

We start by mingling amongst each other in space – following our own path.

- First instruction:

“We move like the running water – a stream or a river. (The leader enriches the instruction with more words if needed but mainly by being a dancing example and moving around to inspire the others...While moving the leader explains what happens next:) We keep moving as different waters...soon I will call out two names. The dancers who will hear their name will freeze wherever they are. All the others will immediately drop what they are doing and run to find them. Without touching them, we will investigate and explore the shape and spaces they create. The two persons

that will freeze are X and... Y! Let's explore their position and spaces. Levels, holes, under, around, over, in between...."

- Second instruction:

"Now everybody including the frozen ones will move as if we have no balance - go!! We might almost fall around, we keep trying to be in balance... but we fail...." And then repeat the previous:

"We keep moving with no balance... soon I will call out two names and then those persons will freeze wherever they are...."

The rest of the instructions:

- *"Now everybody (including the frozen ones) will move as smooth as a cat ... go!!*
- *Now everybody (including the frozen ones) will move as if going through a jungle ... go (through bushes, in high grass, jumping over a river)!!*
- *Now everybody (including the frozen ones) will move as if it is very slippery on the floor or any flat surface. It's hard to stop and we slip all the time... go!!*
- *Now everybody (including the frozen ones) will move as if being overcooked spaghetti... go (very loose, no joints, no stability)!!*
- *Now (everybody including the frozen ones) will pretend to be a fish... go (maybe swimming slowly, or quick, change direction, looking for friends or looking for food, maybe escaping a shark, finding new nice sea areas)"*
- *Finish off by introducing tempo: "Ok – everybody... great... let us move faster – and faster... and faster... now slower, slower – like an action movie in slow motion towards a circle in the room... (This exercise works great with the use of contrasting intense music) and let's just have a pause, let's move again – short pause, move again – and pause...Thank you."*

6. Quality and body parts -Part 1

The purpose of this exercise is to take time to focus on a few selected parts of the body that are the same for all participants. Then we will add on and try out some specific movement actions and qualities.

In a circle

Music of our choice

Estimated length: 8 min

We are all placed in a circle. We all start with the already introduced pointy finger (we choose a body part that everybody can use). We introduce the action of bending. We explore how we can bend our pointy finger (the leader/and helpers may inspire and show different options if ideas are needed).

Now we introduce the quality of sharpness – we explore our pointy finger in a sharp way. Let's add another pointy finger. Now we have two. We explore sharp movements and bendy movements. A possibility of interaction between participants here...We will now change body parts and use our elbow. We explore bendy elbows and then sharp elbows and then two elbows. The circle may open

up. If there is time we try the same thing with the whole arm. We take a short journey with these parts of the body and then gather on the blue side of the room.

7. Quality and body parts-Part 2

The purpose of this exercise is to take time to focus on a few selected parts of the body that are the same for all participants while adding on movement actions and qualities as well as travelling across the room.

From one side to the other
Music of our choice
Estimated length: 8 min

We will go back to the pointy finger and the sharp movement. Now we will add one more thing – lengthening. We move a body part sharply, then lengthen it and repeat until we reach the other side. So now we will use the elbow in the same way but we will cover more space across the room over to the red side. We gather on the blue side of the room.

8. Open/Close

The purpose of this exercise is to explore different parts of our body with the actions of opening and closing.

We gather in a circle
Music of our choice
Estimated length: 5 min

We go through opening and closing in four different variations:

- Our arms open up as a start of a hug (+ wide turned out legs) and close as if hugging ourselves (+ turned in knees) for example. We repeat a few times.
- Our Eyes – we open and close. We repeat a few times.
- Our spine/upper body – we open by releasing our stomach and close by sucking our stomach in.
- The side of the body – we open a side- then other side. We should mention here that while one side is opening – the other is closing.

We encourage participants to explore and investigate – what other places in our body is it possible to open or close? Throat, neck, armpit, back of knees, hands, feet.

9. Open/Close across the room

The purpose of this exercise is to explore different parts of our body with the action of opening and closing while covering space.

From one side to the other (note the color)

Music of our choice

Estimated length: 8 min

We gather on the red shorter side and travel eg. three by three exploring opening and closing across the floor. When the participants are ready, we ask for small and big openings, maybe adding levels (high, middle, low) and tempo (slow, middle, fast).

Small 3 min break for water

10. Introducing elements for a little dance

The purpose of this exercise is to introduce or repeat elements that will be used in a small dance based on the theme body and body parts.

We spread out in the room,

Music of our choice

Estimated length: 6 min

We lead and encourage the participants to move inspired by water. We let them find their versions of their water or even their invented water. Stream, river, beam of water, spray, fog, sea, water gun, raindrops.... Maybe even pink water?

We go through levels in the room while being water: low, middle, high. We open and close as seashells and maybe we have some interactions with others. We go through the tool size: small, middle, large and larger – we become waves in a storm. We freeze and melt. We play. We finish off by finding one or a few different connection points to another body. Then we might try to move all together while being connected. Parts become a unit. The rivers become a lake.

11. The sea

The purpose of this exercise is to make a score together that we can dance to, a small dance based on the theme "body and body parts".

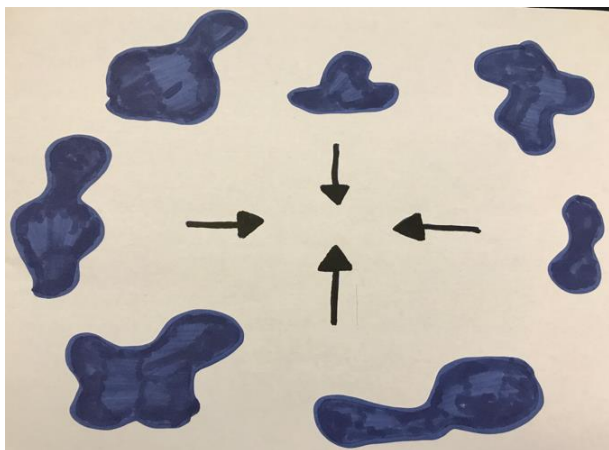
In the whole room.

Music of our choice.

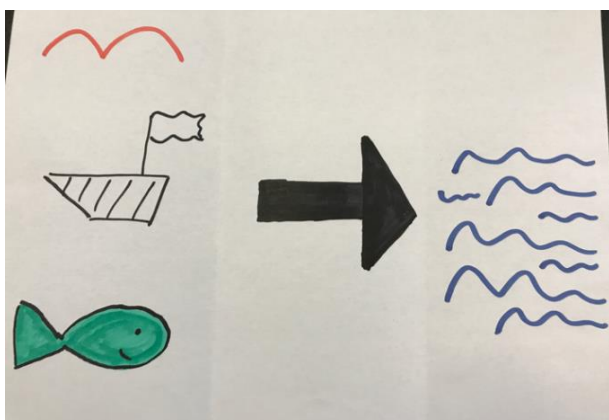
Estimated length: 20 min

We have pictures to help the explanations. We find a good place for the pictures so they also can work as a memory map. This might be done in two or more groups with the waiting group waiting in the positions of the first picture or an audience.

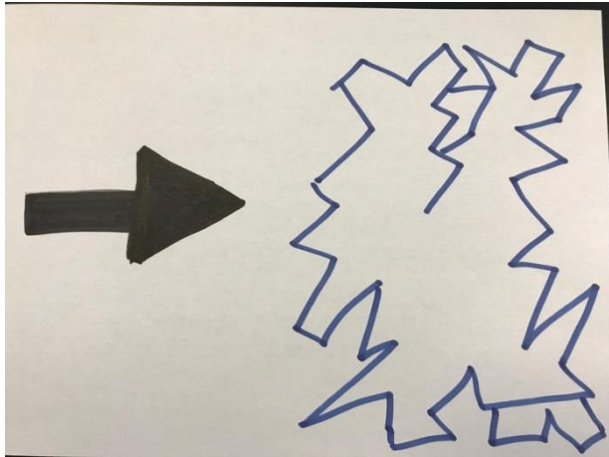
1. We are water in a lake (from exercise No. 9).



2. The water travels in our chosen level (high, middle, low from exercise No. 9) – towards the middle – we connect to each other physically (from exercise No. 5 and 6) and become one with the sea.



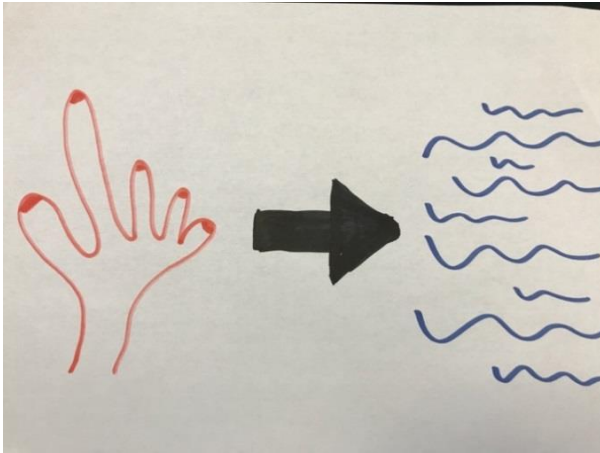
3. The sea travels to the North pole and turns into ice (everybody is connected and travels as one big sea)



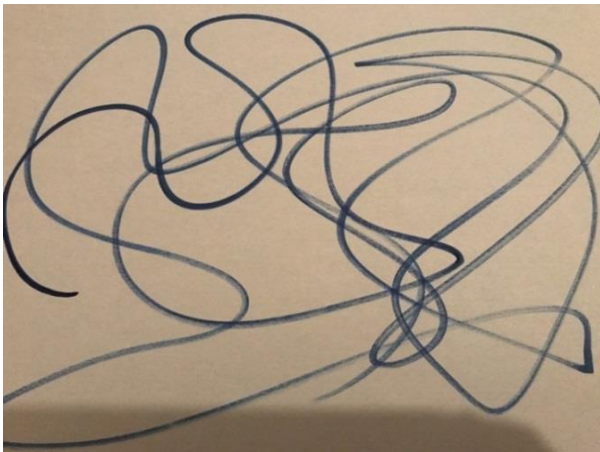
4. Global warming happens - the iceberg melts (from exercise No. 9) and collapses downwards as a low sea - as far down as we can (still connected).



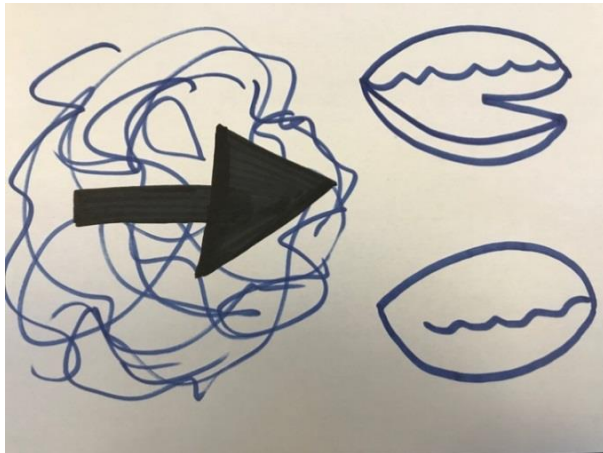
5. One by one we release the connection points and engage in a finger dance (from exercise No. 1).
Through the room – and we become the sea in another corner.



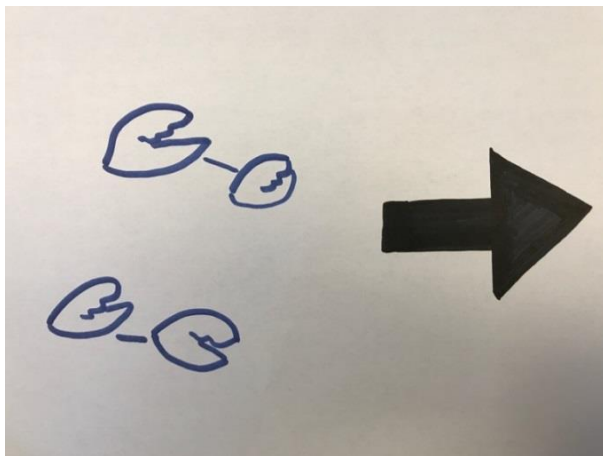
6. The wind starts to blow, waves starts to appear and increase in size (from exercise No. 9).



7. One selected person starts. One by one we are pushed out by the storm and move in a stormy way to a calmer place and become a seashell. The seashells are constantly opening and closing themselves (from exercise No. 7 and 8) making a calm dance together. Maybe closing and opening around each other?



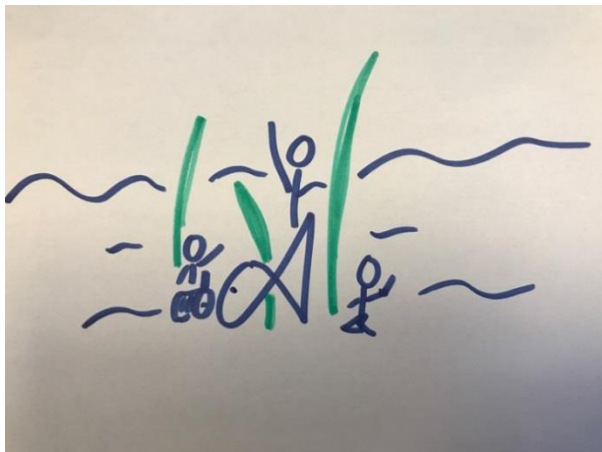
8. We find a seashell friend, make a dance towards the middle of the room.



9. We play with each other in the sea world. Happy herrings, dolphins, hot springs, whales, bubbly water and maybe even waterfalls. We have our moment!



10. After playing – we get as close together as we can without touching each other, we take down the speed and move with a feeling of seaweed in a sea.



12. Warm down

The purpose of this exercise is to gather the group, refocus and give attention to the body with slow stretches, breath and extra care. We finish with a small little hand dance.

We gather in a circle.

Music of our choice.

Estimated length: 5 min

We breathe in, and breathe out twice. Our arms make a half circle starting down and out from the body up over the head – we stretch up and let our arms just release down. Our chin towards our chest and we dive down as far as we can and then roll up our spine again. With our two hands together we rub up some heat. We put them somewhere on our body that needs some extra care or attention. We breathe there for a moment. We release our arms down, we stretch up one last time – arms to the side – we touch the hands of the person next to us – we do a small hand dance before we finish.

END OF PROCEDURE
