

## **Workshop Title: Experimental learning through sports - Yoga and dance**

**Duration:** 90 min

**Topic:** Experiential learning through inclusive activities

**Target Group:** suitable for high school pupils, students and adults, appropriate for groups of all sizes.

### **Inclusive Perspective of Your Design / Adaptation Process of Implementation:**

The methods, used in these workshop are suitable for everyone. The workshop can be adapted, according to the individual's, as well as the group's abilities, when needed.

In the first part of the workshop - the warm-up part - participants are introduced to non-verbal communication, through the use of physical expression and are given the opportunity to establish trust with one another.

In the second and main part of the workshop, participants are divided into smaller groups, in which they are then encouraged and guided to build their own activity, using yoga and dance elements. The aim of this is that through the process of constructing their own activity, the participants face and think about the following questions: What types of limitations can we face in our everyday life or/and in our work environment? ; How can we put these perceived limitations to good use and therefore actively and consciously create a more inclusive environment?

These two main questions lead to a number of sub-questions which, in the course of the activities, lead the participants to their own experience of (in)ability. In the process, they become more aware of the importance of reflecting and above all, the importance of being mindful in our everyday lives and when doing our work, so that we are able to design processes and activities in a way that allows for all kinds of adaptations and thus gives the possibility to include as wide a range of people as possible.

## **WORKSHOP PLAN**

### **1- Introduction Speech Plan:**

Movement is a fundamental element that every individual encounters from an early age. Throughout life, an individual experiences different intensities of it and is confronted with his or hers's own movement limitations, as well as with the limitations within the environment. Movement is a recognition of one's own (in)ability as well as the (in)ability of the environment, to encourage an individual to think about his/her own adaptations that he/she might need and also about the adaptations that their environment might need. Dance, as a primitive movement discipline of art and sports, once also a part of religious rituals, evokes relaxation and exhilaration within the individual.

Yoga, which has roots in Eastern religious traditions, has for centuries, same as dance, been embedded among people and roughly mimics ancient rituals. It mimics the natural movements of animals and nature. In the modern world, yoga can represent virtually any type of movement. It can be a simple basic exercise that relaxes the mind and stretches the body.

Dance and yoga strengthen cognitive and physical memory and can lead to psycho-social interconnections between participants.

## 2- Energizer's Definition:

**Name of method:** The exercise of trust and getting to know the environment

**Aim:** To strengthen communication and trust between participants, to develop awareness of non-verbal communication.

**Duration:** 15 - 20 min

**Profile and number of the participants:** suitable for participants from 15 to 99 years of age

**Materials:** no special materials required

### **Step by Step Implementation:**

This exercise helps participants to communicate through the use of their hands and touch. Throughout the exercise the participants are able to experience what it is like being in a role of a leader and what it is like when you're in the role of a listener - follower.

The main purpose of this exercise is for participants to strengthen trust in themselves as well as in their exercise partners and increase their sensitivity to non-verbal forms of communication.

Instructions: Work in pairs.

### Part 1

Participants are instructed to find a partner within the group. When in pairs, one of the partners takes on the role of a leader and leads the way, while the other one takes on the role of a follower and just follows the leader, with eyes closed. Later, the roles in pairs are reversed, so that everybody can experience being in both roles.

The leader in the pair leads their partner into movement by touching their hand. The follower simply follows the leading partner through the sense of touch, with their eyes closed.

The pair of them move together in all directions (up, down, left, right, when moving, they can use their whole body or just parts of it). The only really important thing in this exercise is that the pair is in contact only through the palms of the hands touching, in silence.

### Part 2

In the second part of the exercise, the same pairs explore the shapes and things within the space they are in. The leader in the pair leads their following partner through the space and directs him/her towards a certain object in front of him/her, using a hand movement. The following partner explores the object with eyes closed, just by touching it, in silence. By using only the sense of touch, the follower explores the object, its shape, texture, warmth, etc. While exploring the object like that, he/she thinks about everything that can be perceived, using only the sense of touch.

Later, the roles in pairs are reversed, so that everybody can experience being in both roles.

## 3 - Concrete Experience:

**Name of the Method:** Become a dancer (or a yoga teacher/practitioner)

**Aim:** To create a context that will encourage the participants to think, act and thus design activities that are accessible for as many people as possible - inclusion.

The activities below are designed in a way that the participants, through role-plays, confront their own limitations, as well as the limitations of the environment.

The following activities equip the participants with useful tools to become more open-minded and to think in a more creative way: whether and how they can be more inclusive in their work and everyday actions.

**Category:** Simulation

**Duration:** 45 - 50 min

**Group Size and Age:** We recommend a minimum of 6 players, age of 15 +.

**Materials:** music, radio and speakers

**Step by Step Implementation:**

This activity is in two parts. Thus, firstly, the participants need to be divided into two groups. One group is given the task of designing a yoga lesson, while the other group is asked to design a choreography for a short dance performance. To make formatting the two groups easier, beforehand we can ask the participants about their experiences in the fields of dance and yoga - the two most "experienced" participants in the fields can then choose the rest of the members for their teams. However, the level of experience is not relevant for the participation in this activity.

The activity requires both groups to be active at the same time and is divided into two parts.

### **Part 1 of the activity (30min)**

#### **DANCE GROUP**

Instructions for participants:

(The introductory story can be arbitrarily shaped and adapted according to the purpose of the workshop and the participants' profile)

Example: "The leader of a dancing group has 9 years of experience in dancing and running a dance theatre. Together with his fellow dancers, now he has to create a short dance performance. The basis for the performance is the story of Cinderella and the genre is contemporary-expressive dance. The dance routine will later be performed on the big stage at Cankarjev dom, in Ljubljana".

The music the group dances to is prepared in advance. We also set the length of the performance (3 to 5 min) and determine the size of the stage. The group then has 15 to 20 minutes to prepare the performance.

The participants divide the roles among themselves.

They are given no other instructions or limitations.

#### **YOGA CLASS**

Instructions for participants:

The participants are asked to prepare a "yoga lesson", altogether, as a group and told that later on, the lesson will have to be presented to the other group. The participants can decide among themselves who in the group will be the yoga teacher/trainer that leads the class and who will be the students. The group is also given complete freedom about the structure and the exercises they want to use for the lesson. The only limitation given to them beforehand is the duration of the lesson (it has to be 3 to 5 minutes long). The group then has 15 to 20 minutes to prepare the lesson.

The participants are given no other instructions or limitations.

Each group then performs their prepared dance performance and yoga lesson in front of the other group. The dance group performs first.

### **Part 2 of the activity (15 min)**

After both groups have performed in front of each other, the leaders of the groups (the individuals in both groups who have proved to be the most active, important for the group - who have spontaneously emerged through the group dynamics during the first part of the activity), are asked to leave the room for a short time.

#### **DANCE GROUP**

When the group leader leaves the group for a short time, we introduce to the other members of the group some new circumstances (prepared by us in advance), that have occurred in a week's time. The group then has 4 minutes to come up with solutions and to integrate the new circumstances into their performance.

The new circumstances/limitations (the number and characteristics of the new circumstances can be arbitrarily shaped and adapted to your needs):

- First circumstance example: one of the group members breaks his leg on the way home from work.
- Second circumstance example: one member from the group has broken-up with the group leader (they are ex-partners) and does not want to communicate with him anymore
- Third circumstance example: the director of the Cankarjev dom, Ljubiana informs the dance group that they will have to dance a reprise of their performance on a much smaller stage, due to the flooding in the large hall.
- The other participants without a specific role in the group are just observers and follow the dance routine, the same as before.

The roles are assigned to participants by us. They express their given roles through movement and dance, they are given a chance to decide in which way they would like to express themselves, in their given roles. They are given the freedom to develop their own expression strategy.

Then the group leader is invited back into the room and into the group. Out of the all of the new circumstances that have emerged, he/she is told only that the reprise of the dance performance will be taking place on a smaller stage, due to the flooding of the large hall. He/she is shown the new size of the dance stage. The other circumstances and roles, assigned to the other group members are not revealed to him/her.

During the reprise of the performance, we observe how the group leader reacts to the new circumstances.

## YOGA CLASS

When the group leader leaves the group for a short time, we introduce to the other members of the group some new circumstances (prepared by us in advance), that have occurred in a week's time. The group then has 4 minutes to come up with solutions and to integrate the new circumstances into their yoga lesson.

The new circumstances/limitations (the number and characteristics of the new circumstances can be arbitrarily shaped and adapted to your needs):

- First circumstance example: one member of the group plays the role of a director who does not see the profitability of having a yoga group. He wants to close down the yoga studio and is concerned about the operating costs.
- Second circumstance example: one member of the group is a yoga teacher/ trainer from another yoga studio and because he is jealous of the success of this studio, he points out only the mistakes in yoga lessons and the overall miss-management of the studio
- Third circumstance example: one group member is in a wheelchair, cannot walk and finds it difficult to move different parts of his body
- Forth circumstance example: one member of the group is a big fan of the teacher/trainer and he shows his enthusiasm by having exaggerated comments
- The other participants without a specific role in the group are just observers and follow the yoga class routine, the same as before.

The roles can be assigned to group members by us or they can decide among themselves who will be what. The participants are asked to express themselves in their given roles, by using verbal and non-verbal forms of communication. They are given a chance to decide which forms of communication they would like to use while expressing themselves in their roles.

Then the group leader is invited back into the room and into the group, where he/she is asked to lead the yoga class again. The new circumstances and roles of the other group members are not revealed to him/her.

We observe how the leader reacts to the situation, the new circumstances.  
Each group performs in front of each other again. The dance group performs first.

## 4- Debrief

### Questions you prepared for your debriefing session related to topic:

What has happened, what have you noticed? (facts)

How did it make you feel? (feelings)

Can you relate the situation to something in your daily life? (reflection)

What did you learn from the particular situations? (putting what you have learned into a context)

How can you use the knowledge you've gained here in the future, in your work and life in general?  
(how will you act differently in the future)