

PROJECT BY SARENA WOLFAARD

*From Teacher to Process Work*  
*Experiential Facilitator in a*  
*Conscious Dance Practice*

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# Question

**How do the principles and skills of Process Work allow for growth in my perception as a teacher and facilitator, and change my relationship to the group?**

**Purpose:** The purpose of this project is to show how through studying Process Work I have developed and grown from a teacher of a movement practice into a Process Work experiential facilitator in a dance community.

The objectives are to show:

- How I examined the various tools of Process Work to see how I integrated these into movement group teaching and facilitation.
- How these tools changed the way I teach and facilitate.
- How I use inner work to become more fluid in my role as facilitator and dealing with insecurity and the critic.
- How I use disturbances in myself and in the group to facilitate the group.
- How through the study of Process Work my relationship to the group changes.
- How I shift from a theoretical understanding of Process Work to an embodied way of working.

# Approach

This project is about my journey and growth working with a community of dancers. It is a personal account, with the intention to provide examples of experiences that might resonate with other movement teachers. It does not seek to provide a new method, but rather a demonstration of what is possible for a seeker of awareness using Process Work methods. I have used a heuristic research approach in writing this project and expand on this further down.

## **What do we mean by *awareness*?**

Using the word ‘awareness’ raises the question of what exactly awareness is. There can be a wide interpretation of the term, depending on one’s perspective, field of interest, culture and unique personality. It is the view of Arlene Audergon that awareness is different for everyone, that we all have a different experience of what it is (Audergon 2005). For example, awareness could be the ‘pulling together of different strands of information to form a hypothesis, or the interpretation or analysis of events’ (Audergon 2005: 256 ). Some say that awareness originates in the mind while others locate its origin in the heart. In the Buddhist tradition, awareness is described as ‘the ultimate nature of mind and a synonym for the awakened state. It is knowing as a state of being, a direct personal experience, that gives one complete certainty and confidence’ (Fremantle 2001: 197). Joseph Goodbread, speaking from a Jungian perspective in *Living on the Edge*, describes how we gain awareness. He says it is similar to staring into a stream. We see nothing at first and then, as we continue to watch, solid objects begin to be revealed; at first the shadowy outlines of fish emerge from the emptiness, then further rich detail. ‘To discover this world requires no manipulation, only patience, curiosity, and an interest in expanding one’s awareness’

(Goodbread 2011: 37). In practices where we use the body, for example conscious

dance or mountain climbing, awareness is often described as focused attention and connection to the body in relation to the environment or to another (Audergon 2005). As a therapist, I work with the different parts the client identifies with, or doesn't identify with, allowing the client to pay attention and feel fully, relative to other perspectives, to feel different angles; for example, how it would feel to be in another's shoes. As a movement facilitator I sometimes work with focused attention and at times with giving space to experiences to be fully felt, to notice relational aspects, or to notice what is missing or just outside my attention. This I describe as expanding our awareness in the dance.

As part of this assignment I studied myself by recording classes and paying attention to the words I used, to what I saw happening on the dance floor, and to my reflections within the framework of Process Work theory. I had many sessions over several years with my mentor, Kate Jobe, and I will be forever grateful to her for her light touch, her brilliant mind and her encouragement, telling me where I brought something new to the field. We reflected, unfolded and explored both my own and her experiences. I came away feeling inspired and with new ideas to explore further in movement classes. It is therefore an experiential piece of work and might be of interest to other movement teachers or those working with Process Work awareness as a tool to use with groups and for themselves.

## **Research method**

The project is inspired by the tradition of heuristic research. In an article published in *Nurse Researcher*, Kenny describes how this type of research came from Mousaka, who said that 'the research process begins with the identification of a question ...' (Kenny 2012: 7). This question is one that is deeply felt, and has an emotional effect on the researcher. It should be lived and embodied by the researcher. Heidegger is cited

as saying that ‘an embodied question allows the inquiry to work on us and influence the quality of our thinking and exploration, which in turn guides the experience and the understanding we achieve’ (Kenny 2012: 7). My research questions came from my own experience and struggles as a movement teacher. (I say more about the emotional effects later in this study.) During my inquiry and while writing this current project I noticed that how I engaged with my experience, how I thought about it, became an internal exploration using Process Work methods. This allowed me to unfold the experience on a deeper level, to find out what was emerging or what was within the initial experience.

‘Heuristic inquiry is an extremely demanding process, involving disciplined self-commitment, rigorous self-searching and self-reflection, and ultimately surrender to the process’ (Hiles 2001: online). I learnt how to surrender to the process in me, not just as teacher and facilitator, but also as the writer of this study.

A further method I used during the writing was to notice how I use Process Work as a modality in doing research. My research did not just involve studying my experiences and reading about movement, dance or Process Work. It involved an experiential approach, which meant studying what happened in the moment – this included studying my feelings or experiences during classes, as well as during the writing of the project. The project thus includes my experiences of being a mover, dancer, writer and holder of space, procrastinator, doubter and intellectual.



# Introduction

The background to this project is that I wanted to become more effective as a teacher of movement.<sup>1</sup> I work with a community of dancers who dance weekly, mostly 5Rhythms and at times Open Floor. In 2015 I did some research with two other 5Rhythms teachers asking dancers why they use 5Rhythms. We received feedback from dancers across the world and this was incorporated into a chapter titled ‘The 5Rhythms® Movement Practice’, published in *The Oxford Handbook of Dance and Wellbeing* edited by Vicky Karkou, Sue Oliver and Sophia Lycouris (Vargas-Gibson et al. 2017). The respondents gave many and varied reasons for why people were doing conscious dance, including: meeting new people, promoting health and wellbeing, achieving fitness or having fun, among others. Some come for the feeling of being embodied, for developing a deeper awareness of their dance experience physically and in the psyche. These are also some of the reasons why I started to dance and why I became a teacher. I got curious about how I could be a more effective teacher to encourage more physical and psychological awareness for dancers.

## Why

I embarked on this project:

- because of my own experiences as a dance teacher and my struggle to be a better teacher
- because of the tools I learnt and studied in Process Work and
- because I wanted to find out how to use these tools more consciously as a movement teacher, as opposed to incidentally, in order to be more effective.

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<sup>1</sup> I use the word ‘movement’ in this project as the word ‘dance’ has associations of steps and particular ways of moving.

I was reminded by Kate Jobe that I was looking here for the differences and similarities between the dance and Process Work.

I wanted to bring something from Process Work to help dancers with their experience. I already included Process Work in classes: I framed, posed open ended questions, noticed my own inner world in the moment, identified roles in myself and in them (the group), and wanted to study this in more detail.

Part of the WHY is the question: what specifically has Process Work given me as the dance teacher? This is evident in my yearning for something tangible that I bring to teaching movement, and the spontaneous applications of Process Work that excited me. My journey in writing this project was about how I noticed the shifts and changes in me as I teach; how Process Work supports me as a movement teacher in being a facilitator of what is going on in the room; and how my own personal journey and development impacted on my role. Here I am reminded of Parker J. Palmer (1998) saying we must enter, and not evade, the challenges of teaching to understand them better and negotiate them with more grace. This is not only to look after our own spirit, but also in service to our students.

I wanted more tools and greater confidence as a teacher. For example, during classes I would feel irritated or upset when dancers did not do as I suggested, or I would feel excited when I saw them respond positively. I couldn't read the feedback and this played into my own psychological complexes. I felt at the mercy of what happened in the class, as if it was my responsibility to make everyone happy and if this didn't happen, I was at fault. Process Work provided a tool to witness and experience more objectively.

I also started noticing how the language or concepts of Process Work unintentionally slipped into my teaching. This made me curious as to how I could use

Process Work to develop the way I work, to create a different platform of experience for the dancers and myself.

### How the project developed

The project started with the idea of investigating the *movement channel* as used in Process Work as a comparison to my teaching of 5Rhythms® and Open Floor (both of these are conscious dance practices). The theme then developed into Embodiment and Process Work, as I started noticing how I was using my own experience of what happened in the room to inform my teaching. My understanding of what was happening on the dance floor started to interest me and I experimented with naming this out loud to support the dancers. The experience of the dance became more involving than the form of the movement practice and I realised I was becoming a facilitator of the experience, rather than just a teacher of a practice. I started facilitating from my own experience, to encourage the movers to become aware of what was already happening for them in movement, encouraging them to trust and to move it more consciously. I was shifting between the roles of teacher and facilitator. The hardest part of working on this project was to narrow down the topic, which had become big and cumbersome during the writing, to get to the essence of what I was actually doing as a facilitator.

Questions that supported the honing of the topic:

- What is my role as teacher?
- What is my role as facilitator?
- What impact does my experience have on the group?
- How does the group influence me?
- Are we in a system – the group and teacher?

These questions allowed me to access areas, zones and places in myself that I could not always access otherwise. It led to challenging moments for me, including engaging

with relationship issues, and put a spotlight on my struggles when facilitating groups. It allowed me to make peace with, and include, those parts in me I usually ignore or avoid, because I do not like them.

### My process as a dancer

Early days in the dance I became aware of my body, my inner feelings and subtle sensations. This was a whole new world opening up. I was amazed at the first weekend dance workshop I attended, called Heartbeat, in 2000. I was allowed to dance my fear, anger, sadness, as well as my joy and compassion. This was new territory to me. It meant it was OK to acknowledge my feelings and emotions, to express them, to allow my body to not only feel, but also move them. I had no idea how much I felt, until I danced. The dance introduced me to my inner world, to feelings, to body sensations. Today the dance expresses my joy as open spaces inside me. My anger can now be expressed with a bodily intelligence, not an overwhelming altered state.

In the dance I found a new freedom in myself, and an ongoing process that will always continue to change and develop.

### My process as a writer of this project

I am a dancer. I do not see myself as a writer. I feel self-conscious about my writing. Will what I write be seen as good enough? English is my second language and I am aware that I sometimes use the wrong words, or words in the wrong context, or I can't find the right words to say what I mean, or what I say is not poetic enough!

Writing this dissertation came in short spurts, like a dance, with long, still, unproductive periods in between when I was not writing. I had to realise that movement is my way into expressing myself and at times I had to dance before I could write. It then became important to write, rather than move. I noticed I was an internal mover and did not just move externally. I was also following the experience or dance inside

my body, feeling from the inside the shapes and forms that were being danced. It felt similar to writing the words that came from inside me; they were not just words forming on the screen.

My physical dance could be big, expansive, creative, impulsive and spontaneous, but in everyday life, I viewed myself as disciplined, nervous, a bit timid, soft spoken. I started playing with how to be big, expansive and creative as the writer of this project. I also noticed that some patterns in my dance were interesting and juicy and others were just for fun. I grappled with how to find the fun and the juice in the writing of this project.

### My process as a teacher

I started teaching 5Rhythms® in 2004. My first classes consisted of four students from a massage course I was training in. We were peers on the course and I had to shift into the role of teacher for the dance session. Occasionally one of the teachers of the massage course would also join us, adding the stress of changing from the role of student to the role of teacher in relation to her. At that time I had no training or understanding of what exactly happened for me with these role changes. Now I know how important it is to name role changes.

I remember the loneliness of the journey as a teacher, arriving alone at the hall, setting up the gear, waiting for the dancers to arrive. I was anxious, fearing no one would come. When they did arrive, I felt awkward and unsure of myself: was my music good enough, were my instructions clear, did I say enough but not too much? Afterwards I would have feelings of not being good enough, and I was highly sensitive to any feedback I got.

As the group grew and I became more comfortable with my own style of teaching, my confidence also grew. I started enjoying myself and having fun being a teacher. But

when I changed halls, my insecurities would come back – would the dancers follow me to a new space? I was jealous of other teachers who seemed more successful than me and I started wondering what success was – a bigger group, more confidence, better music, more useful instructions? When talking to other teachers I realised this is the territory of being a movement teacher: we all ask these questions and have these feelings. Yet, my own stories caused me a lot of hurt and isolation. I needed help, and Process Work became my go-to rescuer.

The part in me that wants to understand and find meaning existed then and is still around, though now I am aware that this is only one part of me. There is a wider world in me, one that includes different parts, feelings, emotions, actions, movements and voices. At times being in the unknown freaks me out. I feel I have to find meaning to deal with the extreme discomfort the unknown arouses in me. As a teacher I have a strong pattern of moving away from the unknown, often ignoring external feedback, or what I see happening on the dance floor.

I learnt through my training in Process Work that what is disturbing to me, when I have this feeling of discomfort, can be considered as being a doorway into a new perspective, or, as it is often phrased, there is gold in the disturbance. The question then becomes, how can I use this way of approaching what feels difficult more consciously as a teacher?

My attitude to teaching started to change when I enrolled on the course in Process Work (Process Oriented Psychotherapy) in 2010. I felt drawn to study Process Work as I wanted more tools for engagement with myself and with others, as well as more understanding of what happens and why. On the dance floor participants were experiencing and showing their emotions, and I wanted to be able to support them, both during and at the end of the class, with a sense of understanding – or at least a bit more

skill. I felt unable to do so, awkward, uncomfortable with the emotions. I just wanted to get away, but also felt the need to engage and find a bigger place in myself from which to respond.

The Process Work training gives me the opportunity to explore my own emotional states, to gain understanding of what is happening within me, why I have reactions to certain things and not to others, and how to relate from these difficult states. I learn and practice tools to work with what happens in me. The training provides a place to explore myself in relationship, as well as in groups. This has helped me to be more at ease when I teach and to feel very differently about myself as a teacher. I have noticed the impact it has had on the group when I teach. There is more ease and I have more confidence to deal with challenging moments in myself and with others. I realise that being in the role of teacher does not exclude me from having difficult feelings, or not knowing what to do, or getting into conflicts. I have learnt that I have a belief system that says being a teacher means I have to know it all. Now, however, I know I remain human, even (especially) when I step into the role of teacher. This helps me to feel my own humanity while I teach, encouraging compassion for the dancers and their struggles, and ultimately supporting me to be able to address difficult moments with dancers when needed.

In studying Process Work I learnt how to facilitate my own difficult states, feelings, emotions. I learnt how to facilitate clients' processes, and in the dance class I noticed I started to shift from being a teacher who brings a topic to the group to being a facilitator or supporter, facilitating the process of the dancers. The word 'facilitate' comes from the Latin word *facilis* which means making something easier or more likely to happen. In facilitating myself I make it easier to notice what is happening for me, I bring attention to aspects of myself that would otherwise slip away. This is what changed for

me in the room with a group of dancers – I started to facilitate the process for the dancers. I support them or make it easier for them to notice what is happening in them, for them, and between them.



# Chapter 1: Open Floor and 5Rhythms®

To provide a container for my investigation, I first describe in brief in this chapter what some of the movement practices are within the description of *Conscious Dance* as I use it in this project.

## 1.1 What is conscious dance?

Mark Metz describes conscious dance as movement with an intention towards greater awareness (2011). The power of conscious dance constitutes connecting internally through free and inspired body movement.

The following four ‘rules’ are applied: you move your body in your own unique way, in a life-affirming and inclusive atmosphere and intention, in the absence of alcohol and drugs, and most likely barefoot, though this last is not necessary.

Examples of these practices are 5Rhythms®, Open Floor, Movement Medicine, Soul Motion, Contact Improvisation, Authentic movement and Somatic movement practices. There are many more conscious dance forms. There are those in the therapeutic domain (dance movement therapy) and others with no specific underpinning or combining of the psyche, physical body and emotional and cognitive elements (ecstatic dance). There are also many dance forms that are fitness based, rather than having an emphasis on awareness. For the purposes of this project I focus on 5Rhythms® and Open Floor.

## 5Rhythms®

5Rhythms was developed by Gabrielle Roth (4 February 1941 – 22 October 2012), described as having been a movement innovator, theatre director, community leader and musician with a special interest in shamanism.

In **5Rhythms** we move through five energetic qualities, known as Flow, Staccato, Chaos, Lyrical and Stillness. As awareness develops through the dancing of the practice, we explore our emotions, relationships and psychological patterns through specific maps in the work. Gabrielle Roth said these rhythms are states of being and a map to everywhere – inner and outer, forward and back, physical, emotional and intellectual.

Each of the five energetic qualities is a map of that rhythm; for example, in Flow we work with feminine energy, grounding, the Mother, earth, the earth of our bodies. It is about finding our deeper connection with ourselves, receiving ourselves and by way of meeting ourselves, we can meet others. Staccato is the masculine energy, expressive, fire, passion, discipline and commitment. In Staccato we meet the other and open up to relationship externally. Chaos blends the two qualities of masculine and feminine, in a release and letting go to empty out, making space for the quality of Lyrical, our creative energy – where the dance comes through us into a new creative expression. In Stillness we come back to ourselves, and connect to Source or the Ground of Being – we are empty, unattached and present in our movement. Moving through the five energies becomes a Wave (similar to cycles we have in life) and when one Wave ends, a new one begins.

Each of the five rhythms has two sides. Flow is grounding and the other, or opposite side is getting stuck to the floor, or becoming too grounded – inertia. Staccato's other aspect is not being able to decide or commit; physically it is where the linear movement is missing. Chaos, when in its opposite dance, is controlled, predictable, where there is

too much substance and no form or too much form and no substance – out of balance. Lyrical's opposite is when we are distracted. The other side of Stillness is being disembodied. Gabrielle Roth realised that there is 'no way out but through. To get in touch with pure archetypal energies we have to dance' both sides (Roth 1999: 185). In the dance, we discover parts of us we have ignored or buried, 'and by bringing them into the light we diffuse their power over us' (Roth 1999: 185).

In my years of dancing the 5 Rhythms® I had noticed that my body held many messages, patterns and shapes of movement, but, without any means of understanding or more consciously accessing them, most of these remained a mystery. At times I felt relief to have danced and moved through emotions and feelings, as if something had shifted. If I had felt heavy and depressed, after dancing I would feel physically lighter and in a better mood. During the dance I would dance my anger and sadness. The dance became a natural release for emotions. Roth suggested that I dance through each rhythm into the true energy of the rhythm. In Process Work terms one could say I danced myself deeper into an emotion or heavy feeling until I felt lighter and thus completed the experience, similar to a completed Gestalt. A sense of wholeness was established. Dancing deeper into an emotion until it changes to its opposite can be understood by how we work in Process Work when we amplify an experience until it reveals the underlying or opposite quality that might be useful to us in a particular circumstance.

Though I felt different after a dance session, I hardly ever had the inclination to understand or verbalise what had happened. My studies helped me to start to understand and to be able to say, 'ah ... I discovered a new part of me, previously unknown, that I can now include in my everyday life. I am not only heavy, I also have a light quality in me.' This reminded me of what Jung called individuation. Jung coined this term when

he realised that ‘the unconscious is a process, and that the psyche is transformed or developed by the relationship of the ego to the contents of the unconscious’ (Jung 1995: 235). This is how he arrived at the central concept of his psychology: the process of individuation. Mindell reframes individuation by saying that opposite tendencies within us are trying to reconcile and in doing so bring together our everyday self with our deeper dreaming, creating a sense of wholeness. Jung suggested that this sense of wholeness would reveal itself as something unique to each individual.

Mindell understood and explained the concept of consciousness as “being aware of the various parts of yourself as well as being aware of yourself as an interacting part of a large community” (Mindell 2000, *Quantum Mind*: 29). Whatever we observe in everyday reality, on a certain level, which Mindell calls the dreaming, all of what we observe is inseparable from us. I come back to this idea later in the project when I discuss the teacher or facilitator as part of the system – the individuals, the group and the facilitator or teacher are all part of one system.

## Open Floor

***Open Floor International*** was established, after Gabrielle Roth’s death, by Andrea Juhan, Kathy Altman, Lori Saltzman, Vic Cooper and a group of founding members. This is a conscious dance practice focusing on core movement principles. Open Floor includes the dimensions of embodiment: physical, emotional, mind and soul. These are combined with the four relational hungers, those basic needs (as defined in this perspective) we all have as human beings: solitude, connection, belonging and spirit. Together the dimensions of embodiment and the relational hungers form the 4X4.

‘The Four Dimensions of Embodiment describe what it means to wholly inhabit our entire selves, and the Four Relational Hungers describe the elemental needs and passions that call us to move in the first place ... The 4X4 is a dynamic, shifting playing

field of experience ... At the core of Open Floor philosophy is the understanding that “we are in relationship” (Open Floor International Teacher Training Manual 2015: 30).

During a movement cycle we open our attention to a specific resource, enter into the experience of it, explore the breadth and depth of it in ourselves and in partnership with others, allowing this to settle in ourselves. With awareness and being mindful the movement cycle supports us to have a rich, meaningful and a creative learning experience. We discover how this cycle is available throughout our everyday life in emotions that grow and subside, that life itself is a movement cycle. There are three underpinning principles in Open Floor: *move and include, from fixed to fluid, and from habit to choice.*

As a dancer, Open Floor allows me to work more consciously with the core movement resources found in many movement modalities. These are *ground, centre, activate and settle, expand and contract, towards and away, spatial awareness, release, dissolve, vector and pause.* Through bringing a resource more consciously into the dance or movement, we notice the opposites and patterns internally and externally. It allows for differentiation and a greater understanding of patterns in life and also in our psyche.

In a class we focus on a topic such as *activate and settle* and have a physical anchor (something that physical grounds us – usually a body part – while we dance). For example, we might anchor with our feet while we move through the movement cycle of open attention, enter, explore and settle. During the class we actively explore how we physically ‘activate’ our body and how we ‘settle’ the body in movement. As we cannot exclude the emotional, mental and soul dimensions, these are included by the teacher to allow the dancer to explore how we express (or in this example activate and settle) emotionally, mentally and soulfully and thus embody the qualities of ‘activate’

and ‘settle’. We notice how we live these in our everyday lives or how these have an effect on us even when we are not conscious of them.

### 5Rhythms and Open Floor as practices

After embarking on studying Process Work I started experimenting in my own dance. Over the years of dancing I would often push myself outside of my comfort zone by making different movements from my usual dance. I would also do this emotionally by pushing through an emotion. Studying Process Work made me *aware* I have a strong *Pusher* in me. Noticing the inner dynamic was important as I was not aware of doing this internally. I describe myself as someone who is active, alive, moving forward in life with passion. I like this about myself. However, for example, I would push through feelings of tiredness without noticing the impact on myself (I lose connection with myself) and on those I am in relationship with. One can say I am very good at ‘activation’, one of the core movement resources in Open Floor, or the pushing quality can be described as Staccato energy in 5Rhythms. When this is happening unconsciously, it causes hurt in everyday life in a relationship as I don’t take care by bringing attention to where I am pushing too much in the relationship. When I pay attention to this pattern in my movement, I can move the push more consciously, feeling into the experience of this dance. I became the Pusher. This allowed me to notice how the pattern moves me internally, allowing me to feel the power of the push and noticing how much strength I have internally. Acknowledging this inner strength to myself helped me to move until I found the end of the push, which felt like ‘dropping’ this dance (or a sense of ‘settling’ a core movement resource as used in Open Floor or ‘letting go’ as practised in 5Rhythms). I repeated the ‘dropping’ as a movement and noticed how this provided a release internally. It brought a new dynamic to how I engage with life – to push and to drop or let go. This may sound like a small shift, but

in reality, this specific example has had a huge impact on how I engage with my studies and in personal relationships.

In both dance forms, 5Rhythms and Open Floor, there is an attitude of doing things better, different, more, less, or that change is needed. This is indicative of the culture we live in. We have to improve ourselves, change or transform – become ‘better’. What we have or how we move in a particular moment is not good enough and needs to be different. With Process Work I learn that it is not a question of changing things, but of paying attention to what is already happening and finding out about it: ‘the Process Work idea [is] that the body is doing something meaningful no matter how strange and even “dysfunctional” it may seem’ (Jobe 2004: 23). In the example above, I use this idea from Process Work to notice that the ‘pusher’ or ‘pushing’ is not a bad quality, that it is actually useful and needed. This attitude helps me to notice when there is a shift into the opposite of dropping or letting go. I now have a choice between pushing and dropping. Both of these qualities are needed; it is about knowing when to push and when to let go.

## 1.2 The teaching of 5Rhythms and Open Floor

● In both dance practices I devise exercises, for example, working with opposites. This supports dancers to try different or find new physical movements – up/down, big/small and so forth. In 5Rhythms we sometimes describe *Chaos* as the dance of moving between a flowing movement and a staccato movement until the two intermingle into a new dance – *Chaos*. This helps the dancers to physically find new ways of dancing *Chaos*. They expand their movement vocabulary.

- I ‘seduce’ the dancers into new dances through the music I choose. Not only do the dancers discover new movements, but they also get the opportunity to express emotions and feelings.
- As a teacher I can also instruct and follow a group of dancers to stay present with what is in the moment while moving their bodies. Here I encourage the inner experience to initiate the movement.
- In 5Rhythms we aim for aligning body, mind and spirit allowing the five rhythms to be a container for the movement internally and externally.
- In *Open Floor* a theme, such as Activate and Settle or Pause, is used to frame and teach with exercises, exploring our dance on our own or in partnership or being witnessed in the open circle. The open circle provides an opportunity to dance in a group format and to be witnessed. The dancers make a circle and choose to go into the circle with their dance when they are ready. The outside circle holds space in a mindful way.
- As the teacher of both practices I am verbally instructing and encouraging the group, and the teaching is accompanied by music. In 5Rhythms the music follows the *Wave* from a slow energy, reaching a crescendo and then subsiding into slower music. In *Open Floor* I create a soundscape with the music to inspire and engage the group through the movement cycle (open attention, enter, explore and settle). In both practices the music is a tool to teach or support. It creates atmosphere and sets the scene.
- In both practices there is a strong teaching element. I teach the five rhythms qualities by demonstrating them, and using music to support the energetic rhythms. The deeper qualities of the 5Rhythms include experiencing the rhythms as an



emotion, as a phase of life, as an archetype or Spirit. The teacher can use his/her own creativity or inspiration to teach these ‘maps’ of the 5Rhythms. In *Open Floor* I teach how we move the body physically, how I can dance my mind or thoughts, how my soul has its own creative dance and how each emotion has a shape, texture and colour, and that Spirit underpins it all. The teacher can creatively bring together ideas and exercises to teach a specific concept or theme.

## 1.3. How Process Work influences my teaching

- How I use language

Adding Process Work to the mix of skills allows the opportunity, for example, to ask open-ended questions. An open-ended question invites a description, instead of a simple yes or no, as closed-ended questions do. The dancer is invited to experience more of what they are experiencing by how the question is framed, for example, ‘Where is the energy in your body (or movement)?’ This allows the attention of the dancer to go to where the energy is present and this can potentially expand the experience. With open-ended questions I am working consciously with language and speak to the secondary movement<sup>2</sup> I see on the dance floor.

- The edge

As the teacher I can bring attention to what makes the movement stop; here I can introduce working with the edge. The edge is at the border of what is known and familiar and often acts as a ‘stopper’ of the movement. Here the dancer can explore by

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<sup>2</sup> I discuss secondary movement later in this paper.

becoming the thing that stops the movement or can dance over the edge into new territory.

● **My awareness and changes in me**

I notice what is happening on the dance floor; unfold and see where it wants to go, helping the process that is already happening to go further. I verbally follow individual dancers, or name the atmosphere in the room or notice what is happening in me, then look for where this might already be happening on the dance floor. I become a facilitator in the moment, not just a teacher of a practice.

During the writing of this project I became aware that I am not only facilitating the dancers' process, I am also facilitating the group's process.

# Chapter 2: Process Work

In this chapter I discuss concepts we use in Process Work, providing background for Chapter 3, in which I draw parallels with the movement practice I offer and expand on the concepts of Process Work I use in my movement work. The concepts are far from being the entirety of all that Process Work offers.

## 2.1 What is Process Work?

In its most simple form I describe Process Work as a paradigm shift of how we can develop to be who we are suppose to be or live the lives we are meant to live in our relationships and in the world. We have an idea of who we are, and then life happens. Suddenly we feel upset, disturbed or out of sorts and life feels difficult. We get depressed, anxious, and blame something out there for our misery. Process Work introduces a quantum leap with interventions to support us finding the meaning or purpose **in** the disturbance itself.

Process Work is an approach that includes working with body symptoms, psychotic and comatose states, relationships, large groups and social issues. ‘Process Work begins with whatever presents itself ...’ (Mindell 1985: 9). This could be a question, a problem in a relationship, medical symptom, a story about something that happened, and so forth. Process Work uses ‘verbal processes, language content, body signals and environmental situations to determine the nature and evolution’ of the interaction between client and therapist or facilitator and group (1985: 9).

The flow of a process is differentiated by a ‘primary process’, or what we regard as being closer to our identity (this is me, or how I describe myself) and a ‘secondary process’ further away from our identity (I am not like this). As a therapist we listen to the language of a person and, based on the way they use language, determine what they

identify with; by studying signals – for example, body movements and postures – or what they leave out, we can guess what they do not identify with. The primary and secondary processes are subjective and are separated by an ‘edge’, like a boundary. This boundary is a belief system that holds the primary identity in place. We notice where the secondary part is already present in the client’s process (in what the client might say, not say, unintentionally do, or move). These parts of us are excluded from our everyday consciousness and by getting to know them we become more whole.

Process Workers work with individuals, couples (including friendships or work relationships), groups and organisations. It is used in a therapeutic environment with individual clients, and also in a social environment in Worldwork, which is ‘a process-oriented approach to group work’ (Diamond and Jones 2004: 9). I describe group work in 3.3.

Mindell’s method of working with groups, or a group process, provides a way for groups to work on the group’s identity, internal conflicts, disturbances, and overall development. He uses the concept of deep democracy: ‘Deep democracy involves helping the various parts (or roles) of a group to come forward and interact with each other, including those parts that have been silenced or are seen as disturbing. Out of the interaction between all of these parts, conflicts can be resolved and a deeper sense of community created’ (Diamond and Jones 2004: 11). These same principles are applied in working with relationships or working with an individual. Mindell wanted deep democracy to address social issues as well as the deeper dreaming dimension of the individual. ‘He wanted deep democracy to be an inner experience as well as a social encounter. He questioned how people might use their awareness and access their inner diversity even in the midst of social tension and injustice’ (2004: 12).

Mindell also differentiates between consensus reality, dream-like experiences (dreaming) and essence level experiences. **Consensus reality** in the dance is when our physical body moves, muscles flex, we move different parts of the body. We make shapes with our bodies, dance at a certain speed, with rhythm. Consensus reality is the intention we have – to stand up straight. Consensus reality is what we can agree on – the ceiling, the dance floor, etc. The **dreaming** is the unintentional movements, as when a dancer dances gracefully and then trips over their feet. The tripping is not intentional yet can become a dance of being off centre to find a new freedom. I expand on this in 3.4.1. The **essence** level is when we are connected to what is bigger than us – what Gabrielle Roth would call what is dancing us, or the being danced by something bigger than us.

There is also an experiential aspect, for example how the dance is danced – what the quality is that is experienced by the dancer. Consensus reality is that the dancer is dancing – that is what they come for after all. The dreaming process happening in the moment, is in the experience of the dance. Essence level would be to surrender to the Dance.

## 2.2 Specific concepts in Process Work

### 2.2.1 Signals

Signals are pieces of information or messages coming from an experience we are having. I wave goodbye. In this example I raise my hand and wave: this is a signal I identify with saying goodbye. My body is also adding something else to the movement. It is not a slow wave but a fast one and it has a quality of intensity. I might not be fully identified with the intensity of the movement. The intensity is a signal of something not

fully known to me. Unfolding or bringing attention to the signal of intensity might provide valuable information, for example, how much I care for the person I am waving to, how much I care about the relationship. ‘[T]he work of discovering their (the signal’s) meaning, and putting this meaning at the disposal of the client, often depends on amplifying the signal until it crosses the client’s threshold of awareness’ and the client can make some use of it (Goodbread 1997: 21). In this example the *care* about the relationship might not be fully known to the waver.

Information comes through our bodies in different ways: it can be through movement, as in the example above, or voice, or a vague feeling, or seeing; at times we experience signals through a relationship or something that happens in our world. We identify with part of this experience and part we do not identify with as it happens outside of our awareness. The signals are dreaming information that are ‘collectively referred to as “sensory-grounded information”’ (Diamond and Jones 2004: 24).

Process Work calls the pathway of the signals ‘channels’ and we use interventions to follow the pathway. The channels are like wires through which messages or signals travel.

### 2.2.2 Channels and how these show up in the dance

Recognising in which channel or pathway the signal appears is important as this will support the facilitator to know how to amplify, or what language to use to stay close to the experience. Unfolding the experience is a specific way of working in Process Work. We unfold what is happening by being precise and staying close to the experience. By staying with the experience and unfolding it we access the deeper meaning or quality. It is not just a problem to be solved or an interpretation to be made. Problem solving and interpretation come from what we already know. Accessing the

experience by entering it allows unconscious qualities to become accessible to our everyday identity.

Each channel or pathway has its own language or terminology. Different words or terms unfold experience in different channels.

Below I provide a short summary of what each channel is. The examples are just the beginning of how I explore channels not just as a movement teacher, but also in my realisation that I am shifting into a facilitator of experience.

### Visual channel

The visual channel is one of the two channels we have most conscious control over: the verbal and the visual.

We judge distance with sight, we can emotionally distance ourselves and we gain insight. We know the process is in the visual channel when the person's head or eyes move upward, or by the use of words such as 'I see, I have an insight, I am seen, I look'. In this channel we encourage seeing more, as well as describing what is seen. The language of this channel will include colours, size, distance, or an activity like drawing – this can be drawing with the body in movement, or drawing on a physical piece of paper.

In the dance class people might look out the window or read a leaflet on the table. I can follow this by saying to see what they see more clearly, and to include what they experience in their dance. They might look at their partner, or not look at their partner. As the facilitator I encourage them to look at a partner, or not to look at their partner, or to look at a specific body part in movement: see how it moves. They can **imagine** being an animal or, for example, dance like their favourite movie star. Imagination mostly happens in the visual channel. In Open Floor we might say find the dance of a

specific colour or ask ‘what is the colour of your dance’, an example of amplification of the experience in the visual channel.

#### Auditory channel

Working with individual clients, I know the process is in the auditory channel when I ask a question or say something and their eyes move to the right or left and words such as ‘listen, hear, speak, sounds’ are used by the client. The auditory channel is also when the body posture freezes, and the head stays up; they might be listening to something (a voice in their heads). Amplifying in this channel will include increasing or decreasing the loudness of my voice or asking the dancers to repeat sounds they are already making, noting the tone of the voice/sound, becoming aware of melody and verbal content of the music track.

In the dance we use music and when we have silence, the dancer can **listen** to their inner melody or beat. Following or moving to the different instruments in the music also allows for being in the auditory channel. My voice as the teacher/facilitator is in the auditory channel, also when the dancers use voice (sing or shout). Each movement can have a sound(s) or each dance or each rhythm has a sound. Thinking or thoughts can imply the auditory channel. Here we can work with how the thought might move or have a pattern in movement. Or the movement pattern (dance) might have sound or a song. Often criticism might appear because of the lyrics of a song or we listen to an inner voice which is critical (of ourselves, or others or both).

#### Proprioception or feeling channel

Feeling is a big part of what happens in the dance. Often our movement is a reaction to a feeling experience. We move away from pain. Goodbread describes this channel as ‘the subjective experience of inner body feelings. It encompasses bodily sensations like pain, pressure, heat and cold, as well as more complex perceptions like



feelings of heaviness, lethargy, energy, and nervousness. Many of the so-called affects like sadness, depression, joy, anger, and rage have very strong proprioceptive components' (1997: 34). It is an introverted channel, as what it represents is only accessible by the person who experiences it.

We feel and move, we move and feel. In this channel the breathing is usually more in the belly area, eyes might flutter, or they are closed or look downward. The head might drop, the hands might touch painful areas, and the body might go still.

With an individual client, amplification occurs by intensifying focus on the feeling by not moving or speaking. External pressure, pushing, rolling, lifting or vibrating can be used or applied by the facilitator or a dance partner on or with body parts until the experience deepens and the body starts moving.

On the dance floor we are often in the proprioceptive channel – we are instructed to feel internally, feel our emotions, feel our sensations and to represent these in movement or shapes. Working with spatial awareness (one of the Open Floor resources) is in the proprioceptive channel – we feel the space around our bodies, we can even feel our partners, without seeing or touching them. We are encouraged to differentiate between the story and the sensation in the body. In both dance practices we explore, feel or sense 360° around our bodies. We can feel into different body parts, feeling the weight or lightness of the arm, hand, leg, etc. This supports the dancer to go deeper into embodied movement.

#### Interoception, exteroception, neuroception and proprioception

Working with proprioception as defined in Process Work makes me aware that this might not be the best term for describing experiences in this channel. It is a vast and complex description when we say 'I feel': it includes many layers of experience. What

we refer to in Process Work as proprioception also includes interoception, exteroception and neuroception.

*‘Interoception* [my italics] is the process by which we notice our internal state. We evaluate a combination of sensations and perceptions of physical processes to assess our interior milieu and decipher what it’s telling us about what we are feeling, how we are, and even who we are’ (Kain and Terrell 2018: 26). It is about the state of the internal body and the visceral organs. This could also include experiencing pain, sensual touch and temperature changes. Our interoceptive ability may embrace emotional feeling states or moods (if the feeling lasts for a long time) as these relate to how we experience the physiological changes in our body.

*Exteroception* is the perception of the external environment, it ‘help(s) us pay attention to our external environments’ (Kain and Terrell 2018: 29). The way we perceive exteroceptively is through ‘sight (vision), hearing (auditory), taste (gustatory), smell (olfactory), and touch (tactile)’ (2018: 29). We can simply describe exteroception as sampling our environment (Pace-Schott et al. 2019). For example, I feel through touch the hardness or coldness of the floor underneath my feet. I hear the melody in my head through my ears. This sensory input or data gives me an experience of something.

*Neuroception* is a term coined by Stephen Porges who describes it as our neural circuits differentiating or helping us to know the difference between situations that are safe, and those that are dangerous or life-threatening. Through interoception and exteroception our neural circuits come into play.

*Proprioception* in general – and more specifically in formal dance – is how we perceive the position of the body and body parts in space. It is how we know we are upright, or where an arm or a joint is in space, even when we are blindfolded. In

conscious dance we use our proprioception and interoception when we explore **spatial awareness** – a movement resource in Open Floor.

‘Interoception by definition originates from within the body, and not the environment: it is distinct from proprioception (information about bodily position) and from touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing [*exteroception* – my italics] (sampling the environment)’ (Pace-Schott et al. 2019: online).

These are a very basic descriptions of the terms and a fuller investigation might be a good future project with regards to how we define proprioception in Process Work – how this includes a wider field or fields as defined in other practices of dance, medicine, manual therapy and psychology. For the purpose of this project I use the term *proprioception* to include how we experience our inner bodily feelings and sensations, as well as how we are impacted internally by our external environment.

#### Kinaesthetic or movement channel

With individual clients we notice the movement channel when they use words indicating movement, such as run, jump, vibrate, etc. Or when we notice something about their posture or a movement they make with a body part. They might be telling of an incident that happened and something bumped into them or something fell. Or they might make a movement with their hand or foot, or trip while walking to the session room. Often in a posture there might be a movement, such as sitting forwards, and then shifting to sitting back. I would then ask them to move forward and backward to check into the directions their body goes.

#### *Working with movement*

In the dance we are mostly identified as movers – we dance, we move our body at different rhythms and speeds, up or down, we repeat movements, we pause or go still. As facilitator I support the mover to have the experience of the movement, to let the

experience speak for itself, without interpretation. I do this by amplifying the experience; for example, moving with a specific beat in the dance, I can suggest making the beat more precise. Then I can follow the experience by adding other channels, for example, with a partner (relationship channel); or the channel might change of its own accord (for example, starting to hum with the tune – auditory channel) until the mover finds the usefulness or meaning of the experience. For example, we move and we include our feelings, or we move and include what we hear or see, or we add our voice. Or we move to the beat in the fullest possible way, and then change to making sounds in a loud and clear voice with the same beat-like quality. Until, for example, we discover the joy of being.

#### *Intended and unintended movement*

In Process Work we say movements can be voluntary and intended, or involuntary and unintended. Often the facilitator will notice the unintended when there is an incongruent part in the movement, for example someone moves heavily but their arm floats upward – here two experiences are happening at the same time – and we call it a double signal. The person might only identify with one experience, for example the heavy part, and not be fully aware of the floaty arm. A double signal is when two parts that carry different or opposing pieces of information are present simultaneously. The person making this signal will in general be aware of only one of the parts. The facilitator can bring awareness to the quality of the movement of the arm – the other quality or experience which the person is not identified with. Unintended movement is one category of secondary movement.

#### *Sub-channels of movement*

The sub-channels of movement support ways of working with an unintended or intended movement by asking the dancer or mover to make the movement bigger,

slower, faster, or by stopping or prohibiting the movement. I experienced an interesting example in a class with another teacher who instructed us to only move one body part at a time while keeping the rest of the body still. This is a great way to develop a more acute or precise felt sense of movement in each body part. This felt sense will have a quality and the quality is what we want to get to, ultimately asking ourselves where do I need this quality or where is this quality important in my life?

Sub-channels support me to find out more about my movement – is there effort involved or not so much effort? I find out by moving faster or slower or bigger and smaller until it becomes clear which is the ‘right’ one. Is my intention to move forward, but parts of my body keep on moving backward? What is the shape of the movement, out into space or carving around and making space? This is different from moving through space. Do I use a lot of space or a small amount of space? Here I am reminded of the core movement recourses used in Open Floor – Ground, Centre, Activate and Settle, Towards and Away, Expand and Contract, Spatial Awareness, Release, Dissolve, Vector and Pause – ‘the core Movement Resources are the ABCs of an embodied movement vocabulary. They give us a simple, universally shared language, a way to explore and communicate our experience of life in these human bodies’ (Open Floor International Training Manual 2015).

Primary and secondary movement, and secondary process

### *Primary and secondary movement*

**Primary movement** is when there is congruency with the verbal content (I say I’m glad to see you and my arms go towards you to hug you), there is a sense of completeness or it makes sense and it is intentional. We often see this on the dance floor. I encourage the dancers to Flow or, dance their Staccato and they move these energetic qualities with awareness. When they flow through the room, they are

congruent with the intention of expressing a flowing quality and we can see this in how they move. The same goes for the other rhythms of 5Rhythms.

### *Secondary movement*

As I often confuse the *secondary process* and *secondary movement*, I provide a clarification here, supported by Kate Jobe's explanation of the difference between primary and secondary movement in her article *Processwork Movement Work: A brief exploration* (2016).

Secondary movement is when the movement happens to us, it is unintended, an accidental movement, strange or unexpected (a yawn, or tripping over a chair, putting a foot through a floorboard, bumping into someone else). Secondary movement is also not just you doing the movement, but can be something that happens to you. Jobe uses the example of being missed by a falling tree limb, where the movement of the falling limb is the secondary movement. One can say you need to move as if you are the 'falling limb of the tree' to access the quality.

In a workshop I co-assisted taking care of the space we dance in. My co-assistant and I made a visual installation with many candles as the theme was about Fire, the Heart, Passion. During the day the candles on the installation burst into a bigger flame (the installation caught fire!). The speed and intensity of the fire is a secondary movement not yet danced or fully known to the group.

A movement can also be secondary when the movement does not match the verbal content, or the movement is incomplete, or the movement does not make sense, is repetitive, or movement that goes along with the secondary process; for example, someone who talks about feeling weak but who is making powerful movements with an arm. The powerful movement with the arm is a secondary movement: it happens unconsciously.

## *Secondary process*

The **secondary process** is different from secondary movement, in that the secondary process is everything we look at in terms of the different channels we describe and work with in Process Work. It is also what is not me, what I don't identify with. The secondary process is all about the psychology of the person.

*Secondary movement* is an accidental, unconscious, unintended movement, a movement that does not look like it belongs to the thing or the whole. It relates only to the movement channel; where the *secondary process* relates to secondary movement as well as the whole history and psychology of the person.

Secondary movement is a tool for working with movement on its own. It is a way of working with the secondary process in the movement channel. It is not the secondary process itself. We cannot from this movement, without the context of the person and what they identify with, really know their bigger psychological picture. Secondary process is about the bigger psychological picture.

As a facilitator: how to work in the movement channel

These are the questions to consider:

*What is the dancer doing in their dance that is not part of the overall pattern?*

A question I can ask the dancers: Are you doing a movement that is not fitting the overall pattern? For example, when you yawn and move slowly, this fits the pattern. When you move fast and yawn, the two movements don't fit together.

We make the dancers aware of the double signal by inviting them to feel into the yawn and find out what is behind the yawn, allowing the rest of the body to follow the experience of the yawn in movement (allow their whole body to yawn), they might discover something useful or new with the experience of being the yawn. Another example is when a dancer, while moving, is staring out into the space, and her hand is

fiddling with her shirt. When I say: Notice what your hands are doing and do it more consciously (a general instruction to the whole group), she starts stroking her shirt with bigger movements. Now she has picked up the hand's movement. I can support her to unfold it further by saying: Slow down the movement and find the quality of this movement. Expand this quality through the rest of the body as if your body is the hand and then dance this quality. To complete I might say: Find something useful in the dance. Obviously, I give time in between the statements for the dancer to explore and deepen the experience, since it is a process and not about getting anywhere specific.

### *How to find what doesn't fit*

Surprises are the parts that do not fit. This could be an unexpected stretch. I bump into someone, step on someone's toes, fall over something, hit someone as we dance past each other, have a limp arm while the rest of the body is moving almost ecstatically, or someone bumps into me.

In a walking exercise I might say: Find the pattern of your walk.

What movement or body part is not going along with the walking pattern?

Or what is outside the walking pattern or beyond the pattern?

Here I ask the dancers to walk through the space and allow them to notice what they notice and then bring attention to what is actually happening.

### *Am I making the movement or is it making me? (Jobe 2004)*

Often the dancers might not identify with a movement, they are feeling or listening or seeing while they touch a part of their body. Or they are swaying or yawning while looking around. The movement is happening to them. By bringing their attention to the movement – for example, noticing how their legs are moving or how their arms are reaching outward – they can begin to deepen the movement or dance. They might become aware of their movement or experience and still not identify with it.



For example, my dance is often a circling around with my right foot as an anchor. The left foot has more freedom to lift and circle through the air. I became aware of this pattern, which I've had for almost 15 years, when I started feeling pain in my right hip. I am not the agent of 'making' me do this dance – it happens to me. I did not dance this way intentionally. I explore the movement by giving my attention to the pattern and dance it consciously. It is as if I am held down by my right foot, which feels grounded and strong. There is a strong grounded quality in me I don't identify with, but it propels my dance. I don't have a strong edge to this quality, I like it when I feel it in my dance, but I don't identify with it much in everyday life or the relationship between the inner parts, nor in my outer relationships. Jobe says the 'question, "Am I making the movement or is the movement making me?"' is like a koan that lives in my movement. More and more they become the same thing' (2004: 24). Over time my inner relationship to this strong grounded quality has become stronger and the edge to identify with it has disappeared.

### *Impulse and tendency in the dance*

I noticed that what moves me in the dance and in teaching often starts from an impulse. I have an impulse to bring in something light and fun and follow this with a laugh out loud on the microphone. This has an impact on the group and the atmosphere in the room changes. Here I felt the impulse, was aware of it and used it.

In a movement practice, such as *Open Floor*, we work with the impulse (described in the dictionary as an impelling force or action, a prompt or urge) behind the movement, there is an impulse to move and we follow this and give it expression. Physically there is an impulse to move in a direction or a specific way, and we allow this impulse to move the body. The impulse can also begin from a sense or feeling of

discomfort, comfort, pain, pleasure, boredom, excitement. We move these impulses from the physical, emotional, mental and soul body (as we explore in *Open Floor*).

I add *tendency* (an inclination towards). Tendencies are the subtle shifts that are already happening in my posture or movement, and I don't identify with or am not aware of it. The dictionary description of tendency is an inclination towards a type of behaviour. Kate Jobe describes 'tendency' as sentient movement. 'It means a movement that can barely be perceived. It moves the mover, rather than the mover moving with intention. It is the genesis of an experience that is emerging from essence. It cannot be named' (Jobe 2019, in a session).

A tendency is not always fully in my awareness, I do not always know it is around. For example, as I write I become aware of how important it is to for me to unpack concepts. I am at first not aware this is what I am doing, until I reread parts of my writing and then realise how unclear my writing is in places and how much I struggle to explain clearly. I include many quotes from others. When I explore this more I realise I have a resistance to recognise the expert in me – I search for what others say about something and then struggle to find my own words, until I just delete all the quotes and write from my own experience. Here I follow the tendency to be the expert consciously.

In the dance I become aware of a tendency or body experience of 'going away' when I dance with someone else – I feel this in my body. The signal could be that I do not look at the other person or I dance next to them. When I give my attention to what is already happening, I follow the signal, not looking at them, and also turn away from them, and even move further away from them. I discover how important it is for me to connect with myself first before I move with another. It is as if something bigger than me or wiser than me already knew what was needed and manifested through my body signals.

Another way of working with tendency is to ask: Who moves like this? A possible figure might show up. I allow myself to explore how the figure moves by becoming this figure. It makes the experience more concrete and accessible to my understanding instead of pure experience with no understanding. The figure becomes an ally, a friend who informs me of what I need, or need to be or be like. I can now include this tendency more consciously in my relationships and avoid overt double signals which have an impact on the relationship.

In the dance I facilitate the individual dancers to notice more precisely what their body is doing when they dance with another and to follow this more consciously. Usually this develops into a new dance between the two dancers and often the feedback at the end of the class is that they have learnt something new about how they relate.

Why do we stay close to the experience? In Process Work, for example, we encourage the client to stay close to the experience, or to stay in the same channel to be able to unfold the signal's meaning or message. This allows us to experience the parts we do not identify with, to step into these new parts and experience them. This is where the dance can be a great ally (a support or friend), for by following a tendency it allows the dancer to cross an edge (to the unknown) with more ease. To go from something already known to something new and unknown.

### Relationship channel

In the relationship channel we experience our process through another person (Jobe 2019, in a session). This can be a real person or it could be feelings about a figure in a dream. For example, if I think someone is difficult, then their difficulty is something that disturbs or fascinates me. I can explore that particular kind of difficulty through my own experience and learn about myself. I use the relationship channel to get information about myself.

In the dance we often work in partnership – where dancers take a partner and move with them. As facilitator I might notice where there is already a connection between dancers. I might name this connection (‘You might already be dancing with another pair of feet’) and ask them to move together on purpose, find a mutual dance, slow down the dance between them and then notice how the connection happens, what the quality of the connection is to allow the relationship or connection to develop more fully between the dancers. This allows for feelings to come up about the other or ourselves. We sometimes copy someone else’s dance and make it our own, noticing how this dance is also ours.

On the dance floor we explore relationship as a channel from the point of view of how we make relationships or avoid relationships, or how else we can be in relationship in the dance. Dancing becomes a metaphor for how we make relationships in life and a practice ground to change how we relate.

As a facilitator, I invite the dancers to become aware of the third dynamic: what is the quality of the dance between them, and how is this dance unique or new or different from their individual dances? The dance is more than the sum of its parts. How does the partnership in movement change their individual dances. This allows for a systemic view of relationship – seeing the relationship as a system or a whole. If one part in the system changes, the others will change as well. To understand the system, we can explore the relationship between the individual parts; in the dance, when one goes up, the other might go down, or might follow going up. This means the system is behaving in a particular way, for example following and leading or being in opposites. It will feel different being in different roles (either the follower or the leader), and the feeling in the role encourages different behaviours or dances. This might trigger personal psychology for dancers and support them to take risks in stepping over edges in the

dance – an opportunity to relate differently, something that does not often happen in everyday life.

As a facilitator I allow for dancing in small groups in comparison to dancing in pairs. How do I find my place in a little group? Am I in the centre or on the outskirts of the group, or somewhere in between? How is this different from dancing with only one person, when my focus includes just this one person? This opens up attention to how systems can shift and change and how our behaviours within them shift and change. It can allow us to apply how we behave in other systems (family or work) in the outside world, off the dance floor.

Taking this a step further, we can work with disturbances and attractions in relationship. I ask questions such as: Who am I disturbed by or attracted to in the dance? How do they move? What about them disturbs or attracts me? We access this further by moving like them, or being like them. We feel into how it is to become the other person and find out about the quality that disturbs or attracts us. We find out what it is about this quality that is acceptable or good and also where we might need this quality in our own life or in our relationships. It is easy to step over an often difficult edge in the dance in this way – a fun, playful way.

We could also have an exercise where we dance with someone and move in ways that feel true to us. We notice how the other person responds and we respond to that movement or the feeling that comes up in us. Here movement becomes a language, we communicate through movement in relationship. The movement between us also reflects the dynamic of our relationship.

During a supervision session on my project, I become aware that not only is the relationship between two or more dancers, but also between me as facilitator and the group. My writing style here reflects the role of a teacher, more than facilitator. I am

the one in the know, talking about the relationship between dancers. However, in writing this and being in the role of facilitator during a session, there is also the relationship between me as facilitator and the group. The relationship between facilitator and group is somewhere here in the field of this section. I expand on working with the field in a later section.

### World channel

The world channel is present when there is attention on the outer world, the universe, unfamiliar people, foreign objects or events in the news that disturb us. In the dance a piece of music might bring in other cultures, such as music from other countries and nations.

The world channel when I facilitate someone in a therapy is about their job, their relationship to money, race, identification of gender, sexual identity, etc.

In 1989 Jan Dworkin said the world channel is becoming increasingly important. With climate change and current political issues, we know the world channel is central now. It is no longer sufficient for us to think of external events as separate from ourselves. What happens in the world around me and even further away from me, is intimately connected to my body symptoms or relationship challenges (Dworkin 1989): ‘switching from seeing the system [*or the world* – my italics] as something “out there” to seeing the system from a perspective that includes one’s own self’ (Scharmer 2018: 16).

My perception as a dance teacher needs a paradigm shift to notice how what I do has an impact on my immediate world, and also an impact on the bigger world. As much as world issues impact on me, I impact the world.

In the dance we are affected by world news as we bring our feelings about events onto the dance floor. It might be an election result that makes us angry or elated, and

we want to dance the emotions, especially the difficult ones. The dance can support us to clarify our feelings or to find out what exactly about the event disturbs us, or what is the quality of the disturbance in our bodies, how does it move?

Two aspects might emerge:

- The first is to find what is underneath the disturbance. Often underneath anger we find what it is we deeply care about and this needs to be made explicit to ourselves, but also to the world we live in.

- The other is to find the essential quality of the disturbance and notice where it is also in us. I am also the impossible political figure or the one burning down the Amazon forests. As a facilitator I can pose the question, where is this quality in my life or what about this quality is good to know? For example I do inner work before a class on the destruction of the Amazon forests. I take on the role of the companies that burn down trees (this is the disturbance). When I dance this role I feel the same strength and power in my physical body as the companies and the fire. I shift into the other role of the trees being burnt and dance this. Here I feel the surrender, the dying. Something happens to me that I cannot stop. When I step out and look at these two dances, I see the dynamic of strength and power versus surrender and dying. It has a big impact on me as a witness. There is something powerful on both sides, it is powerful to destroy as well as to surrender to death. I am reminded of what a teacher of mine once said, that my physical body is my earth (Ya'Acov Darling Khan during an ongoing group in the nineties). What am I doing to my own physical body that is killing it? I sometimes eat what is not good for me, I don't pay attention to stress levels, I don't take necessary breaks. Here I am the destructive force killing the Amazon forests. How can I use the quality of this force to take care of my own physical body, and in the process change my habits and behaviours to change my impact on the earth. This becomes a topic in

the next class. The quality of surrender becomes a trust in something that is bigger than me.

As a facilitator I can work with how the disturbing factor in the news also moves me, where it is found in my dance, how can I become aware of the quality in my dance and notice that the disturbance brings a new flavour to my dance – a quality I might need in my life or that might give me compassion for the opposing side. Or where do I find this quality that disturbs me in the news, in myself – where is it me as well. Where am I already like this. Here is a possibility of discovering self-compassion and through self-compassion, kindness – and kindness I can apply to the world around me. Here I become the change that is needed in the world. I listen to a talk on Collective Trauma Online Summit (2019) where the speaker, Monica Sharma, suggests we are cells in the global body. We embody and work on ourselves and that is how we activate the global immune system. We become healers in the system, the world, to become a post privileged world – where I have awareness of the things I don't have to think about, where I can take responsibility for my part in what is 'wrong' about the world.

In the dance we explore our own prejudices in the group, the group supports us to discover these places where we are unconscious about gender issues, racial issues, ageism, sexism and many more. The group becomes the world channel, as much as the world becomes our inspiration to explore the undiscovered, suppressed or marginalised parts in ourselves.

The world channel is used, or more apparent, when we do a group process in Process Work. The topics that come out of groups are mostly about world and diversity issues. To be able to draw parallels between Process Work group facilitation and how I work with a movement group, I discuss what we do in Process Work during facilitation of a group process. Groups can be organisations, community



groups, social groups, or any group that comes together for a purpose. Arnold Mindell suggests that if groups or organisations want to know themselves, they need representation of all the feelings in the group in a structured, person-to-person, democratic meeting (Mindell 2002). This means exploring the diversity in the group. Groups will have diversity of gender, race, class, age, health, sexual orientation, able bodied and those with specific physical needs, psychological and spiritual privilege and more. Feelings need healing. Feelings act like hidden messages and these are generated around any kind of diversity. 'If a group succeeds at diversity, it is a successful community ... If it cannot do this, it fails at the deepest spiritual level of community' (Mindell 1995: 20).

Mindell calls his way of working with groups Worldwork. His underlying principle is that groups hold their own wisdom and if the members are allowed to actually relate to one another this can create rapid change.

# Chapter 3: Experiential facilitation (from teacher to process facilitator)

*I want to integrate life and art so that as our art expands our life deepens and as  
our life deepens our art expands.*

(Anna Halprin 2009)

Halprin refers to the art of moving or dancing, I want to link this to the art of facilitation. As an experiential facilitator I am an artist in how I work; this deepens the experience ('life') not only for the dancer, but also for me as facilitator.

'Art is an act of tuning in and dropping down the well. It is as though all the stories, painting, music, performances in the world live just under the surface of our normal consciousness. Like an underground river, they flow through us as a stream of ideas that we can tap down into. As artists, we drop down the well into the stream. We hear what's down there and we act on it – more like taking dictation than anything fancy having to do with art' (Cameron 1995: 118).

The art of facilitating is about dropping into the stream for, or with, a group of dancers. By doing this, as the facilitator, I drop into the stream. I explain further in the section *How do I follow?*

Writing this chapter has helped me to name what I do more clearly with regards to teaching a movement practice. It has also helped me to be more precise about how I think about facilitating a movement group in a Process Work paradigm. I draw parallels and extend some concepts from the previous chapter. This is an ongoing learning and investigation for me and I imagine I will be developing this for as long as I teach and facilitate a movement practice.

## 3.1 Differentiation between teacher and facilitator

During my journey as a student of Process Work, I realised that I am more than a teacher. This became evident when I looked at the movement group and noticed they were not necessarily doing what I was asking or suggesting, but that something else was happening. I got curious as to what this meant. Instead of just feeling irritated by the group or feeling at their mercy, I started investigating in order to understand what was happening in the group and in me. As Lane Ayre poignantly describes in the introduction to his book: ‘Whenever we create, just like in other areas of our life, some things happen that do not go along with our intentions. The unintentional aspects ... contain more wisdom than we think’ (Ayre 2001: 3). As a teacher, what was happening when dancers didn’t follow the instruction felt like an unintentional moment for me and if I could stay curious and open to this, something might reveal itself. It did not necessarily mean the instruction was wrong.

I became aware of the difference between being a teacher giving an instruction and being a facilitator following what was happening in the moment. The group becomes the leader or teacher. It felt more and more like I was following the group, rather than instructing the group. My new client was the group! A new door opened up and I became excited. Mindell comes to a similar conclusion (though on a bigger scale) when he says: ‘My new client, I dreamed, was the world’ (1993: 4).

### Being a teacher

The definition of ‘teach’ in the dictionary is to impart knowledge to or instruct (someone) as to how to do something (Dictionary.com) . A teacher approaches from the top down: the teacher has the information, the knowledge and passes this on to the students. The teacher is the expert, the one that has travelled the road and has the

wisdom or knows the content or curriculum of the teaching. The teacher is goal-oriented and wants to have a specific outcome for the student. In 5Rhythms we teach maps in movement, in Open Floor we teach movement resources. A teacher's attention is on the content or theme and how that is transmitted and received. It is a single focused attention.

### Being a facilitator

A facilitator works bottom up, drawing the dancers in and following the dance or the group. A facilitator does not focus on imparting specific knowledge, although this might be in the background. The facilitator knows that the dancers' body experiences have wisdom and the facilitator supports the dancers to access this wisdom. Jean Liedloff says: "To educate, in its original sense, is to "lead out"" (1989: 92). This feels closer to what a facilitator does – supporting the dancers to bring out the inherent wisdom, make it visible in movement. We bring attention to what is happening. The facilitator does not know where the next step will take them. The outcome is to follow the dancers' or group's process – wherever it takes them. It is not about following the facilitator's perceived idea of where things should go, nor the dancers'. The hardest thing for me has been – and still is – to let go of my idea of where the process is going or should go, to let go of a goal-oriented approach which is so inherent in our Western culture. As I begin to trust the process more, I realise there is inherent wisdom in the process and when I follow and creatively work with this, something shifts in the group and in me.

Obviously, there is no stark line between teaching and facilitating, since teaching also facilitates learning and facilitating involves teaching. While I teach something, I might also facilitate what is happening. I notice my struggle when I facilitate as I have a belief that I should 'know' where this is going or what is happening. When I teach, I

spontaneously start guiding or facilitating. This perceived ‘struggle’ is a good thing as it brings attention to the two approaches. At times I lack the skills and structure to leave the ‘teacher’ role of knowing and enter the facilitator role of following or not knowing. Here I am reminded by my supervisor to find out who (in me) is saying I have to leave the teacher role or there is lack of skills and structure. There might be times where amplification of this role might be useful. Other times I manage to blend the two roles more smoothly – where I intuitively teach and then follow and facilitate.

## 3.2 Tools to facilitate

### 3.2.1 Inner work as a method of working with groups

I not only look for signals outside of me, I also notice what is happening inside me as facilitator. How is what is in me, or happening in me, relevant to what is going on outside of me? Where might it already be in the group? How is my experience in the moment relevant to what is happening in the group? I am part of the system. The system is also in me. It is not about finding a resolution, but about bringing attention to what is happening in the moment.

‘Inner work’ is perhaps not a good way of describing what happens; it can be more accurately described as an ‘inner attention practice’. There is no set formula for how we do inner work. It is about bringing attention to what happens in the moment, finding the parts or roles or polarities, deepening the experience and discovering the quality that is needed or emerging or useful, noticing where I am already doing this or where it might be needed.

## How I facilitate myself

In the example I give below I facilitate myself on a specific thing that happens and then I facilitate myself in the group during the following class.

I get an email from a dancer thanking me for the lovely Sweat Your Prayers. *Sweat Your Prayers* is when we bring our prayers and dance them. This is an unfacilitated practice where the teacher creates a journey in music for the group. This dancer continues in her email that she prefers this way of working, rather than being instructed to do partner work. I get disturbed by the email and go for a walk with my dog. I first take my own side. Underlying the disturbance is a feeling that what I teach is not valued, or the way I teach is not appreciated, I am to just bring the music, I am only needed for that, not my teaching skills. I go deeper into this feeling and find anger. I feel angry that my years of training (different trainings in embodiment) are not valued – it feels like anyone can put on music and create a Sweat. I notice I walk fast and I am impatient with the dog when he stops to sniff. I hate this part in me, the disgruntled victim! This is the point when it dawns on me that here is one part in my inner process (the disgruntled dog walker) and by feeling the anger deeply, I shift to feel compassion for my strong feelings, this is my passion for what I bring to the dance – it feels like I reach the core of the disturbance – why it is around. As if the universe sent me this email to get to this place. Now I can shift into the other side, into the one who wrote the email. Here the voice says I want it in a specific way because then I can stay with myself and not be bothered by the teacher's instructions or other dancers. I want to feel safe and warm here with myself. Instructions make me feel unsafe and are scary or bothersome. Here I can have compassion for this aspect – we all want to feel safe and free.

I repeat: 'I want it like this' – my hand makes a soft, flowing movement forwards (finding the gesture that goes with the 'want'). I do this movement a few times and slow it down to get to the essence. Subtleness! This is needed. How can I use the essence of subtleness to facilitate a class? I take this attitude to teaching back into the next class.

In the class I start talking about my experience to feedback (in general) and name the discomfort it put me in, how I realised that we often want to stay safe and in our comfort zone and not step out and discover new territory in ourselves. As I talk, in the moment, I suddenly realise how important it is to have a comfort zone and to know it well. I slow down my talking – being subtle and soft with myself in the moment – and then name that both parts are needed. We need a comfort dance or place to calm an often over-activated nervous system, and we need to know when it is safe enough to step out and try something new. I see heads nodding in the group and know this is positive feedback. I encourage the group to notice during their dance where they are – in safety mode or in new discovery mode. The dance inspires me and I bring in 'play' towards the end of the class – the whole group responds with new dances, laughter – congruent lightness in movement. I could not have planned this class in advance!

This is how I use inner work between classes, and also on the spot while teaching. Inner work does not have to happen in private, often this can become a teaching in itself for the group, to show my vulnerability in the moment and also my willingness to step into the discomfort and find the wisdom. My willingness to show vulnerability allows the group members to try it as well. It gives a freedom.

Another example is when I become aware of my irritation with someone in the group. When I take this as a signal, I find out exactly what about the person irritates

me. I do this quietly to myself – the work happens internally. I know *irritation* is a reaction to something else. I notice the irritation is about the other person being stuck to the floor, not moving, but folding their arms. This is surprising as I wonder why the person comes to the dance and then stands with folded arms. How curious. A part in me gets irritated, because I have a belief system that says ‘dancers should move or dance’. I feel into the posture of the dancer – folding my arms, taking the posture of the dancer. I notice there is something restful in this posture, no effort. This supports me to encourage the group to find a way of moving effortlessly. The gold of the ‘disturbance’ of this dancer’s posture is in finding something effortless – an often, neglected state of being for me and for many others.

With the feedback I get from the group at the end of a dance session, I notice a change in myself. In the past I would feel self-critical when there is feedback – even with positive feedback from the group. I am now curious, interested and want to understand and learn, but also model for the participants. When I do inner work on this in a supervision session, I realise I am changing. I notice when I change, the system changes (this includes the whole group). I am able to have distance and see more, include more.

I am reminded of a conversation I had with Todd Garcia (from Laboratories of Anatomical Enlightenment) who runs fresh tissue cadaver (different from cadavers that are embalmed) dissection courses in the USA for movement teachers and manual therapists. He says that the biggest shift for the attendees is when they realise that everything in the body is connected. They at first look only at the detail and he brings their attention to the whole body. This provides a shift from seeing one part of the anatomy to seeing the whole (one system) – a startling experience for many. I also look at the group of dancers as a system, and that includes me. What happens in me is also



in the group. When I shift, something in the group will shift, when one group member has a peak experience, this will have an effect on the whole group (me included) – Gabrielle Roth knew this intuitively when she said that when one person has an ecstatic experience, it is for all of the group. Every individual will feel something; the experience reverberates through the group – one body of dancers.

Working with a group is similar to working with a client. Where I would do inner work in a client session to unfold the process structure, I begin to do the same with a group in movement. How can I find the process structure of the group in myself in the moment while teaching?

#### The process in me

I notice with a few classes in a row that there is feedback at the end around resistance – resistance to my voice, to the instructions, to being pulled out of what they want to do or where they want to go. How do I think about this without my inner critic gaining the upper hand and me feeling like a bad teacher? I realised I felt resistance during the class – it was in me already – I felt resistant to seeing very little movement, people looking around or looking at me. I noticed in myself an inner figure saying you have to be useful, productive, do something to keep them going. The quality of this figure is strong and ‘pushy’ – ‘pushy’ is a word a participant uses to describe me after a class. Another comment about me when I talk about future events in the class is that ‘you are very busy’. This is also something I often hear from peers and colleagues. In inner work I take my own side first. I love what I do, I like being busy, it feels full and rich and I like using my brain, working things out, meeting people, attending conferences where my learning expands. This is a part in me that has supported me to be successful in publishing, in being a dance teacher, in becoming a therapist. I have achieved a lot and like what I have achieved. Now I take the other side. This part says

don't push me, I want to stay where I am and enjoy this. I don't want to be challenged. Life is difficult enough. I come to dance to have fun and feel release from stress, and also to be with my friends. When I am in this part, I notice how much I need release, and fun – the pleasure of movement and just being with friends. Both parts are needed. From this discovery I can prepare a theme for a group session working with both parts. Here I find the process structure of the group in me and I learn to do this more during a class, not just afterwards. I can also notice the resistance in the group and know that the other part will be present, I can look for where it is already present in the group and bring attention to these two parts in the moment. There is also another part of the dynamic that might say: I want to set my own challenges, I need space and your holding of that .

#### Inner work while I write

As I write I notice the critic in me/the pushy one saying you are just sitting here writing this, you are not doing 'it'. The 'it' being inner work. This is a strong pattern I have, a belief system saying life is hard and you have to work hard at it to have a good life. Nothing comes easily or by having fun. Not even writing this piece here. One way of taking this further in inner work is to allow the two parts to talk to each other.

Here I get up and stand in the place of the Pusher. It says to the part that needs release and hungers for fun: 'You need to be active and teach something, you need to give them something to work with, to explore, challenge them to change.'

From the other side, the fun-loving part: 'Just feel yourself, and feel into your experience, enjoy yourself, life is short.'

Bringing the two parts together, integrating them, it becomes: 'Challenge yourself to stay with your experience of enjoyment and find out about it.' This I developed into an exercise for the next class.

### 3.2.2 Metaskills, or the attitude I use to facilitate

‘Metaskills are the feeling attitudes or qualities that support or bring to life our ordinary skills’ (Mindell 2006: 133). Our feelings when we work with a client or a group are important. Amy Mindell includes compassion, beginner’s mind, fluidity and precision as feeling attitudes. Many people use qualities such as compassion and kindness. Mindell defined these feeling attitudes as metaskills. They are skills that enhance our ordinary skills.

I added *curiosity* to my list of metaskills. It felt like a saving grace at times when I sensed that I was stuck in a teaching situation. For example, I noticed during a warm-up before a class that I felt critical towards both the dancers and myself. I got curious about why the *critic* was present. I became the critic (dancing like the critic) to find what the qualities are of this critic – it is precise and notices a lot. It notices detail and small movements. I became aware, with the help of the metaskill of curiosity, that it was not about being against these details. I brought this into my facilitation during the class, by encouraging the dancers to be curious about what is with them, what they perceive, to be precise in what they notice, what is moving with regards to places or parts of the body, to get curious about their dance, the shapes of movement, about their experience. Here I used the quality of the critic, of being precise and noticing detail – I named what I saw in general to make the dancers aware of what they might not be aware of. This supported the dancers to go deeper into their dance or process and the feedback at the end of the class confirmed that being made aware of details helped them.

Here my style shifted from feeling critical of the group and myself to being curious and noticing what I notice in detail and with precision. One can say I stole the qualities of the critic and used this to facilitate the group.

## 3.3 Group facilitation as part of Worldwork

The movement session or dance class is a group. A group has an atmosphere and identity. ‘Worldwork [*when we do a group process* – my italics] deals directly with the atmosphere of a group’ (Mindell 1995: 19). This atmosphere or ‘field’ is in us as individuals as well as in the whole group and we can feel it – whether it is loving, hostile, fluid or repressed. According to Mindell the ‘field’ needs addressing first to create change in any group. We address the field by naming out loud what is around. If we don’t name or bring it in, the ‘thing’ in the atmosphere becomes like a ‘ghost’ in the background that can keep on troubling the group. Here I know as a facilitator of a movement group that I feel the resistance or lightness or critique in the room, but also in myself.

Mindell elaborates by saying that groups dream through subtle signals, unexpected intentions, movements and directions and these signals might be called ‘spirits’ or the ‘group’s mind’. Here I am reminded of sudden laughter, or a shout or where a woman does not want to partner with a man when asked to take a partner. Underlying might be gender issues, or trauma. As a movement facilitator it is difficult to know and I find out by doing inner work or dancing what I see to amplify and unfold what is underneath.

It takes skill to step forward and facilitate a group as the facilitator can easily feel shamed or judged. We get it ‘wrong’, or are accused of doing so. This is when inner work becomes invaluable and can transform us into elders to be able to work with conflict and challenging moments in a group.

### 3.3.1 A group process

In a group process we might have a theme or find a theme that has energy and we want to explore this as a group to find out how we can be better together or give attention to how we relate in the group. In the dance we come to a workshop with a theme that attracts us, the teacher presents the theme and gives opportunity through exercises for the group to explore and experience. A theme can also be presented in a shorter class. I find themes from my personal life: a fight I had with my partner on my way to the class, a news topic or world issue such as how we treat ourselves and our bodies is also reflected in how the earth is treated by humankind, or something that I read during the week that impacted me. Usually these are issues that personally feel difficult for me and I know I am not the only one to have feelings about the topic. I also know that there will be those in the group that might have a very different experience, or an opposite feeling, or who are not bothered at all.

Here I remember an example when I talked about what happens in the political world and how angry it makes me feel. As I talked I moved – my body was expressing the anger. I got positive feedback with nods from some; however, I missed the fact that there were those who were lying on the floor listening to me. Their body posture already indicated something else was present. Now I know I would name this and invite dancers to name or express the feelings when I bring up this topic.

In Worldwork we explore through identifying **roles** or attitudes to the theme. Usually the roles are found when we delve into the underlying feelings we have and this becomes apparent through interactions with other group members. Roles have many viewpoints. As an individual you belong to all the viewpoints. When we explore the different viewpoints, by physically stepping into each one and also finding new ones in ourselves, we will find all the different qualities inside ourselves, even the more

difficult ones. Group members get the opportunity to fill out the viewpoints by stepping into the role and speaking from each one. Usually people start to get more personal as they feel into a role, and they can then speak more personally to the other side or other role.

In the movement group, as facilitator during a two hour class, I have to be creative in how I find roles; I need to be willing to try, even if I get it wrong. I make my presumptions from what I see on the dance floor, or what I feel when I witness the group. I might also find roles when I dance in the warm-up before the class begins and notice what parts are present in me and which parts might be missing. In the example above about current politics, it became clear in the ending circle that the other roles that were around had to do with collapse and overwhelm. If I do not name and acknowledge them, these qualities will remain in the field like ‘ghosts’ and trouble the group. As I did not name them or at least try to find out about what else was around, in the ending circle there was a protest that ‘the dance is not a place to bring the outside world, here we come to get away from it all’. I immediately knew that this attitude needed a place in the circle as well. This was the diversity of the group in that moment. I did not say it on the spot, but realised afterwards when I reflected on the class. This was a great learning opportunity for me as facilitator in how to work systemically with a group. It made me consider how to name roles out loud over the microphone during the class, how to find them in me and how to identify them by witnessing the dancers – an ongoing learning process.

In Worldwork, speaking personally from a role can relieve hot spots or moments when there might be hurt or conflict.

The facilitator’s function is to bring attention to what is happening by helping to represent roles, fill them out, support someone who speaks personally, frame hotspots

(moments of conflict or hurt) and cool spots (when there is a relieving moment). At times the facilitator might step into a role and speak personally; in these moments, any member of the group can step into the facilitator role and frame what is happening.

This description may sound fairly easy, or perhaps not, but in reality, groups move fast, and things can very easily escalate into a full-blown conflict.

It takes skill from the facilitator to slow things down when they go too fast, to notice who speaks, who does not speak, who is touched by something that was said, who does not get an opportunity to speak. The aim is not to find a resolution, it is to relieve the field by bringing attention to what is happening. Noticing and naming out loud how the group behaves, how the roles get constellated in the field, is already relieving to everyone. This is where the movement facilitator can work well, noticing how group members behave on their own or with each other and saying this out loud in an inviting way, saying that these are all needed within the whole of the group. Acknowledging and accepting what is happening is done by the facilitator over the microphone: it creates relief in the group, gives permission to the group to have an experience; it supports them to go deeper and connect more intimately with themselves and each other. It brings the group together and allows for healing within the group.

In the dance I name the attitudes or roles that might be present: those who like dancing with a partner; those who are scared of being in relationship; those who stay connected to themselves by dancing on their own; those who like to stay connected by dancing with another. There are roles of: I don't like everyone on the dancefloor; there are disturbing energies around me on the dancefloor; I love the differences on the dance floor; I have to like everyone on the dancefloor. Naming these helps me to bring awareness (for myself and the group) to diversity in the room and to include the unnameable in a conscious/spiritual dance practice – 'It is OK to not like everyone. At

times I don't like parts of myself.' As facilitator I have this in myself and I can have compassion for this very human trait.

### Preparing a theme or topic for a movement group as a process worker

This is where I do homework as the facilitator. When I choose a theme, I can draw a map of what other associated sub-themes might be around. I next find the viewpoints on the theme and the underlying roles which might be in the field, also those that will be hard to represent or bring in or name out loud. Then I can do inner work on these roles.

For the purpose of this exercise I feel into the energy of each role, first the one that feels closest to me, the one I most easily identify with. I move this and express this in my dance. I then switch to the role that might feel further away for me. The role I don't like or don't believe I am ever like. I express this in my dance and maybe I notice how I can be like this just a tiny bit. I dance this further or deeper and notice what the underlying quality is, the deeper wisdom in this role. I notice where I get held back, stop or feel uncomfortable. This is all information from the field of the theme and will be in the group. The essence of the most difficult role, or the role I am against as facilitator, can be useful in another way. I can facilitate using the essence of this role as an attitude or way of teaching or facilitating.

What happens in me or to me while I am preparing for a class provides information on what might be around in the class.

### Individuals and the group

Sometimes I work with dancers as individuals in a group and at other times I am aware of the group as a whole entity or system. This differentiation feels important. Here Process Work provides ways of how to think about a group – groups have an awareness, an identity and a process, which is different from each individual's process



in the group. There is a dynamic in the group that belongs to the group, and this will be different from other groups; for example, a yoga group will have a different identity and is structurally different from a 5Rhythms® dance group. Each dance session is a new group with a new identity as well. The tribe of dancers as a group has an overall identity in the community. Taking it a step further, as the facilitator, I am part of the group and therefore part of the group identity. What happens in me is important information regarding what is going on for the group. The question becomes *Can I allow myself to be inspired by the group field or process and allow this to inform my facilitation?*

How do I follow? A few examples

- As a facilitator I use blank access. I don't know where we will start or what will happen. I don't know if I'm saying the right thing or not. The dancers have the information they need in themselves. Every individual is in a different place in a group, and blank access is the way in. Blank access can be questions such as: What has most energy, what in the body feels most energised? The facilitator gives choices – does it want to be bigger, smaller etc.? – and explores ways to satisfy the intent of that movement; for example, let the movement speak to you.

- As a facilitator I amplify what is already happening to bring this closer to the dancer's awareness. I do this without naming the thing being amplified as this will take the dancers away from their experience. I want to guide them in having their experience more fully. Amplification in the movement channel happens when I suggest making the movement bigger, take it to its edge (as far as it will go) and even further; or move faster; move slower; move more in the beat; include the whole body; or move just with one part of the body (isolating

body parts to encourage more awareness into the quality of the movement in a particular body part). Amplification can also happen in the other channels; for example, when there are sounds in the room, we can work with voice.

Being above the water would be for the movement facilitator to notice what is moving (which parts of the body), or how a movement happens (up and down, open and closed, etc.), or if the eyes of the dancers are staring out, looking down, half-closed or completely closed. As facilitator, I might start making the movements myself, i.e. I drop into the water with the dancers and check what is happening. In Julia Cameron's (1995) words I (the artist) drop down the well into the stream and hear what's there. I might move or dance to connect with myself. Here I join the dancers as another dancer. I can then feel into myself what this might be about. How does it make me feel? What happens for me when I move this way? I might notice or feel the atmosphere (the mood the movement generates), or I notice the dimensions (consensus reality, dreaming or essence level.)

Being 'in the process' is like being under or in the water; I get dreamed up or join the process as described above. I say more about 'dreaming up' in 3.4.2.

## 3.4 Experiential facilitation

To demonstrate how Process Work as an art influenced my way of working with groups in movement, I discuss a few aspects from Process Work theory with examples of how I work with these in the group, which make it clear I am not just a teacher of a dance practice anymore, but an experiential facilitator or a facilitator of experience.

### 3.4.1 Dimensions or levels of awareness

Process Work identifies three levels of awareness: (1) consensus reality or everyday reality, (2) dreamland and (3) essence level or processmind.

**Consensus reality** ‘describes the realm of experience that is generally consented to or agreed upon as “real”’ (Diamond and Jones 2004: 21). In everyday reality or consensus reality, a table is a table, it is made of wood, it is hard, it is solid and it is used to put things on or to sit at while working or eating. We all agree it is a table, not something else. On the dance floor everyday reality is this hall, this group of people, my feet on the floor, and this is my physical movement. Mindell uses the story of *Alice in Wonderland* to describe the dimensions, where consensus reality is Alice above ground with her friend in the garden. It is the ordinary world ‘of clocks and measuring sticks’ (Mindell 2000: 20).

**Dreamland** is ‘the world of dreams, projections, emotions, fantasies, and the like’ (Diamond and Jones 2004: 13). In this dimension an everyday reality table in my kitchen becomes me sitting at my grandmother’s table. It brings back the taste and colours of the cake she baked for my first birthday, a dream-like experience. This experience is nameable. I feel the support of her love inside me and this feeling of love might be useful in how to be in a difficult current situation. It is when Alice in *Alice in Wonderland* goes below ground, ‘jumps out of time, space, and ordinary reality into Wonderland, the dreamworld’ (Mindell 2000: 20). On the dance floor the dreamworld is the images that come to me, the memories or flashbacks while I dance, the stories or imagination. ‘The movement of my arm becomes the rainbow in the sky’ (Jobe 2019, in a session).

‘Following the rabbit involves a shift in viewpoint, a paradigm shift, specifically, a shift from observer to participant’ (Mindell 2000: 21). This is how we get to where

our perceptions come from. Our interpretations in everyday life are based on our perceptions and when I go to the roots, change can happen. Here is where the dance becomes a tool to get to the roots. When I dance there is a possibility of entering an altered state, of accessing the dreaming, of allowing the experience to change me. This is where I become a facilitator of *experience*.

The **essence dimension** is a ‘non-dualistic level of reality’, a ‘dream-like reality that permeates everything’ (Diamond and Jones 2004: 13), which Mindell calls the sentient or essence level or an essence experience similar to the Dao. In the Tao Te Ching the Dao is described as having two natures. There is the Dao that can be named, and the one that cannot be named. Arnold Mindell refers to the Dao that cannot be named. The essence dimension is where we become aware of an organising principle, the processmind. This is a feeling or an intuition that can come in different channels, something that is emerging. The ‘processmind organizes our overall direction yet also allows us to zigzag in life according to the needs and choices of our everyday mind’ (Mindell 2010: 51). He defines processmind further as having two characteristics. ‘First, it is field-like; it can be felt but not easily verbalized. Second, it is particle-like. You can see, hear, feel, smell and sense a specific something like a body tendency, a dream image, a “flirt”, or a directional movement’ (2010: 51).

In this dimension the table used as an example above has within it a feeling that I cannot yet name. There is a vague sense of something that underpins what is happening. I can, for example, make a movement that goes along with the sense or feeling (the particle-like characteristic of the Dao) which allows me to explore this further and eventually name or find the dreamland quality which might be useful to my everyday experience. In movement we often experience something we cannot name, we dance it deeper and eventually something more tangible emerges; we might call it *ecstasy*. Here

we move from essence level (something unnamed), to dreaming (a feeling I can recognise), to everyday reality by naming the experience.

In Open Floor we explore Dissolve, a movement resource, by allowing our dance to dissolve into an experience of something bigger than ourselves, we can call this the essence dimension. In an exercise as a participant I image my body being unzipped (a partner in the dance touches lightly from the top of the back of my head down my spine to the floor) and I step backward outside my physical body. The experience is difficult to describe afterwards, there are no words stepping into the Unknown, a source bigger than me. Another participant declared this exercise was too scary and couldn't do it, couldn't step backward. In 5Rhythms we allow ourselves to be danced by the Dancer, we say we surrender to the Dancer in us, something bigger than us. Here the *Dancer* might be referred to as processmind.

Often in the dance we have these experiences that we cannot name; afterwards we might call it the mystery, a sense of something bigger than ourselves. I usually disconnect from this feeling back in everyday life. I might reconnect with it, for example, when I make love or watch a sunset. The dance allows us the experience of the essence dimension; there is permission to go there without any need to talk about it. This feels an important role conscious dance has and explains the popularity of it. It gives us access to something we do not often have in everyday life, though we somehow know we need it: 'our inherent sense of what is good for us has been undermined to the point where we are barely aware of its working and cannot tell an original impulse from a distorted one' (Liedloff 1989: 35). Liedloff continues by saying 'the conscious mind, by its nature, can consider only one thing at a time, while the unconscious can make any number of observations'. The essence dimension includes the unconscious mind. It is the vast undercurrent from which experience comes, the Dao that cannot be spoken.

It provides access to our inner wisdom. As the facilitator I support the dancers to access this dimension by noticing the channels the group might be in, providing suggestions for amplification to unfold what is already happening in the dance and to find the nature or the deepest quality of the experience. From here we might be able to bring back the quality or direction needed in our life coming from processmind.

Gabrielle Roth describes five layers of being we move through, from inertia, imitation, intuition, imagination to inspiration. For her these are steps to awakening to live inspirationally. The first experience, 'inertia', is not good enough and the other experiences are steps to get somewhere better. We dance through inertia and imitation to get to intuition, imagination and ultimately to inspiration.

A radical shift would be to recognise that all the dimensions and all the experiences are needed. This is deep democracy: we say all the parts, roles, experiences are needed and can provide access to the unknown, the Dao, the Source, Spirit, the Dancer that dances us, processmind, inspiration. This helps me to understand what I teach, why I teach and how I am developing into a facilitator of experience encouraging access to essence. At the end of a class I often notice I cannot go back and duplicate the experience I had as facilitator; it felt it was inspired from somewhere else, from a place that I cannot control.

### 3.4.2 Dreaming up

'Dreaming up' is where the facilitator becomes a channel for the group or a client, and vice versa. Arnold Mindell describes dreaming up as two systems or fields (that of the facilitator and that of the other person) that simultaneously behave as if they were one process (Mindell 1985). He gives the example of a client telling a night-time dream and the therapist typically having a reaction to the dream. These reactions are also what the figures in the night-time dream have towards the dreamer themselves. These

reactions happen before and during the telling of the dream and after it (1985). The dreamer and interpreter (facilitator) are in the same field. Mindell explains further that the therapist or facilitator's dreamed up reactions are expressions of the client's process, parts that the client is not aware of or doesn't want to be aware of.

Another way of looking at this is to say that dreaming up is the effect of one person's unintended communication on another (Diamond and Jones 2004). 'Someone is dreamed up when they respond to another person's unintended communication signals without being aware of the communication that has triggered their response' (Diamond and Jones 2004: 27). When we are in a relationship, whether it is with someone we know well or a total stranger, we are always dreamed up. It doesn't only happen in a therapy situation.

As a facilitator, a good question to ask myself is: 'What role am I in for this person or group?' As the teacher of a conscious dance group, I am often dreamed up to 'teach' and the group is 'student'.

For example, when I introduce an exercise I notice two people talking in the back of the room. I am checking if what I explained is clear and then notice the two talking. I instinctively ask them if they understood, and notice immediately I am behaving like a schoolteacher. I name this out loud and the group and I respond with laughter. It was edgy for me to name the role I found myself in – it felt like a role I didn't want to be in. It was not like me to be schoolteacher-like. The quality of a schoolteacher is of someone who is strict, knows the content, knows what is right, how to do it, and is in control. I did not identify with this in that moment and felt embarrassed when I noticed it. I knew it might be helpful to the group (and me) if I named this out loud. The laughter from the group broke the tension I felt while explaining the exercise, it felt like a resistance to doing the exercise. The laughter broke this tension and invited the group into the

exercise. By naming the role and then being the schoolteacher fully, something can shift. The atmosphere changed, it felt like the barrier between facilitator and group lessened – it felt more relaxed. By naming my feeling, I brought the role of schoolteacher into the group and I didn't have to act out the role unconsciously anymore.

The field (we are both in) dreamed us up into behaving the way we do. We can become aware of the dreaming up when we have a strange or particular feeling/sensation when we are with a person or in a group, or behaviour patterns happen between two people even if they don't intend it, for example having a fight; it just happens to them, they don't want to fight. Joe Goodbread, in *Radical Intercourse* (1997), says the dreaming up takes interrelationship far beyond the concept of transference, into the mystery of communion. The process may happen in therapy; however, it also happens outside the therapeutic room in our everyday relationships and also on the dance floor between the teacher and the group.

In the above example of me feeling the 'schoolteacher' in me, we can say the group needed to find their inner teacher, and being unaware of this, the role constellated in me. Goodbread describes that in therapy the unintended signals of both the therapist and the client create a dreaming up. The more the therapist/facilitator is in touch with her own feelings, the faster the unintended message will disappear and dreaming up will end. He suggests the therapist/facilitator step out of the therapeutic or dedicated role in the relationship and be 'real' with the client/group. In the example, I trusted my feeling and spontaneously spoke out loud. I was 'real' with the group in the moment – this is a radical shift from being the teacher to being a facilitator in the moment.

Dreaming up and projecting often happens simultaneously in both parties. That is why innerwork is crucial for the facilitator. I try to make the group move through the



space/hall, while the group members mostly remain on the floor and don't get up and move around. I get more insistent to get them to move, using different words and ideas to create the movement. The dancers just want to follow where they are, slow internal movement. I am responding to something happening in the group, and the group is responding to something happening in me. As facilitator I notice my 'persistence' or 'pushing', I consciously drop this and go inside, go slow and dreamy to feel into how it is to just not move. I take a deep breath and notice how much I enjoy this. Here I join them and I voice the slow deep sigh over the microphone. Slowly the dancers start moving until they are all on their feet and moving through the hall. I was dreamed up to be persistent or pushy to allow them to feel their resistance and stay slow to connect deeply to themselves. When I changed into being slow and more internal, they could pick up the part that can move more freely – the *persistent* energy of movement. In this system there was the part that wanted to be slow and move more internally, and another part that moves freely through the space. Both parts were needed. 'Both *parties* are projecting and dreaming each other up!' (Mindell 1985: 43, my italics).

**Dual awareness** provides the periscope for me to go above the water in the moment (this is stepping out of my own experience) and notice I am being dreamed up to be insistent and pushy, and know that this quality or role I am in is somehow needed. The awareness of the facilitator is twofold: the facilitator goes into the river (experience) with the dancer, and also keeps a periscope above the water. This is dual awareness.

In staying in my experience of being persistent without awareness, the system won't shift. With awareness I drop it and join the group and then the shift happens. However, in deep democracy we say, at times, staying persistent is needed: this supports the group to drop deeper and become slower. In a way this is the reason I got

dreamed up! ‘Prohibiting’ or stopping them with my instructions they actually cross their edge to go deeper. I say more about the ‘edge’ in a section further down.

#### A bit more on projection and countertransference and dreaming up

As a movement teacher/facilitator, I often get projected on; for example, the music was great or not great, your words were just right, I love the way you guided the dance or this exercise didn’t work for me, and I don’t like instructions. As a new teacher these comments would affect me in a positive or negative way and at times encourage countertransference, with ‘oh that was a good or not so good group’. Now I know that what is said by dancers is often about the personal experience of the dancer and related to their individual process or it relates to the group’s process as one of the parts or roles in the field. When I react to the comments, or notice feelings coming up in me, I know that these might have something to do with the group as well, and it is not always just about me. The skill is to know which is which and the way to find out is to check it out. If I still have feelings about what was said hours or days afterwards, then I am projecting onto the group (countertransference) and I can take this to supervision or therapy or do inner work. It means I have wood to burn (work to do) on something that relates to my own psychological process. However, if the feelings do not linger and disappear soon after the class, then I can presume that it has something to do with the group’s process (or a certain individual’s process) and I was dreamed up to behave or feel a certain way as described above. I was in a role that was somehow needed in the system. Here I refer to Mindell’s concept of deep democracy as described earlier – all the parts or roles are needed in the field.

#### My relationship with the group

Not only does the group have an effect on me, I have an impact on the group. How I perceive the group often influences how I feel as a teacher. Many times I get irritated

by the group. People leave the space, not just to go to the toilet, but take their bag and leave. I feel the impact, my critic gets activated and I am spinning downwards into being critical. With Kate Jobe's question, what is my relationship with the group, I investigate my projections onto the group or group members.

Often teachers of conscious movement commiserate with each other that there is that one person in the group that is a rebel. This dancer never follows the instructions. It becomes an 'us and them' situation. I realise I have always seen the group as separate from me, the them, the not me. I am not like that, I always move, or dance a lot when on the dance floor. I don't go that slow or static. I begin to see that the 'them' is me as well. I am also like that – slow and static at times, needing to connect in a different way with myself, not always fast and energetic, at times the rebel. I notice how much I am against the moving slow or becoming static – I don't identify with being a slow mover. With this understanding I can now hypothesise that there is a part in me that wants to be slower. I can take this back into my facilitation with the group – by following this slower part in me, the one that wants to just stay on the floor, the quality of being connected to something deeper in me. I use this to find a slow place in me to facilitate from. I can say the group has shown me what facilitation style is needed. Amy Mindell (2006) describes the feeling with which we interact as the most crucial part. She continues by naming compassion, beginner's mind, fluidity and precision as the most important metaskills in process work. By trusting that I need 'slowness' I am compassionate with myself and I can use the metaskill of compassion with the group.

My thinking about the group's sluggishness and my pushing reminds me of a Zen story Arnold Mindell mentions in his book *Dreaming While Awake* (2000). In this story there is a man on a horse galloping along as if heading for an important place. Another man on the ground asks him where he is going. That is the story. But Mindell dreams

further by imagining the story is about the relationship between the two men – one on a galloping horse and one standing quietly on the ground. He sees the man on the ground jumping up saying he has ignored his rushing Self. And the man on the horse realising he is really standing still. For Mindell it is to find your centre while in the race. In the dance we talk about zero zone where we find the stillpoint in the centre of Chaos; in the centre of the dance there is an infinite stillness. Both parts are needed, we cannot have one without the other. What happens in me is needed by the group and what happens in the group is needed by me. As facilitator I bring awareness to both parts to support the field, to what is emerging in the moment.

### 3.4.3 Staying in the experience

Movement often takes us out of our experience. This is most common when we have pain and we move in ways to get away from the pain. This can also happen when I give an instruction to the group, where the instruction takes the dancer out of their experience. Mostly through instruction, I can take the dancer out of their experience into relationship with me.

Naming a body part specifically (for example: now move your hands or your feet), I bring dancers into relationship with me as the teacher of the movement practice, telling them what to do. I can do this as the teacher on purpose to build a relationship of trust between us. After a class a new dancer says he didn't like being told which body part to move, he wanted to stay with where he was in his body. He had a resistance to my instruction, and I guess he might have an edge to following instruction, perhaps to authority. I respond with, we do body parts for a specific reason – to become aware of different parts of the body we often do not have in our awareness. (Here I am also aware of the possibility of him having an edge to go somewhere else in his body.) His eyes brighten up – 'ah, I didn't know that'. I realise how important it is to say what I

am doing and why. For example: ‘Now you are connecting with the parts of your body to bring attention to the different parts and how they move.’ I name the obvious and by doing so, allow them to stay in their experience of moving between body parts.

I can also say that there might be resistance to the instructions and suggest to the group to include the resistance in the movement of the specific body part we are working with – this can bring relief to those in the group feeling resistance (in relationship to me or what I represent) – I confirm that resistance is not bad, it is about bringing attention to what is happening in the moment. It is not about getting away from something or being impacted by something outside our awareness. By naming the resistance, I bring it into the dancers’ awareness and make it OK to have resistance on the dance floor. I allow the experience of resistance to be present.

I am reminded by Kate Jobe that the language I use is important to the goal. I do not want to take them out of their experience or get them to follow me. What I want is for the dancers to follow themselves. This is different from being a teacher who instructs or imparts knowledge of something and the dancers follow the teacher or the teacher’s experience. As I write this, I notice that at times, following the teacher is also needed and can be fun and informative to the dancers. I might follow the group at times, and they might follow me at times. Differentiation becomes important – when am I the teacher of something and when the facilitator of the experience. It is to be clear in myself.

#### 3.4.4 Information and experience

I am also reminded by Kate Jobe that here are different models that people use in Process Work. ‘One is that information is at the base. We unfold experience to get information about ourselves, who we are, what we should do, and often has to do with “understanding”. This tends to be conceptual and is very useful when we need to get

perspective on things’ (Jobe 2019, in a session). She continues by saying that another approach to Process Work is that of an experiential model. ‘That we unfold experience to enter into it. By entering the experience, we go beyond what we can think and conceptualize about. In other words, this experience gives us a “direct” access to something we could not understand by conceptualizing it’ (Jobe 2019, in a session).

There are experiences we do not identify with or, to be more precise, marginalise because it might not be acceptable socially. What we marginalise is part of the secondary process. Goodbread writes ‘Social frameworks for studying experience are relatively new’ (2011: 41). He continues by saying that most psychotherapeutic methods regard experience as the business of the individual person. Psychotherapy mostly works with the principle that healing happens by helping individuals reconcile their ‘abnormal’ experiences to fit into their social context. Goodbread suggests that we marginalise experiences we don’t think are real (2011). The more people share a particular experience, the truer it appears – we can say experiences that are acceptable in society become part of our primary process and those that are not acceptable are marginalised and become part of our secondary process. We will have an edge to live the marginalised experiences in society. Some dancers, such as someone in a wheelchair or someone with Parkinsons, might already experience themselves as marginalised (their primary process does not fit well into society’s norm of who should dance), yet coming to the dance class, they feel included by others, there is a space for them to dance their unique dance equal to everyone else on the dance floor. This is not a disco or night club where only those that ‘fit the scene’ show up.

Conscious dance is all about experience. ‘Movement gives access to experience and that is a rich world that allows insight but more importantly direct experience that makes its own sense’ (Jobe 2019, in a session). This is great to hear, as I know from

my own experience that dance gives me something that feels good. I don't know what exactly it means and the meaning is not important, I just know the experience was needed. Conscious dance happens individually, in relationship and in a group, providing fertile ground for experience.

An example of relational work (dance in a different way, as two facilitators working together – this is also a dance) is when I co-teach a workshop with an artist, which helps me clarify different approaches. She brings experience in the visual channel, the marks, colour, lines, shapes, patterns or making marks inspired by an object on big sheets of paper. I bring the embodied experience (movement and proprioceptive channels) to the teaching. Together we create new experiences for the participants. Visually you look and draw. I add the feeling in the body, becoming the object, and drawing from this quality. I work with flirts – this is like catching the thing that is on the edge of our awareness, the thing almost missed, bringing it into attention and allowing this to be inspiration for the drawing. I take it further with encouraging the participants to notice where this quality might be needed or is already present in their life. Here I notice I did not have to think this through, the instructions came spontaneously, I am already living the experiential facilitator. Afterwards I can see how the elements of Process Work influence my facilitation.

In relationship with the co-teacher I at first feel as if we are at opposite ends, we do not agree about how to do things (one dance). When I step into the field consciously and notice and move the roles (the artist – visual – and the dancer – embodied), I realise we do a great job! At first I didn't trust the process or dance, I had an edge to being visual. When I am made aware of this 'other' role during a supervision session, I can get clear on what I bring to the relationship and notice we create from different places, providing something bigger than what we each bring on our own.

In the group, there are experiences not acceptable on the dance floor. For example, when someone shouts out loud or screams at the top of their voice, other dancers will get disturbed and stop moving or start looking at the offending individual. Being ‘that’ out of control is not acceptable, we only get out of control in a certain way. Yet, in Process Work we hypothesise that the individual is having an experience that is somehow needed not just by the individual, but also by the group.

### The edge

The edge separates what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. The edge is held in place by a belief system (for example, I should not lose control completely, I cannot get lost in this experience). One way the facilitator can work with the edge in the example mentioned is to invite the dancers to all make sounds and to allow this to go as loud or wild as these can be, giving them permission to go further into the experience and not leave the individual on their own having feelings of shame or guilt when they return to a ‘normal’ or more accepted state. The sound might be a very frightening experience to some in the group; however, the group as a whole or system provides a container for the experience. As the facilitator I name the feelings that might be around to create safety for the group experience, whether it is an impossible moment or a liberating moment.

The edge is also an experience, and dancing this experience might already be a relief as the dancer stays with the feelings and can deepen these to fully feel what they feel. For example, a suggestion can be to dance how it feels to not let go and be totally out of control, to just stay with the control, holding on.

It is not about getting over the edge, it is about feeling what we feel and experiencing in a given moment in our body and psyche – this is embodiment. Mindell says ‘process work deals with the edge by staying near it, by switching channels and



going around it, by letting it be, by jumping over it or by whatever else achieves positive feedback from the client' (1985: 25).

The group (and the facilitator) has primary and secondary processes and edges. Mindell says 'there are many ways to allow processes to unfold, but perhaps the most essential way is to *stay with the edge*, with awareness of the group's forbidden communication, its tendency to avoid emotional issues, personal feelings, idealistic visions, and relationship conflicts' (1993: 39). Mindell suggests using the 'weather report' method to share information about the edge with the group. A weather report is feeling the atmosphere in the moment. Knowing about the edge is not enough: the knowledge needs to be shared. The attitude in which the weather report is presented should be 'curious, encouraging (and) warmhearted' (Mindell 1993: 40). A weather report is a simple statement of what is happening, for example, now there is less movement in the room. Now some feet are moving, some are not. Now some eyes are closed and some are open. Now there are a few lying on the floor. Now there is fast dancing.

Mindell further suggests that the facilitator can guess the future of a process (or the secondary aspect): where there has been harmony, conflict might show up next time; individual issues might bring up relationship issues at another time. For the facilitator of a dance group, many changes occur during the course of a session. There will be quiet inward moments and this can easily change to a more outward rowdy moment. I can say being quiet or inward is more primary in a given moment and that rowdiness might be more secondary in that moment. Or laughter might be around for some, but there will also be those who seem serious and more on their own. I often experience this in a session – where little groups might have fun and laugh together, while others might be on their own and look more inward. This poses a difficult moment for the

teacher to know where to go next. What I am noticing is the group members following themselves. This is a group that follows itself. Secondary would be to follow someone or something else. An intervention that comes to mind is asking the group to find another dancer to follow, or to follow an instruction I might give.

Difficult atmospheres develop when the group members do not feel safe, do not feel at home or do not feel supported. The facilitator can voice the need for love, support, approval. Mindell suggests that if these are not named and brought in, dependency and stasis and eventually revolution develop (Mindell 1993). Often, at the beginning of a class, I name what might be in the room; these are usually feelings I feel in me. I ask the participants to walk or dance through the space and notice which feelings are around for them, to acknowledge and welcome these feelings, and to know that these feelings are found in most groups. As they move through the space, I will name what I see: smiles, eye contact, hands touching, feet meeting other feet. If I don't see connection (an edge to connect), I could name it or I could say 'meet a partner', and ask to them change rapidly, to allow them to gradually get used to making contact without having to feel the discomfort too much or for too long. This is a form of edge work, staying at the edge and perhaps crossing the edge briefly.

Edges show us where there is a possibility of growth. Dancers might reach an edge when they say they cannot make a certain movement. The group might have an edge by saying they are not like those doing yoga or those going to nightclubs. As the facilitator of a conscious dance practice I have an intention of supporting dancers to become aware of their edges, and at times to step over edges and discover new territory in themselves. We, as conscious movement teachers, are in the business of helping others and ourselves become more self-aware, to live freer in ourselves, to become more of who we are. We often promote ourselves and our workshops by saying 'you

will discover/experience something new about yourself'. As human beings we want to live more of who we are. As a **teacher** I use my own edges, the ones that I have struggled with, as examples in my teaching or I develop an exercise on a particular edge. As an **experiential facilitator** I support the group as a whole to experience the edge of the group and perhaps dance over the edge.

Emails from and conversations with dancers often help me to notice the edges that might be in the group – we don't like this or that, or I prefer this not that. What is marginalised, for example, not wanting to follow an instruction or a quality in a music track that disturbs them, might hold information of something that stops the dancers/group. Mindell describes reaching the edge as not being able to look at something, hear a certain voice or noise, make a certain movement or feel a specific feeling (1995).

Another way of noticing the edge is to pay attention to what happens in me. I often get dreamed up as an unoccupied part of the group. I experience the group's secondary process in me. This can be in how I feel, or a physical symptom I might have or how I think about the group.

Most of the time the group (and facilitator) want to remain in their comfort zone. This is a very human need, and we all want to feel safe and comfortable. Being at an edge is uncomfortable, daunting, and can also be painful. Yet, it is the place where we can meet new parts of ourselves and grow. I am also reminded that we have to know our comfort zone well, as our often over-activated nervous systems need a release and a safe zone to recover in. I reflect on this in myself and take this back into the next class I teach and we explore staying in the comfort zone and noticing where we are ready to take on the challenge and go further. It reminds me of Andrea Juhan during *Undercurrents* (an ongoing Open Floor group in May 2018) instructing us to find our

blueprint dance, with the blueprint being our comfort dance. She supports us to step out of the comfort dance by playing diverse music to support our exploration into unknown, new dances. Here she works at the edge and over the edge with the dancers. Safety is in having a choice when and how to step in and out of the comfort zone.

It takes skill and awareness to notice where I stop as facilitator, where I don't go, what I don't want to feel, what I ignore. This happens to me when I notice I am ignoring a difficult issue happening in the room – there is a disturbance, noise or interaction, but I ignore or choose not to see what is happening and I don't address it. One can say I am at an edge, something stops me from interfering or even seeing what happens. A dancer comes up to me and says 'there are people talking, they should not talk, I find it is disturbing my dance'. I tell the group to drop words and dance – here I collude with the dancer and we are held by the same edge figure, which says 'This is a movement practice not a talking practice.' This is an important role in the room – and my giving it attention allows me to frame it out loud, for example: 'Notice where you are taken out of your dance when there is a disturbance in the room. What stops you from staying with your dance?' This 'stopper' or 'voice' or 'figure' might say something like 'you should have a peaceful environment to connect in your dance'. This is what we call the edge figure, the figure that holds the belief system in place and creates the edge.

We can either become the edge figure and find out what is useful about this figure or we can become the disturbance, for example, the voices that talk while I want to dance. Goodbread suggests 'our challenge is to befriend these inner dramas rather than remaining their passive victims' (2010: 55). We become the figure or disturbance to access the secondary quality, the quality that provides the possibility to help us grow into more of who we are. In the dance group I demonstrate at the beginning of a class how the disturbance pulls me off track, how I find the dance of this figure or disturbance

and dance it to its end to access the essence. Here I use an actual disturbance I might have had that morning before the class. I also name the types of disturbances we might experience on the dance floor. Naming these out loud brings them into the group's awareness and allows these qualities or energies to be present and not to stay banished or to be something that is wrong and should not be experienced. I model for the group to support them.

Another way of working at the edge is to use this as an exercise with the group. I can suggest to them to check if there is something stopping them from dancing the way they want to dance. I invite dancers to notice in their own dance a movement that seems stuck, or stops them from going further. This 'stopper' movement might also be in someone else's dance, and they can then take on that dance to explore the energy. I encourage them to stay with this stuck movement or other disturbing dance for as long as they can. Here we work at the edge. Hold the dance right there. Don't go any further, dance deeper into the stuckness. For some it might be great to explore the 'stuck' dance, or for some to stay at the edge, while others will step over the edge and dance outside the stuck place or stuck movement. For me as facilitator it will be to notice where some dance deeper into stuckness, or where others remain at the edge and where some cross the edge. My language will be to support all the dances. There might also be those who move between dancing at the edge and dancing over the edge. What I see will inform how I frame or name it out loud. My instructions include noticing the quality of this movement, and what might be useful about it, what might they need and where in them do they need this quality – to make meaning of the experience.

As I write this early in the morning, I spill my coffee three times, knocking the cup or knocking the table with the cup. The spillage disturbs me as I have to

get up and clean the mess. I feel irritated with myself. The part in me that wants to get the writing done and stay focused gets annoyed with the part that makes a mess. Here I identify the two parts in me. I have an edge to being messy. Yet, something in me makes me do it. I become the figure who kicks the table, here I go into the movement channel and do the movement. I slow down the movement to find the essence. It is a leg that goes a different direction from where the rest of the body is focused – on the screen. I follow this leg with the rest of my body – one can say I follow the dance of the leg to become the figure more fully. This becomes a trickster having a bit of fun. I dream into how I can bring more fun into the writing ... I enjoy this figure's energy, it is light and playful. I notice I write stream-of-consciousness style and then go back and clean it up! More of this might be needed – it is enjoyable to write this way, relaxed, fun, yet I keep it to a minimum so as not to waste time!

### 3.4.5 How to identify roles or parts in the field

The secondary process can manifest as signals indicating things that might be disavowed such as, gender issues, boredom, tiredness, rigidity, control. What I might see on the dance floor, for example dancers dancing far away from the DJ desk, and how I think about this takes me into what we call roles in the field

#### *Roles and parts*

We often use the terms roles and parts interchangeably in Process Work. In some psychotherapy modalities parts are used to describe an individual's internal makeup, with regards to split off parts that are painful or difficult. The work with the individual is then to identify the parts and allowing the parts to be present with other parts. Parts

are in relationship to other parts in us. For example, I feel afraid, there is a part in me that feels scared and there is an opposing part that causes these feelings, this could be an internalised critic. There might also be a part that is a protector. With the term ‘roles’ we bring in systemic thinking. There is a role that is scared, and there might be a ghost role in the field that causes this fear. A ghost role is when there is a role in the background not spoken of or something that the group is scared to mention, but the group suffers from, for example an oppressive feeling. Here we don’t focus on the individual’s personal psychology alone, but bring the issue into the bigger field, context, society or the world. With both roles and parts there will be complimentary roles or parts, opposing roles or parts and missing roles and parts.

In the dance community we talk about feeling ourselves change or transform in the dance and that this has an impact on my world or my relationships off the dance floor.

I notice I have changed.

The systemic perspective helps me notice the struggle I have is also in the world out there. The role that I am in is bigger than me. When I am in the role of the oppressor, there is also an oppressor in the bigger world. I can step out of the role and try a different role. I can explore and experiment with being the oppressed, being the oppressor, being the bystander who does nothing, etc. I am attracted more to certain roles because of my personal psychology. When I work on the roles that come through me, I also work on the bigger field, on the world out there. This is exciting, as it places the work we do on the dance floor as crucial to changing our world.

With the example of dancers dancing further away from the DJ desk, I hypothesise that here is one role of someone who doesn’t want to be seen (by the teacher). I can identify another role in the field, which is what is on the other side of not wanting to be seen (what are they not afraid of or where do they feel safe), and that could be the **need**

to be seen. There is also a third part/role – what/who is seeing or looking? And a fourth role – who is being seen?

If people are loud or complain, it might be that there is a part in the field that isn't listening or hearing. The loudness might also be a need to be noticed or to be heard. When there are those who are stuck to the floor and not moving, there will be a role that wants to move. As I write this I realise how many ways or how many roles each scenario holds. Each facilitator will find many roles (complimentary, opposing or polarised) and often different ones from other facilitators. Any given situation is rich and diverse. We delve into this richness with our awareness. At times the group will make us aware of a role we, as facilitators, are missing.

'The facilitator must value all parts in the field, because in order for interaction and evolution to take place, all the parts must be present' (Mindell 1993: 36). This means the facilitator is aware of the **tension** that might exist between parts. Staying in the tension is what is needed, not to choose one part over the other. How do I stay in the tension? We bring attention to both parts and value them equally. Or notice where we don't; this also needs to be valued. We give them space, for example, in the dance we will find the movement or quality of the one part and then find it for the other. We allow these parts to dance together or find a mutual dance. We don't move away from a part that feels difficult or uncomfortable or might feel strange and unintentional. We welcome what is odd or the unintentional movement or difficult feeling and let it dance. My challenge is to find the words to allow uncomfortable feelings such as boredom to be present and experienced. I struggle to find the words that 'speak in movement or sensation' to the mover to find the dance of boredom. Boredom is a reaction to something else. The **experience** of boredom is what we want. If the experience is felt and a movement is allowed to come forth, a new dance will show itself.



### 3.4.6 Disturbances and timespirits

Life consists of trouble and disturbances (also joy and pleasure) – it is not always an easy ride. We are thrown or taken by our feelings and emotions when we are disturbed by outer and inner events. Disturbances happen when things break down. These could be moments of instability, indicating that we have an edge to something. We aim for peace and love, yet we mostly experience strife and difficult emotions. Life happens to us! In Process Work we say there is gold in the disturbance, that what is happening could provide information not yet available to our everyday awareness. This information is held at bay, because we have a belief system that says it is not part of us, or we are not like that. We are a **system** comprising a primary identity, edge and secondary identity. Disturbances happen when something more secondary for us is ready to step into the foreground – we get disturbed by it, our equilibrium is lost. For example, the dancer that acts in a rebellious way, always doing the opposite from what is asked, disturbs me no end. When I realise this is a disturbance for me, and I notice in myself what the quality of the ‘rebel’ is, my inner rebel, and how I can teach from this place, the whole group responds and it creates an atmosphere of lightness and fun. I didn’t know I had such a rebel in me, nor how much fun it is when the group lightens up! Mindell calls the disturbances ‘timespirits’ (Mindell 1993: 33). He says that we must be able to identify all the various parts and timespirits in a system. These timespirits all need to speak – to have a place at the table, and in my case, to be on the dance floor. Sometimes I need the rebel on the dance floor!

Often these disturbances are like ghosts in the background, they are difficult to identify. ‘Ghosts such as jealousy, love, contempt, and dignity need to be brought forward and identified as well. Once all the parts are identified, they must be encouraged to speak [or to dance – my addition]. A system that gives no time or space

to its ghosts will eventually be disturbed or be destroyed by them' (Mindell 1993: 33). A system is the group of dancers, including the facilitator, and the room; an individual is also a system. A system will have a direction and sometimes the direction of the group and direction of the individual might be different. It will be up to the facilitator to notice this and frame or name what is happening. This does not mean using the actual names of the dancers, but a general indication of what is happening on the dance floor. For example, one dancer might be lying and moving on the floor, while the others are on their feet. I bring attention to different ways of moving with the floor or on the floor. At times one might be touching the floor with an arm or buttocks and at times one might touch the floor with the soles of the feet. This allows the dancers to open their attention to what body part is touching the floor in the moment. They might change the point of contact or stay in one place.

I mention and welcome all the different kinds of feelings we might have towards other dancers: those we like, those we don't like, are attracted to, feel ambivalent about. A further step or example would be to also welcome the feelings each dancer feels towards themselves, for example when I don't like someone or am attracted to someone on the dance floor, while already in a relationship. 'I don't like myself when this happens – it is not allowed in my world.' How can the facilitator invite these feelings to be welcome – 'notice how you feel about yourself in the moment, and if you don't like what you feel, is there a possibility to allow these feelings to be present for a short while'. A way to deal with the edge of allowing these difficult feelings is to invite them to have them for a minute. The short timeframe supports them to go there. Allowing them to step around or over or into the disturbance to possibly discover a new pattern of being with themselves.

## Group identity

Not only do individuals need a space to feel into their inner diversity, the group needs to be made aware of its diversity. ‘All groups have *edges*, that serve to limit or define their identities. Edges may be experienced as resistances to recognising, allowing, and living certain disavowed parts of the group’ (Mindell 1993: 33). The group might not be a place where personal feelings are expressed. ‘There is a tacit group agreement that personal feelings do not belong in the group’ (34). And ‘All groups ... have beliefs, tendencies, philosophies, and behaviours that they promote and others that they disapprove of, prohibit, repress, or actively resist’ (34). When this happens the group might lose its energy, become lifeless, rigid, or group numbers might start dropping. With awareness of what is happening in the moment on the dance floor, we can point out to the group what is happening. ‘An awakened group will be self-balancing and wise’ (1993: 34). Mindell describes the group as ‘wise’, because the group at a deeper level already knows what is needed. As facilitator I support the process of the group by naming what I notice about the group. I can also feel in myself what this group is about or notice how I think about the group. They are fast or always in ‘Chaos’ or there is no direction in this group or the group is very slow. The group has an identity. ‘We are nice to each other/we don’t ignore each other.’ It is then good to notice where the opposite is true in the group as well. When I teach in different places I notice the different identities of groups more clearly. One group has a lot of expressive, wild energy and easily connect with each other, while another group is slower, more internal and connected to themselves. Some groups respond to certain types of music easily and others have a different response. Of course, this is also true for each individual, and for the group as a whole.

## 3.5 Quantum Mind awareness, processmind and the dance

Everyday awareness is being aware of what we are aware of in a particular moment, similar to other mindfulness practices. Quantum Mind awareness is being aware of what I exclude from my everyday awareness.

As Process Work facilitators, we also develop the ‘quantum aspect of our awareness, notice the tiniest, easily overlooked “nano” tendencies and self-reflect upon these subliminal experiences’ (Mindell 2010: 5). For example, a yawn that when brought to the foreground might take someone further into an experience of opening up, or a flick of the hair might take the dancer into a dance of seduction. Everything is important (the body’s movements as well as internal feelings and thoughts, sensations), nothing just happens, we pay attention to what we might think is not important.

I check with myself as facilitator why I imagine something is unimportant; I bring attention to this. What I find or uncover might be useful to the overall process of the group that is emerging. What I ignore as facilitator, and the reason why I ignore it, might be useful to the person or group’s process. If I ignore my resistance to tiredness, I miss out on an opportunity to support the group to unfold the deeper experience of dropping inside and connecting to themselves in a different way.

Mindell describes quantum mind as not only a ‘supersensitive and self-reflecting awareness’, but this is also ‘a kind of “pilot wave” or guiding pattern’ (2010: 5). He says that when we don’t self-reflect, we marginalise our dreaming nature. In physics it is described as the ‘wave’ function collapsing to create reality. As an example, Mindell says that from a night-time dream we might take certain aspects to create change in our everyday reality. This means we marginalise other more esoteric parts of the dream as it might not conform to everyday reality of who we are. For example, I dream of

climbing a rock face in the path of an oncoming tidal wave. I assume this is about surviving, but I forget I am not only the figure climbing to safety, I am also the tidal wave, and the rock face!

This happens in the dance as well. We dance our usual, comfortable dance. The comfort dance will be our habitual patterns, our easy dance, the dance that we are used to and fall back on. During the comfort dance something else happens, for example, we trip over our feet or one hand just hangs by the side. The unintended trip (unintentional movement) or breaks in movement or an unfamiliar sensation does not conform to our everyday view of our dance. As we are doing our normal dance, we marginalise the other things that happen. We don't give it our attention. This thing that happens to our normal dance is what we call secondary movement, as discussed earlier on. If we get interested, we might ask ourselves, who wants to trip? I am also the one that trips. Or who wants to 'hang'.

As the facilitator I use quantum awareness to perceive that which is marginalised in the movement. I notice the unintended movements, the flick of the hair, the hesitations, the pauses, a little smile and I don't ignore them or let them slip past. I support the group to expand their attention to include what Mindell calls the esoteric parts we normally ignore, what is not noticed and embraced. In this way I help dancers go beyond what they are already familiar with and explore emerging patterns. A dancer moves fast and energetically, yet one part of the body is not moving. As facilitator I name noticing the parts of the body that are not moving. I might name out loud the parts I see that are not moving. As facilitator I become aware I am holding my breath, bring this in for the group to notice their breath. Or I notice I am tense or nervous about my music. I know tenseness or nervousness will also be somewhere in the group, as well

as being at ease and playful. Here I notice first in myself and then check out what I see on the dance floor.

Mindell brings another aspect of quantum awareness, in that we could be in two places or states at the same time, similar to how ‘quantum physics suggests that material particles can behave’ (Mindell 2010: 5). In a night-time dream you may be in two worlds at the same time, but on waking up, you identify with one of the worlds and not with the other. For example, a dancer might focus on their feet and their hands hang limp next to the body. It is as if the feet and hands are on different planets. As facilitator I can bring attention to the two different states: the active feet and the inactive hands. Or a dancer might say at the beginning they feel tired, down, or have low energy. Yet, they are standing upright while speaking or make a subtle fast movement. They are only in one part of their experience. It takes quantum awareness to notice the other experience.

Mindell builds on Quantum Mind awareness with what he calls processmind. This awareness is also earth-based, ‘subtle feelings we have about places on earth that tend to “move” us into feeling wise and/or in particular directions’ (2010: 6). Mindell likens processmind to what Aboriginal people have always felt, ‘that special earth spots, such as burial grounds, are power areas and have identified with them’. He explains that we normally identify with our body in a particular location; however, when we dream or are near death, when our everyday self is less prominent, our ‘*nonlocalized* mind or processmind – becomes more apparent’ (7). Mindell describes this ‘organizing factor’ as a ‘force field’, like the wind blowing through the trees. We cannot see this field, we can only see how it moves things around. It gives us ‘a sense of the power and structure of invisible fields’. Here I am reminded of Anna Halprin’s video *Breath Made Visible* (2009), when she refers to dance as a form of art. She says dance is what you see, what

you smell, what you hear. It is nature, it is how we move in nature, it is in everyday movement. She brings her consciousness into a tree and then brings this consciousness into her body, which becomes a dance experience for her. As a five-year-old she thought God was a dancer (Halprin 2009). Mindell would say the tree moves us, we are danced by nature or places. On the dance floor we aspire to connect with the inner dancer or to be danced by something bigger than us – the Mystery – a secondary experience for most dancers. In Open Floor we *dissolve* into something bigger; in Process Work we can say ‘the something bigger’ moves us, it is a deeper part of who we are, the Dao.

Gravity is an invisible force field we live in, we are mostly not aware of its effect on our movement and body. In the same way we don’t pay attention to processmind, unless we are in an altered state, having a night-time dream or are near death. Yet, it ‘organizes great portions of our lives’ (Mindell 2010: 7). Processmind or the unconscious according to Jungian theory is an invisible force field that moves and organizes our bodies, dream images and relationships in meaningful ways. In the dance we become altered and at times experience processmind. The dance becomes a meaningful experience. As facilitator I practice to notice when I am in the zone and to trust this experience as useful and needed.

Mindell describes the Tao as a ‘field-like power moving us moment to moment through what otherwise seems like accidental events and random directions’ (2010: 55) In a duality perspective we see psyche and matter as separate things, or as Mindell says, these are like parallel universes. With attention we could see psyche and matter as a process or unity that flows in an around everyone as well as from one to the other. We mostly see the world as: *we are this not that* – we need the **bridges** between the parts in us and between us as humans. As the facilitator of conscious dance, I become a

vehicle for processmind, I develop my quantum awareness by following the group and the group following me. We move as one or in Mindell's words: 'Follow the processmind to be at one with what is happening' (2010: 56).

## 3.6 Conclusion

My aim in writing this project was to demonstrate and explore how I shifted from movement teacher to Process Work facilitator; to examine the various tools of Process Work and how these tools change the way I teach and facilitate; to demonstrate how through the study of Process Work my relationship to the group changed; and how I shifted from a theoretical understanding of Process Work to an embodied way of working with a group of dancers.

During the writing of this project I explored the shifts happening in myself, first from teacher to facilitator, and discovered that I needed both roles. Sometimes I am the teacher of movement and other times I am the facilitator of experience. Being able to differentiate and know in which role I am – teacher or facilitator – brings clarity and that clarity supports me to notice where I am needed in the moment.

I explored and discovered ways of using inner work in my classes and how I am part of the field when I facilitate. I explored the elements of Process Work for my own understanding and learning. I became excited about how the project came alive during the writing process, also when I took back into my classes what I have discovered. I discovered the importance of feedback – that which came back to me from the dancers, from my own learning, from further reading. How I can use the feedback to discover the roles in the field and devise exercises to allow the group to explore their experiences I became aware of my place in the field, of how the process is in the group and



simultaneously also in me. What I noticed in the group I can also explore in myself and this is where inner work plays an important role

Through my explorations I realised I am no longer taken by my own inner complex during a class. This allows me to support the larger process of the world I am in to develop and unfold, allowing for new directions, new ways, new patterns to emerge. This is both relieving and liberating and a way to change the world – internally and externally. I found my place in the world of conscious dance, as an initiator of change.

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