



# **Method Sheets**

## **Use of Space, Time & Proxemics**

Understanding how to make the best use of a given space for a performance is a skill in itself, it heavily influences the finished product. Correct understanding and use of timing are also vital. Proxemics, and how each of us has differing needs for personal space is more important than ever in these times of COVID. When working with people with disabilities it can be even more important that all participants understand the agreed guidelines about proximity to each other and touch.

In this exercise, we approach communication through the notions of time and space. Time and space are two components of dance movement that will enable participants to have a non-verbal mode of communication.

Eye contact is essential during this phase.

## **Title of the activity**

Use of Space, Time & Proxemics

## **Activity proposed by**

Compagnie DK-BEL

## **Duration**

120 minutes per workshop

## **Participants**

- Minimum four participants, maximum number depends on space available and helpers.
- Accessible to all except blind people.

# Aims

Advancing using different components of movement:

- proximity (close or far from each other and other objects in the space)
- level (low to the floor or stretching up high on tiptoes)
- timing/speed (very slow/ slow/fast/very fast)
- energy (low energy, sloth-like/high energy, Tasmanian devil)

# Material

- A safe space big enough for the group
- Several options of upbeat music
- Speaker/sound system

# Preparation

Make sure the floor is clean, music is cued up and the speaker is working. Prepare an area to store shoes, coats, bags etc. Any paperwork needed should be printed and laid out with pens to hand.

# Steps/Instructions

Bring the group together in a circle. Each participant gives their first name aloud to the circle. Then, in the second round, each participant must give the name of the person to their right. In the third round, they give the name of the person to their left.

Ask two participants to move by walking or dancing to the music in the space whilst looking at each other continuously: connection with eye contact. All participant interactions should be non-verbal and activities wordless. Use dynamic music. Guide verbally if you see a participant in difficulty.

Then give instructions of movement concerning the space:

1. With the notion of distance, near and far:
  - Partners getting closer: being close / being very close, whilst keeping eye contact
  - Partners moving further away: being far away / being very far away whilst keeping eye contact
2. With the notions of level:
  - Partners go low to the floor whilst keeping eye contact
  - Partners stretch up high whilst keeping eye contact
3. By introducing the notion of timing/speed
  - Partners move quickly or very quickly whilst keeping eye contact

- Partners move slowly or very slowly whilst keeping eye contact

Ask the group to swap partners often to establish a group dynamic and the notion of play. The duration of the game varies depending on the attention of the group and the shared pleasure of performing it.

An optional next step is to add an action verb like jump, turn, or side-by-side whenever the partners are close, never forgetting the importance of keeping eye contact throughout.

## **Evaluation method (if applicable)**

- Gather the group in a circle to go over the session
- Give positive feedback highlighting all the collaborations that emerged during the session
- Let the dancers express themselves about the experience and feedback about the workshop
- The closing includes indicating how the session may continue
- Prepare any future sessions by noting the successful duets

## **Hints / Tips for facilitators**

- Be ready to assess the skills of each of the dancers in different fields (psychomotor, understanding instructions as well as the desire to participate).
- It is important to get a feel for the affinities between dancers so that they can start forming working groups.

## **Variations (if applicable)**

- Caregivers are able to help dancers pronounce their first name or say it for them if they are unable to do so. The group begins to get acquainted in a playful form. These warm-up exercises will allow you to assess whether the instructions can be understood by all.
- If the level of understanding of one of the dancers does not allow them to work alone, one of the caregivers will be able to participate with them. Subsequently, this help will come from one of the other dancers directly.

## **Method**

This method was created by Compagnie DK-BEL. This activity sheet lists the steps of the first workshop. If you would like more information on this method or would like to learn how to manage subsequent workshops, please contact Sophie Bulbulyan at [sophie.bulbulyan@dk-bel.com](mailto:sophie.bulbulyan@dk-bel.com).



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