



# Method Sheets

## **Title of the activity**

Making Space for Each Other /  
Creating Spaces Together

## **Activity proposed by**

Anna Vekiari

## **Duration**

20 minutes

## **Participants**

From 2 to 20 for the duets exercise  
From 4 to 20 for the group exercise

## **Aims**

- to be aware of the negative (empty) space the body creates while changing shapes or moving
- to contact through the element of action/reaction
- to improve communication skills
- to design through space with others
- to feel like a member of the group

## **Material**

- A comfortable space
- A music player

## **Preparation**

Ask the participants to wear comfortable clothes and socks.

## **Steps / Instructions**

1. Show what “negative space” is and then explain the exercise. (Negative space is the different inner spaces our body creates when we make a shape.)

After giving the instructions, choose a member of the group to help you demonstrate to the others. Be sure that everybody understands before beginning.

2. In partners, one person creates spaces with its body while making a shape and the other one tries to fit into it. When the second partner fills that negative space, the first partner leaves to make a new one. The aim is for partners to fit into each other "negative spaces" like a puzzle piece. The initiator can decide if there is physical contact between partners.

3. After explaining the exercise, separate the group into pairs and decide which one will be creating spaces and which one will be fitting into them. The partners can also decide this for themselves if confident enough to do so. Start the music for the exercise. Give the group 2-4 minutes and then ask them to exchange roles.

4. The second step is for the pairs to continue building upon the same idea of filling the negative space. One person makes a "space" and the other fits into it. Then, the first person moves away and tries to fill in a space that their partner has already created. In this way, there is a body chain that is creating and travelling throughout the space. Give the group 3-5 minutes for this activity.

4. Allow time at the end of the activity to talk about what happened.

5. Group activity: One person enters the space and makes a shape. The second person joins and makes a shape that fits into the first person's negative space. This continues until, one by one, all the other members enter the space and connect with the whole group. When the whole group is finished, one person moves away and makes a new shape away from the group. Then one by one, the group leaves the first group pose to join the newly created one. These shapes can travel and use the whole space. If the group has already built a good rapport then they can take the initiative themselves to decide who makes the initial shape.

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

Participants should be asked for feedback after class if it is possible.

For some severe disabilities it is not easy to communicate through language so you will need to "read" the feedback from their body language or their response to the information given.

## **Hints/tips for facilitators**

- Instructions should be clear and demonstrations of each exercise should be given before beginning.
- Modifications can be made as needed depending on the group or disabilities.

- Exercise timing: Try to feel the energy of the group so that you feel when the exercise should come to a close. Sometimes people need time to embody an instruction and connect with others.
- Do not end exercises suddenly. It is helpful to give a 'one-minute warning' before the end. For example, you can say "you have just a little bit longer".
- Advise each pair to take their time to find an end together.
- For the group exercise you can set the order if you feel that the group needs it. One of the aims of the exercise is to let the participants feel it for themselves and the group.

## **Variations (if applicable)**

- For limited mobility participants you can set an assistant from the group to help them enter the space.
- For blind people, you add the element of touch. The person that fills the space of the other can sense the shape of their partner by touch.

## **Method**

The method used is based on dance improvisation techniques and the DanceAbility technique. For further information, you can contact Anna Vekiari at [www.exisdancecompany.gr](http://www.exisdancecompany.gr) or [www.danceability.com](http://www.danceability.com)



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