

DanceAbility International

One Mover, One Watcher ©

Featured Exercise

Introduction:

In this exercise, people work together in pairs and one person is the Mover and the other is the Watcher.

Changing the way you perceive an object or event is an opportunity to change the way you feel, the way you think, and the way you move. It is also good for the eyes to work with different ways of focusing, and to see things from different perspectives. Learning to see things upside down or sideways can reveal valuable new aspects of the world you would normally miss through your typical patterns of observation. This exercise helps us expand our ways of perceiving beyond sight: touch and hearing can also be used to “see.” This exercise can be modified, but is not ideal for groups that include people with visual impairments.

Before You Begin:

For two people on their own: simply read the directions and perform the exercise.

For a facilitator of a class: have people pair up for the exercise, then read the directions out loud or explain the steps in your own words.

The Exercise:

In your pair, decide who will be the Mover and who will be the Watcher.

The Mover: Begin to move, making whatever movements you want to. At all times, trace with your mind the sensations in your body that come from the movements you’re making. If your attention wanders

from the sensations in your body, notice where it goes and bring it back to the sensations caused by your movement.

The Watcher: Intentionally change your perspective of the Mover, in any variety of ways you can. For example, you can change the way you see by moving into different positions, or covering up one eye, closing your eyes, blinking fast, or looking at only one part of the Mover's body or seeing her whole body, coming very close to her or moving further away, looking from behind another person or object, tilting your head to various places, or lying down on the ground and looking from below. Watch your partner while you do anything you can to change the way that you observe the way she moves. Make a movement or dance improvisation out of your watching. You can incorporate movements or inspiration from the Mover's dance into your own dance as you witness your partners movements. Use your different senses to percive what is happening. Listen to the sounds of your partner; close your eyes or turn away from your partner and imagine, or intuitively sense, what she is doing.

The Facilitator: After several minutes, say something like, "A short time more, then find a concentrated end." When everybody is still, say something like, "From that stillness, each person change one thing about the shape you are in. And relax."

Change roles and repeat.

To close the exercise, share your experience and observations with your partner. You will learn more about your yourself and your environment from the new ways each of you have learned to see.