Name/Title: Improvisation

Purpose of Event: Explore different techniques of communicating emotion, interpreting personal and group dance space, integrating personal style into expanded group expression, and peripheral understanding of rhythm and timing to synchronize movement.

Prerequisites: None. This is particularly good to orient children and adults of all ages with disabilities to a creative environment where everyone's individuality is an acceptable form of expression and can easily be adopted by other participants. A collective language is the ultimate outcome of this class.

Suggested Grade Level: 3-5

Materials Needed: Comfortable loose clothing; bare feet or socks; a metronome, tamborine, or drum; a timer

Recommended music: Not needed. Students are listening to each others footsteps to determine synchronisity of motion with each other. This is where a metronome, drum, or tamborine could be used.

Beginning dance formation: Relaxation exercises (e.g. yoga breathing and light stretching). Begin seated and then stand and stretch as a group.

Dance source: This lesson idea is taken in part from curriculum content of a dance course, Dance Improvisation (1992) from the State University of New York College at Purchase.

Description of Idea

Varying exercises: (each of these can be timed)

1. Enact a verb, ie: tremor
2. Enact a series of verbs. Each person can make up their own and must perform for a specific time period.
3. Enact a situation, ie: dressing (Several small groups can each take a different situation and one person will begin the pantomime. The others join and elaborate.)
4. Walk in pace across room next to someone else
5. Begin a rhythm using only hands and limbs as instruments and have group join in one by one for several minutes.
6. Collective dance formations: groups of approx. 8 people stand in a square formation each facing the same direction. A person from the front row begins a series of motions of their choice which the others follow as close as possible. That person then turns to a different direction, creating a new front line. Another person from the new front line begins and this continues.

Variations:

Additional exercises can be added from familiar acting techniques and other dance and music sources.

Assessment Ideas:

Did the participants expand their concept of dance and movement? Did they feel comfortable participating? Did this bring out creativity in each person?

Submitted by **Gretchen Kraus** in Danbury, CT. Thanks for contributing to PE Central! **Posted on PEC: 11/29/2001**.

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