



**An Evaluation of Dancing Inside:
a creative workshop project lead by
Motionhouse Dance Theatre in
HMP Dovegate therapeutic community**

The 2003 programme

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Dancing Inside

A research evaluation conducted on behalf of

Motionhouse Dance Theatre

by Surrey University

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Front cover photo credits

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Summary

Surrey University is conducting a longitudinal investigation into the efficacy of HMP Dovegate's Therapeutic Community. This report evaluates Motionhouse Dance Theatre's Dancing Inside Project (spring 2003 – summer 2004), funded by the Arts Council of England as part of the Dancing Included initiative. This report presents findings from the first year of the project. It details the development of dance skills in participating residents of HMP Dovegate and investigates the impact on the participating Motionhouse dancers as well as residents taking part in the workshops.

Box 1 Evaluation conclusions

- The residents have rapidly developed the dance skills they have learned
- They are very quick, focused learners
- They have been able to produce and perform challenging movement in front of others, which far exceeds that executed by most beginner groups
- They have developed confidence, team work and relaxation
- In performing a dance work created by themselves and Motionhouse, they have gained a sense of value and achievement in what they have done
- The other residents have acknowledged and celebrated their achievement
- In terms of psychological movement, little evidence of change was forthcoming from the psychometric analysis
- Sorting task data did reveal some re-definition of self after involvement in the workshops
- The interview data was by far the richer source of evidence for increased confidence, a greater respect for others (especially the workshop facilitator) and some indications of changing attitudes towards violence
- The Motionhouse dancers have been able to explore in depth movement that they do not normally have the opportunity to practice, specifically in partner work
- They have valued the opportunity to learn from artistic director when he has led the sessions
- Some have started to experiment with facilitation techniques in other workshops
- Dancing with the residents has given them opportunities to explore artistic possibilities further

Introduction

“I haven't been as nervous as this since I appeared at the Bailey”

This was the comment from a Dovegate prisoner after he had performed a choreographed dance in front of fellow inmates during an Arts Festival (*Rezart*) organised in the prison, which had resulted in a standing ovation from the audience. Another prisoner observed “ I wish my Mum could have seen me, she would have been so proud and I haven't given her much to be proud of”. A dancer with Motionhouse, the company providing the workshop facilitation, wrote, “it is a really emotional experience and quite mentally and physically exhausting”. Louise Richards the co director of Motionhouse commented after the *Rezart* performance “I was nearly in tears watching you this afternoon. Having done other projects I thought I knew what I was going to see, but you totally blew my mind. You've surpassed what I thought. It was fantastic ...really exciting”. The researchers conducting the evaluation reported being moved and impressed by the calibre of the final performance. Prison staff too talked about the “buzz” created by the performance and the Director of Therapy spoke of the brief suspension of the prison environment inspired by the Arts Festival and the capacity that the dance, and other creative media, had had in giving men serving prison sentences the opportunity to discover talent and achieve some outstanding work. He commented “families are getting parts back of the person they knew to be in there”.

It would be true to say that few remained untouched and unmoved by their involvement

with the Festival whether as facilitator, performer or evaluator. However, the task of this evaluation is to conduct a systematic and evidence based assessment of the Dance component beyond the immediate emotional and subjective responses that undoubtedly testified to the positive reactions to “*Dancing Inside*”.

Context for the Present Research

The Arts Council of England implemented a projects based initiative using different arts media with excluded groups. One project ‘*Dancing Inside*’ was with HMP Dovegate Therapeutic Community residents. HMP Dovegate was opened in 2001. It is a privately managed prison, with a separate Therapeutic Community for approximately 200 prisoners. Broadly speaking the Dovegate TC is underpinned by a philosophy which seeks to: restore hope; instil altruism, group cohesiveness; impart information, instigate new social learning and encourage imitative behaviours.

Motionhouse delivered the dance workshops which culminated in a performance by the participants.

Apart from KF and one of the dancers, NC, none of the Motionhouse team had worked in a prison environment before. It was therefore an interesting project to monitor artistic/pedagogic development in the team. None were obliged to take on the project and, in fact, one dancer from the company did not participate. All who went to Dovegate volunteered freely to do so. The dancers saw their role as supporting KF in facilitating the sessions, demonstrating tasks if necessary and observing him teaching.

Two male and two female dancers started the project. During *Rezart*, three of these, bar OS, carried on and were joined by one male associate member for the first week, as well as another male (NC) and female dancer.

While involved in *Dancing Inside*, the dancers were also touring *Volatile* to venues and sites around the country. Added to this, they were teaching other community groups around the Leamington area. These included youth groups, young adults, children and older adults. All categorised themselves as dancer/teachers or dance artists, performing, helping devise work for Motionhouse and teaching educational workshops. Each dancer had been with the company for different amounts of time varying from over three years to just several weeks.

KF articulated the aims for *Dancing Inside* within a framework of prisoner participation. A

key goal for the first stage was to make a piece of work that the residents could perform.

Sharing the process of the workshops through a performance was more relevant to KF than actually creating a choreographically interesting piece of work.

Box 2 Motionhouse Workshop aims as specified to the Arts Council

- Reducing stress levels
- Increasing respect for others
- Challenging attitudes towards violence
- Enhancing self esteem
- Getting in touch with touch

In addition

- enabling participants to develop a personal interpretation of movement material
- gaining confidence in making their own aesthetic choices
- giving value to their achievements
- developing of feeling of empowerment as a result
- creating a dance work for performance during *Rezart*

TC residents indicated their aims for participation in terms of physical dimensions of movement.

Box 3 TC Residents' aims for participation in the Workshop

- gain (movement) flexibility
- develop knowledge about movement
- obtain relaxation
- learn to move fluidly

Broadly, the evaluation aimed to examine the impact of the workshops on both participating dancers and prisoners and to make some observations about the working method employed by Motionhouse.

Box 4 Research aims with respect to prisoner participants

- evaluate movement skills development
- examine psychological change
- examine change in emotional awareness and ability to address new or re-address previously problematic emotional material
- examine changes in social interactions and interpersonal relationships
- examine change in self-knowledge especially with respect to prior behaviours

Research aims with respect to dancer participants

- attitudes to the project and
- their perception of self as artist and teacher before, during and after the Group sessions

Method

A multi method procedure was adopted for the evaluation. Two evaluators undertook the key data collection for year one and wrote independent reports of their respective studies: Sara Houston (SH), a member of Surrey University Dance Studies Department, and Krystian Burchnall (KB), a MSc Forensic Psychology student, who completed this research as his Masters dissertation.

This report is an amalgam of these two pieces of research with some additional material being analysed by Jennifer Brown (JB). Where appropriate initials will indicate the data collection and analysis attributable to these researchers.

Year two of the project will be researched by Lisa Lewis and this will result in a further report.

We would like to thank the TC dance participants and the Motionhouse dancers in helping us to evaluate the project.

For this phase of the evaluation several methods of data collection were employed.

Box 5 Methods used by the Surrey University Evaluation Team

- observations from attending the first two days of weeks 1 and 2 and the one day of week 3, followed by the last two days of each *Rezart* week (SH)
- questionnaires completed by the Motionhouse dancers, one was filled in at the beginning of the project and the other at the end of the first phase (SH)
- examination of the dancers' diaries written after every session and containing reflections on, and reactions to, the workshop (SH)
- conversations with residents and Motionhouse were used to clarify observations and contribute to information gathered (SH, KB)
- examination of case file data of prisoner participants and two comparison groups extracting psychometric scale score at three time points (KB)
- administration of psychometric scales after completion of performance (KB)
- administration and analysis of a multiple sorting task at three time points (KB, JB)
- secondary analysis of video interviews (collected as part of Motionhouse's monitoring of the workshops) (KB, JB)
- analysis of a focus group following the performance during *Rezart* (JB, SH)

The first phase of *Dancing Inside* took place in the Therapeutic Community (TC) of Dovegate Prison (Category B), Staffordshire from April 14th 2003 – 18th July 2003. Workshops were divided up as follows: 14 – 17 April; 28 April – 1 May; 19 May. There were also two weeks from 7 – 11 July and 14 – 18 July that were part of the TC's *Rezart* festival. The report is based on research over this period.

Background

Prison Therapeutic Communities

The idea behind the Therapeutic Community (TC) is that it can provide members with an environment that helps develop them as participants of an effective community. Woodward (1999, cited in Howitt 2002) describes the main features of such a community.

Box 6 Key features of prison based therapeutic communities

- treatment is aimed at changing the behaviour of the participants
- the living environment is structured
- offenders must consent to participation in the programme,
- the desired changes in behaviour can be brought about other than by control by those in authority.

The two common types of TC are the democratic-analytic, and the concept based TC. The concept-based TC can be seen as more appropriate for use of addictions, and the democratic-analytic style is more often used in prison settings. Genders (2002) suggests three structural elements that the ideal TC community should have

Box 7 Values of the therapeutic community

- permissiveness should ensure the regulations of the TC are kept to a minimum, but are still in place to protect the community members.
- democracy is used to emphasise the community as a whole to share decision-making.
- communalism allows the community to control its own actions, and reduce the externally imposed boundaries, allowing a development of culture within the community. This also includes sanctioning and policing being left in the therapeutic realm.

All this should lead to a development of a code of conduct within the TC that will aid the course of therapy, developed by the members of the TC themselves. There have been many evaluations which show how TCs have affected residents, with the majority reporting outcome measures in terms of recidivism and reconviction. The purpose of the present evaluation is to examine, in particular, the contribution that an Arts based programme of Dance can make in contributing to the therapeutic outcomes of the TC.

Dance as a Prison Based Intervention

The collaboration between Motionhouse and Dovegate was not based on the idea of therapy, but of making art. It is possible, however, to look at the therapeutic side effects of dance in an arts-based context. Some dance projects have gone a step further and used Dance Movement Therapy as the basis for therapeutic intervention in prisons. Particularly as this report has a psychological focus, it is interesting to highlight the use of dance as therapy within the criminal justice system. One of the main ideas behind offering art as therapy is the belief that artistic expression (for example, movement, sounds and images) are stored from a pre-verbal stage of life, as memories, and it is these that can be re-experienced during therapy (Payne 1990, cited in Karkou and Sanderson 2001). Houston (2002) indicates that a common perception within the community arts movement is that *“dance can transform individuals collectively, by giving them a sense of agency in what they do”*. Matarasso (1997) adds *“(dance has the) ability to help people think critically about and question their experiences and those of others, not in a discussion group but with all the*

excitement, danger, magic, colour, symbolism, feeling, metaphor and creativity that the arts can offer”. According to Boris (2001), dance therapy uses non-verbal communication through dance, along with psychological concepts, to “sharpen inner perceptions” which in turn lead to increased satisfaction in the dancers.

A previous dance programme was carried out by Motionhouse in the TC housed at HMP Grendon, and results were presented to the *“Dancing Inside”* conference at HMP Littlehey in April 1992, showing a measurable difference in the tolerance of touch showed by the dancers. Quinn (2001) describes a dance project involving HMP Lancaster Castle, and highlighting that he had been able to *“clearly see the benefit to the men”*. For example, one inmate is quoted as follows: *“Where could I bring my daughter to do some dancing? Mind you, sod her, I’ll come along, it’s been great fun”* after the workshop.

Ritter and Graff Low, (1996) suggest that qualitative research is necessary to clarify the usefulness of *“non-traditional therapies, and increase their acceptance outside the domain of creative arts therapies”*. From the results of their meta analysis they found few changes in self-concept, suggesting that *“Dance Movement Therapy alone may not improve self-concept”*.

Motionhouse’s Dovegate Workshop Approach

Recruitment

Posters were put up in the TC advertising workshops with Motionhouse. Participation was voluntary. The first stage of the project culminated on 18th July in a performance of

work devised from 7th – 17th July, as part of the *Rezart* festival. Residents were encouraged to choose one artistic activity to pursue over this time and included such things as drama, needlework, poetry, ceramic design and welding, as well as dance.

Motionhouse also gave a performance of its work *Volatile* on the 18th July. Both were performed in front of the other TC residents and TC managers and prison officers.

There were thirteen participants in the first session. Numbers had dropped down to five by the last workshop in May. There were nine participants who started the two week *Rezart* residency. There were eight who took part in the performance, plus one Motionhouse dancer. Three were new, joining at the beginning of *Rezart*. One participant rejoined the group after an absence from some of the workshops. He later stopped participating resulting in the inclusion of one of the male Motionhouse dancers.

Involvement of the company

All sessions were led by Motionhouse artistic director, KF. For the April and May workshops up to four company dancers, two male and two female, supported him. In the *Rezart* sessions, three of these dancers were joined by two new members of the company, one male, one female, and KF was supported in the first week by a male associate member.

Working environment

The project took place in a communal visits meeting room with provision for children in the Education-community block of the TC.

Motionhouse and participants put mats out to cover the floor when dancing. One prison officer watched. The performances took place outside in the courtyard.

Content of sessions

The sessions took on a format of a vigorous warm up, followed by partner work, learning and practising movement and creating (linking) phrases of movement. The sessions ended with a cool down, usually of stretching, and a time for questions. The Motionhouse dancers helped to demonstrate partner work and then subsequently partnered participants, joining in with the tasks set as well as helping participants with challenges.

The workshops were fast paced from the beginning. Participants were shown a particular movement only once or twice before they tried it for themselves and there were no breaks taken during the session. The solo and partner work was also physically demanding. Movement was 'acrobatic', with rolls and slides to and across the floor, springs from the floor to standing in a variety of different ways, catching one's partner and leaping or rolling into them at all levels, on the ground, standing and high above them. This quality of movement demanded a degree of strength, but also an awareness of how the body needs to soften into the floor or person, sensitivity to where the partner is in space, concentration and trust. This type of acrobatic movement formed a basis for an exploration into Contact Improvisation (CI).

Box 8 Contact improvisation

- improvised movement, which is created with a partner
- the unseen and the unexpected form a part of the activity
- participants cannot rely on being dictated to by a leader
- participants maintain physical contact with their partners in order to share body weight whilst moving

KF describes improvisation as “*making it up as you go along, without the security of a pre-rehearsed order. This can be very exposing and unnerving*” (Finnan, 2003: 8). It demands a great deal of sensitivity and an understanding of how a body falls and is held safely. It can be delicate or dynamic, take in off balanced movement, as well as creating balances. Again, trust and concentration were important.

Working style

TC workshop participants were shown movement phrases only once or twice before they had to try them. They were reliant on only a brief picture of how the phrase was done and what it looked like and could not imitate them immediately. They had to interpret movement in their own way and explore between themselves a way or ways of articulating the sense of the phrase.

As many of the movement exercises were based on CI, particularly towards the end of the project, participants could not rely, therefore, on any one way of working. They had to explore, for example how to ‘fly’¹ at a low

¹ It is useful to think of a human pretending to be an astronaut or a bird to picture what ‘flying’ looks like. In low, middle and high flying, the dancer is able to stretch and turn their bodies with legs and arms free so as to look as if they are weightless or flying in space. Their partner is able to balance or hold them discreetly enough to ensure that they can accomplish this.

level on their partner’s front, and give a personal interpretation as to how this particular idea could be embodied. Through such explorations, even the Motionhouse dancers occasionally remarked that they managed to arrive at a physical place with their resident partners where they had not been before.

KF and the dancers gave constructive guidance as to how to execute the movements in an easier fashion, or more safely, while the men were exploring. Over the course of the second week and thereafter, the participants themselves were giving hints to each other about how to perform a movement more successfully. This was particularly noticeable once they were rehearsing the set work that they had to perform as a group. It was also evident that these hints became less autocratic and more guiding as the weeks went on. In other words, in the first two weeks, once someone felt that he had grasped a phrase, he often told his partner that he was doing it wrong and that his way was the right way. KF never told anyone that there was a right or a wrong way of executing a movement and the men gradually took this on board opting to help each other without condemnation.

Similarly, when rehearsing the performance work, some would suggest that perhaps they could perform a phrase with a certain quality in mind, or move an arm or leg in a slightly different fashion, not to ‘*get it right*’, but just to give the piece a particular quality or flavour. It was not always evident that everyone took on board suggestions like these, but the fact that they were suggested indicated a willingness to interpret movement and a confidence to put forward an aesthetic choice.

Personal interpretation of movement was therefore evident within technical execution of phrases and in thinking about a quality of phrase. Although much of the personal interpretation came from not being experienced in executing movement of this type. Participants could not simply 'go through the motions' without thought. That they were allowed to consider their own way of performing a phrase was significant. It was particularly evident that this pluralist way of working was successful when participants developed confidence to take interpretation through to performing CI jams and exercises for several hours.

In the last workshop session in May a composition was made with music. It was directed by KF and performed by participants and the two male Motionhouse dancers. In this instance, performers were given the composition to learn. They added three gestural movements of their own to the piece, as well as making a few suggestions as to the make up of the composition. The work was partner based again and drew on the movement material participants had already learned.

Because three new members joined the group, for the first three days of the *Rezart* festival workshop skills were reiterated and developed. From then on, the men learnt and devised the performance piece with KF and the dancers. The structure of the whole work was created by KF and most of the first section was devised by him. The group chose the music to this part. The second section consisted of duets that the men had created themselves, plus material that the dancers had created with them. For both sections, KF was open to include suggestions

that the men readily offered. The eight minute performance was physically demanding, with many of the athletic, Contact movements that the men had learnt previously. It was also quite humorous, especially in the first section, which was less overtly spectacular.

Results

Assessment of TC residents' achievement of aims

The participants demonstrably gained in knowledge, flexibility, relaxation and fluidity (analysis by SH).

Box 9 Dance Skill and Knowledge Gains

- how to stretch safely and effectively
- how to 'fly' low, at a middle level and high with a partner
- how to roll and slide along the floor in a variety of ways, including 'flea' jumping
- a vocabulary of movement
- how to move and interact with others through the medium of dance
- how to 'give into' the ground by relaxing muscles, rather than tensing when falling
- technical skills in how to move effectively and safely
- how to build strong structures with their bodies to balance their 'flying' partner
- how to stay in contact with a partner, which meant that they had to know how to sense changes in weight and balance
- having a sensitivity to moving with a partner safely, fluidly and perceptively
- fundamental skills of how to dance through improvising with a partner

What was apparent was their willingness to take on board the knowledge to use it on their own. Many entered the room in the latter half of the sessions and started to stretch by themselves before the session began, instead of chatting. Participants moved in a much more fluid coherent manner by the performance, which indicates a less 'bound' body and, by inference, a more flexible one. What was also

evident as the workshops proceeded and in the delivery of the final performance was a sense of mutual support for each other and both encouragement to succeed in a movement and appreciation of when this occurred.

Box 10 Flexibility

- there was no observable evidence to suggest that they have become noticeably more flexible so far, but the time frame is too short to measure this.
- some, however, did say that their limbs and shoulders felt more pliant and less bound, indicating that they were becoming more flexible and, indeed, some participant's physicality had noticeably changed over the time period.
- all participants had begun to move in a much more fluid coherent manner by the performance, which indicates a less 'bound' body and, by inference, a more flexible one.

It was difficult to ascertain the level of relaxation obtained just through observing the sessions. There were a number of clues that indicate that this was achieved to some extent.

Box 11 Relaxation

- last sessions before *Rezart*, less vocal and stopped grunting
- breathing through movement, which meant their bodies were not as tense
- loud and boisterous behaviour was replaced by quiet concentration
- shoulders and necks reported as being freer
- noticeable in some of the participants that they had opened up their chests by the *Rezart* weeks, rather than being hunched over
- smiling faces and unforced laughter were also signs of enjoyment and, by inference, relaxation
- feeling comfortable dancing with other men also demonstrates a certain amount of relaxation, or at least of tolerance
- meeting the gaze of the female dancers, as well as partnering them in the second session onwards, also indicates a release of tension

It is interesting to note at this point that much of the best Contact Improvisation work done in the sessions was when participants were very tired. In order to sense and connect with one's partner, creating unforced, concentrated and subtle work, it is important to be relaxed. The men would not have achieved the beautiful, sensitive work that they did during these times had they not achieved a high level of relaxation and concentration.

As with many beginner dancers, fluidity of movement does not come quickly, but requires time and practice.

Box 12 Fluidity

- three were more able by the time of the *Rezart* performance
- the most dis-jointed had gained a fairly competent degree of fluidity by the time of the *Rezart* performance
- all by this stage were able to connect phrases of movement together without obvious pauses or much hesitation.
- movements, however, were rarely phrased with their own internal rhythms, which would indicate a high sense of fluidity

One participant stated that he was not a "good" dancer, even though he enjoyed the sessions, because he could not move as fluidly as the Motionhouse dancers. In his view, he had not quite achieved his idea of moving fluidly and needed more practice. Observing his work, however, he had made great improvement in this area and looked fairly competent at moving from one movement to another. It is interesting to note, however, that even in the first week, there were moments where there was fluidity, particularly in the Contact Improvisation.

Movement analysis

This section is concerned with a series of indicators that identify common elements associated with skill in Western dance forms (SH):

- The dancing body in space
- Dancing sentences
- Performance and expression
- Creativity

The dancing body in space

Is the participant aware of the safety issues involved in moving, often unpredictably, in a contained space with others around him, or during contact work with another?

- In the first two weeks they seemed cautious, even hesitant, but in the latter half of the sessions, they were more relaxed about moving around others, yet still retaining a high sense of care.
- The room was fairly small for the amount of people and dynamic movement that was being executed. From the start, though, there were hardly any instances of pairs tripping over others whilst dancing. If there was not room, or if a pair were attempting a particularly challenging phrase, others waited until there was space for them.
- There were one or two injuries as a result of dancing, but the tally was low for the challenging level of work being carried out by novice dancers.
- The Motionhouse dancers noted the very high level of care that residents took when dancing with them, particularly the female dancers. They commented that this was something to be appreciated as they felt that their partners were taking responsibility for safety with movement. One dancer wrote: *"I could dance with these guys feeling safe – they were looking after me and I them and if something went wrong they knew what to do to save themselves"* (HP, Diary: 17.4.03).

In conversations with the residents there could have been other reasons for this great level of care, particularly with the women. Notions of how to behave with outsiders within such an institution were important to them, as were

ideas of women being more delicate and also sexual beings. Many residents noted that sometimes it was daunting holding a female partner whilst moving since they did not know where to put their hands without causing offence or trouble for themselves. Moreover, many participants at first were reluctant to catch or be caught by the female dancers because they felt that they would 'squash' or hurt them. However, such attitudes did not adversely affect dancing safely and indeed, as noted above, meant that the residents produced a very high level of care during sessions.

How ready is the participant to 'have a go'?

- All, bar two, tackled the tasks set for them with full commitment, including the performance
- Activities undertaken during the sessions were particularly challenging for beginners and they carried them out without any questioning or protest
- In the first week, there was only one man who stood on the edge of the floor, not attempting to execute the movement with the others (he later dropped out due to an old knee injury)
- A new recruit joining during *Rezart* was also much less confident than the others, standing out of some exercises, or complaining of aches and pains whilst attempting them.
- Others did have aching muscles and were often tired, this did not deter them.
- One Motionhouse dancer commented: *"This group (like some school groups) has shown me clearly how much confidence can be built through Contact, regardless of their ability when they start learning"* (V, 2003b: no.7).

Some participants were quite wary of observers watching them at first. There were several people who were spectators on and off throughout the period. One prisoner, who was particularly wary in the beginning, characterised the sessions as *"being in a goldfish bowl"*. They seemed to get used to it and it did not seem to put them off what they

were doing. In fact, they readily talked to observers and were happy to share their experiences with them.

Is the participant aware of how the body is 'stacked' (i.e. how the skeleton moves and is joined in a particular way) and how this affects how one can move safely and with ease?

- Awareness of alignment did not seem to be a priority for Motionhouse when teaching, apart from in stretching exercises.
- Some of the residents were misaligned when moving, particularly in the areas of knees to ankle.
- It was interesting to observe that by the end of the *Rezart* weeks those who had a tendency to misalign were now physically stronger and so more able to cope safely with misalignment. It was not evident, however, whether they were aware of this or not.

Can the participant move different body parts in the same way at the same time, and, conversely, different body parts in different ways at the same time?

- Motionhouse's style of moving was not one that favoured isolation of moving body parts, so the latter part of the above definition of co-ordination did not apply to a great extent.
- In order to execute the movement, however, a good level of co-ordination was important, particularly when dancing with others. This was seen in the performance, where they had to move fast to avoid being hit or landed on by other dancers.
- In some dancers there was a remarked development of co-ordination, where phrases of movement ceased to be disjointed, hesitant and slow, which sometimes impeded their partners, to fairly fluid, confident and fast.

Has the participant the strength to contain and control movement of body parts? How easy is it for participants to find their balance when dancing?

- Participants were able to control their bodies and execute physically demanding movement without wavering or collapsing very often.
- In order to 'fly' participants needed a lot of core strength, especially at low level, to

avoid squashing their partners. Similarly, the anchoring partner also needed control to enable the flying to happen.

- Balance was seen during Contact Improvisation, where sensitivity was shown over where one could balance on or fall off one's partner.
- The control involved in falling and recovering was seen, as pairs could dance for over ten minutes without letting go the contact. Again, control of balance was also seen in the athletic movement carried out in performance, such as through head stands.

Has the participant the ability to ignore how he usually moves, to take on board a different way of working? Has he the ability to go beyond a pedestrian stance and way of moving?

- By the end of *Rezart* some of the residents had started to look physically different from when they started and so were beginning to move differently. For example, one man had lost weight and muscle bulk and was beginning to move in a much more fluid fashion and in a much more unforced way.
- Most participants, however, did not really take on board a different way of moving for the performance, but this was not discouraged (becoming part of the choreographic aesthetic).
- Pedestrian movement and everyday postures characterised the show, apart from when they were actually executing challenging movement. To successfully carry out many of the spectacular movements, the performers had to step out of a pedestrian stance.

How does the participant take into account the space around him when he is moving? How does he use the space in relation to the room, other people and his own movements?

- From the outset participants did not intrude into another group's/dancer's space. They did not often trip over other people, despite the small room.
- By the middle of the period of workshops, there was a sensitivity to sharing space. Some groups allowed another groups to practice their task on the mats before attempting to do the same thing. Residents were also not afraid of big movements. They used space to execute large movements fully and did not condense them down.

- When rehearsing the performance, if there was a movement that involved quite a few people to be in a particular space at a particular time, - for example if they all had to catch someone - the men discussed any problems of space between each other. They had a fairly good sense of spatial awareness to recognise and solve problems.

How does the participant take into account a partner, or partners, when dancing with them? Is he sensitive to their movement and his own so a 'dialogue' can take place in movement, or does he ignore what others are doing, or what he is doing? How does he use the space around him when dancing with others?

- By the second half of the sessions, all the men bar one were demonstrating sensitivity to their partner's movement and to what they themselves were doing. There was a willingness to dance in physical contact with another and an achievement of a confident level of sensitivity to that person's body in motion in relation to their own. This was particularly evident in the Contact Improvisation session, where slow, tender, focused dancing was observed.
- In talking about how they enjoyed Contact work, some of the men said that it was good to do because they could feel a connection to the other person. This indicates a high level of sensitivity, demonstrating that these participants were not just 'going through the motions' of improvising, but were actively communicating with their partner through movement.

Dancing sentences

How quick is the participant to pick up a movement phrase that he has been shown?

- Great variation was achieved with some finding it fairly easy, others very hard.
- It was noticeable, however, that most improved on the rate that they could pick up phrases during the course of the sessions.
- Two of the new recruits who joined for the two *Rezart* weeks were able to pick up movement material easily from the start. Both were highly concentrated and motivated and were intelligent movers, which would have helped. They were also given a very intense introduction to the

movement that the others had been doing over three or four days.

- *How easy is it for the participant to remember a learnt movement phrase?*
- All performed the piece without forgetting major sections. One man forgot a few minor movements, but this is not unusual in a piece of work learnt over one week.
- They did remember some stretches and movement phrases in July that were taught in the first few weeks in April. This enabled them to create the long sequences that were used as duets in the performance.

How accurate is the participant in performing the phrase?

- This was not a priority for Motionhouse because they wanted the men to achieve their own personal interpretations.
- Several of the participants in rehearsal made comments about how they felt a certain phrase should be performed.

Can the participant accurately articulate specific movements and qualities of movement?

- The men rehearsed specific steps or movements until they were performed with a sound level of precision. It was fairly easy to discern as an observer each specific movement, although articulation would have grown stronger with more time.
- In terms of different qualities of movement, the performance did not really show these, apart from through executing small or big movement. Several men began to talk about the different qualities to show in certain phrases, but it did not really come out in performance. It was through improvisation where a greater expanse of movement qualities were shown, where pairs could linger or speed up.

Performance and Expression

How able is the participant to extend body parts into his kinesphere? How able is the participant to use eye focus to enhance the performance and expression of his movement?

- The cultivation of focus and projection was not a priority.
- In order to do many of the acrobatic movements, however, it was necessary to

stretch/extend parts of the body into space in an emphatic way, which was done.

- The choreography was staged in a way that it was not necessary for the men to look out to the audience, but only at each other. Focus was used to anticipate pathways, or to check partners as well, but it was not used overtly as a performance tool.

How able is the participant to identify and act on variations in dynamic within movement?

- It was clear that most of the participants had high levels of raw energy to use when dancing. This energy was channelled into the execution of challenging, physical and quick movement. The beginner participants were able to take on board the risky movement because they were able to add great energy to the physical strength they had. In this way, they identified with, and were able to carry out, one end of the dynamic scale.
- Participants, however, were capable of slow, tender, quiet movement as well. This end of the dynamic scale was shown in some of the CI sessions, particularly when the dancers were very tired.
- In the performance the players showed both the spectacular, risky movement and also some smaller, slower sequences. The ability, therefore, to change dynamic was not predicated on how physically tired the dancers were.

Both within workshops and within performance the participants demonstrated clear attempts at articulating dynamics. However, the understanding of how to manipulate and explore subtle changes in dynamic nuance within one phrase of movement was not seen. The potential for a more sophisticated interpretation of dynamics is there though. Their capability of articulating a good range was demonstrated.

How able is the participant to articulate rhythmic constancies and variations within his movement and in conjunction with a sound/music score?

- There was not a lot of time devoted to working on rhythm during sessions.

- There was one section in the performance work, though, where dancers clapped, clicked, swiped and slapped out a fairly fast, long rhythmic phrase in unison.
- The performers individually demonstrated a sound grasp of the intricacies of such a phrase, although executing it in unison proved to be more difficult.
- But with more than a week's rehearsal, the residents would have improved on rhythmic co-ordination as a group, as the sequence got better with practice.

Although music was used during some of the workshops, it was there as a background wash, or mood enhancer. It was never used to practise musical rhythms. In the performance work there were several places where the rhythm of the music was used to complement the movement. For example, at the beginning of the work a line of men crosses the floor. It was evident here that the steps had been choreographed to fit in with the phrasing and rhythm of the music. Half the men grasped this idea, half did not and walked 'through' the music, rather than dancing with it. Since this skill had not been taught, or focused on in rehearsal, it was not surprising that some men did not use the rhythmic phrasing of the score. It is interesting to note that the more fluid dancers, and those that picked up the movement quickly, were those that seemed more musically attuned to the potential of the choreography.

How able is the participant to identify variations in musical qualities and be sympathetic to these in his movement?

Upbeat dance tracks were used for warm ups to complement the vigorous movement whilst lighter or slower music was played for cool downs and quieter moments.

- The identification with the variation of musical qualities was seen in how the participants tackled improvisation and in how they performed in *Rezart* to different

music scores. It was clear that they were sympathetic in their movement to the *general* qualities of the music chosen, although more subtle, sophisticated nuances within phrasing and timing were not noticed.

Can the participant see different ways of expressing/articulating movement phrases?

This element requires a very good level of competence in dance to actively be aware of expressive potential of movement phrases.

- When practising sequences, the men were eager primarily to remember them and secondly to execute them with fluency. They did not to any observable extent explore the interpretation of expression in the phrasing of movement.

Creativity

How able is the participant to take known movement and play with it to create new, or at least, altered material?

Manipulation and development of movement material was actively encouraged in sessions.

- Participants demonstrated a sound level of competence in taking movements, such as a handstand, and developing them further with a partner.
- Moreover, the men were able to remember phrases shown by KF and then use them in different combinations and variations to develop new, longer sequences.
- Sequences became very long, numbering about 30 phrases, showing competence in creating and remembering sequences.

The ability to problem-solve also points to creative skills. Participants had to continually re-think movement if, for example, they were not connecting with their partner very well, or they could not get out of a position, or were not able to execute a lift. The ability to think competently around a problem was instigated fairly early on in the workshops. It counter-acted some of the institutionalisation that was seen through the residents' insecurity in having their day disrupted by a dance workshop, or

their worry if KF did not appear at the beginning of a session.

How able is the participant to think up original movement material?

During Contact Improvisation, some of the Motionhouse dancers remarked on how occasionally when dancing with the men that they did something that they had not explored before. In this way, through improvisation, the participants were creating new dances, albeit not recorded or performed more than once.

- Mostly, creation of material was through manipulation and development of known movement. With more time, it is possible that the generation of new movement would feature in sessions.

Psychological change

Three approaches were taken to attempt to demonstrate psychological change. Firstly, a series of psychometric tests were undertaken at strategic time intervals to show if there had been any moment on the constructs measured by these instruments. Secondly, a multiple sorting task was conducted, again at three time intervals to show if there had been any reconstrual of self in relation to dance by the TC participants. Thirdly, subjective comments were extracted from a series of talking head interviews and a focus group filmed as part of the Motionhouse project.

The three most appropriate psychometric measures available from case files were:

- Locus of Control (LOC) i.e. the degree to which a person feels events are internally driven or they are subjected to external forces
- Culture Free Self Esteem Inventory (CFSEI) i.e. assessment of their self-confidence
- Stages of Change Questionnaire (SCQ) i.e. readiness to change.

KB collected data at three time points (T1 data collected before involvement in the workshop; T2 before the performance and T3 after the performance). In order to determine the impact of the dance experience above and beyond its physical fitness dimensions and the ongoing impact of therapy a High Workout (N=20) and Low Workout (N=20) control group were recruited. The definition of 'Workout' was if the residents participate in rigorous exercise nearing three times a week. The control groups were matched for age, sentence, and offence.

The following table (p16) reports the mean scores on the measures. Statistical analysis revealed few significant differences. Low work out prisoners had lower overall self esteem compared to those volunteering to participate in the dance workshop at the outset.

There was also a significant difference between the low work out and high work out groups in terms of the former's psychological readiness to change. In terms of these measures that, although the trend is in a positive direction, there was little measurable difference between those participating in the dance workshops and others in the TC. Neither was there any measurable change during and after completion of the workshops nor did these measures predict drop-out from the project.

We must conclude that either these measure do not pick up the aspects of change impacting the participants, that the time period is too short to register change on the chosen measures or that the involvement in the Dance project did not result in sustained changed.

Table 1 Summary of Psychometric Findings

Measures	Time 1	Time 2	Time 3
Locus of Control			
• Completers	43.67	52.00	55.00
• Dropouts	43.50		
• High Workout	48.86		54.60
• Low Workout	42.27		52.38
Self-Esteem Total			
• Completers	28.00	32.33	35.25
• Dropouts	15.75		
• High Workout	20.86		35.40
• Low Workout	15.45		33.25
Self-Esteem General			
• Completers	14.00	12.33	13.50
• Dropouts	8.33		
• High Workout	9.46		14.40
• Low Workout	8.00		13.00
Self-Esteem Social			
• Completers	6.67	7.50	7.75
• Dropouts	4.67		
• High Workout	6.62		7.00
• Low Workout	4.73		6.25
Self-Esteem Personal			
• Completers	5.67	5.50	6.50
• Dropouts	6.67		
• High Workout	6.46		6.60
• Low Workout	6.73		7.75
Self-Esteem Lie			
• Completers	5.67	7.00	7.00
• Dropouts	6.67		
• High Workout	6.46		6.60
• Low Workout	6.73		7.75
Stages of Change Pre-contemplation			
• Completers	11.67	13.71	12.25
• Dropouts	15.00		
• High Workout	11.31		17.00
• Low Workout	12.09		12.63
•			
Stages of Change Contemplation			
• Completers	37.67	34.57	35.00
• Dropouts	33.25		
• High Workout	35.69		30.20
• Low Workout	36.45		36.50
Stages of Change Action			
• Completers	38.00	34.86	36.00
• Dropouts	34.00		
• High Workout	34.54		31.20
• Low Workout	33.00		36.13
Stages of Change Maintenance			
• Completers	28.33	26.14	30.00
• Dropouts	31.25		
• High Workout	27.54		21.40
• Low Workout	26.09		27.50

Emotional movement

SH noted that all the dancers had to deal with the emotions of the residents. By breaking through people's boundaries, tension was occasionally high. One dancer wrote that, "*it is a really emotional experience and quite mentally and physically exhausting*" (HP, 2003b: no.4). Even as an observer, SH could sense when anxiety levels were high and it was quite a relief to step out of the workshop room at the end of the day. Two residents in particular were quite challenging to deal with in different ways. One because he was very vocal, constantly emphasising his masculinity, and was physically tense and unyielding, the other because he did not volunteer much to his partners or the group and needed a lot of attention to keep going. The dancers and residents alternated partnering these two participants regularly to keep themselves refreshed. The dancers tried to let them see the benefits of doing a particular exercise and to relax them into the movement. V commented that it was hard to work with such potentially volatile men where '*saving face*' is paramount (V, 2003b: no.4). Several short moody outbursts by various residents, particularly near the time of the performance, were a learning experience for the dancers to know how to channel that emotion positively. Some noted that their skills of persuasion were enhanced through this.

KB content analysed the April/May video interviews which brought out several themes with regard to the expression of emotional material. There are several examples of cognitively taxing elements, where residents' thoughts were being challenged at a

fundamental level as they desired to retain their beliefs. Yet there was some indication from the sessions that their role as '*powerful male*' was not as clear cut as they may have initially believed.

Box 13 Challenges to macho images

"there was a woman there...who must weigh about 7 stone, and I got to throw myself on her and I couldn't do it...cos I know if I throw myself at you're going flat on your back and I'm hurting you...I couldn't do it and in the end she said, Look, watch and I seen her catch this big lad.. "I thought no way this woman can hold me; this woman can take my weight!" And I'm like this feather, this is madness"
(Interview 5)

Although there is a shift to more emotional content when they felt more confident and relaxed and as the group cohered there is still, at the time the first video was made, a distinct defensiveness when talking about the emotional content of the sessions, as most focus is still on physicality. Some examples of the indicators of this emerging emotional expression can be seen in the following extracts:

Box 14 Emotional shift

"it may sound mad, but it relaxed us in a way"
(Interview 4)
"it kinda like opens your mind and helps you to concentrate more" (Interview 6)
"so it is good, it is spiritually...spiritual, you know what I mean it is good for you"
(Interview 7)

The theme of confidence is also highlighted on several occasions by the residents, and this too suggests a way they can start to feel comfortable with emotional expression,

without entering into it too deeply at the current time. In the example below, while confidence is mentioned, there seems to be an underlying hint at the beginning of some expression of emotional content:

Box 15 Increasing confidence

“Confidence, I got a lot of confidence from it, trust as well.” (Interview 9)

“For me personally it brought me out of my shell a little bit working with people and participating with a partner It’s helped me with my self esteem which has always be an issue of mine so from that point of view I learned I am capable of doing a lot more than I give myself credit for” (Interview 8)

At this time, then, there is little evidence to suggest that there are any dramatic insights and the evidence that is available suggests that the men are only just beginning to express issues with an emotional content in the sessions.

Participants mentioned that the sessions were helping improve interpersonal communication skills in so far as reading others’, and thinking about their own, body language.

Box 16 Interpersonal communication skills

“I’ve learnt that you can say a lot more by just body language and expressions as well and what I thought possible and I am learning to read other people’s body language and expressions as well and it is helping me just all round. It is just really helping me.” (Interview 1)

One major theme to emerge from the interviews was the increase in the amount of trust between members of the group. It was mentioned on several occasions that this was due, to the most part, to the jumping and catching exercises that the sessions involved.

Box 17 Increased trust

With the trust it brought down barriers for me you know like having to trust people with the work that we do” (Interview 9)

“I notice the guys who do the most, who have been going through the routines have built up a little bond and camaraderie sort of style. It’s like another chance to bond without doing the therapy” (Interview 9)

On a less positive note, one resident interviewed talked of how he felt he was missing out on his work in the therapeutic groups, and so had had to leave the sessions to maximise his stay in the TC. He did however add that this was a *“bit of a cop out”* (Interview 6) as another reason he left was due to the hard physicality of the sessions.

Touch (SH)

From the very first workshop, the men worked with other participants and the male Motionhouse dancers without hesitation, complaining or questioning. KF did not allow the men much time to think about their situation. He constantly kept the participants active and gave them challenging tasks so their minds were on how to do a specific activity rather than worrying about with whom they were dancing.

- On day one, participants were being asked to work in pairs, one rolling into the other, lifting, exchanging weight and creating strong ‘ledges’ where the other could balance. All seized on the challenges that these exercises posed. Of the three that joined in the *Rezart* weeks, two adapted to the physical intimacy of the movement immediately. The other was more reluctant, but by his complaints of physical ailments, his reluctance could have stemmed from an anxiety about executing such challenging movement, rather than dancing with another man or woman. Embarrassment or anxiety might have

manifested itself in other ways, though the level of muscular tension and holding of breath was higher in the first week, when confidence was lower.

- By the second day, the men were dancing with the two women. One of the dancers, wrote:

Box 18 Developing confidence in interpersonal skills

My partner was initially fairly embarrassed to work with me - especially on the foot dodging exercise - but as it developed, his confidence grew. At the start there was little eye contact between us - and that was both of us, not just him, I was just as apprehensive - very few collisions, looking out for one another. My partner was aware of stepping over the mark. Just trying to encourage him to go for it, but more relaxed by the end (Diary, 15.4.03).

- During the end of the first week and into the second week, participants and all dancers were mixing without much apprehension. One TC participant commented to his female partner that he never thought he would trust a woman like he was doing now within the Contact exercise. It is interesting, though, that during those workshop weeks before *Rezart*, residents were very careful when dancing with women. One of the male Motionhouse dancers, OS, remarked in his diary that, “*all the men worked with girls like they were china dolls a bit. Always taking great care to put them to the floor carefully*” (Diary, 17.4.03). This care did not change during *Rezart* but with faster paced Contact Improvisation activities, hesitancy with the women was less obvious.
- Two weeks into rehearsal, one resident confided to SH that he did feel initially rather embarrassed having to dance with another man and tried to find a corner of the room where he was less visible. He admitted he still felt slightly embarrassed by it, but just got on with the work. None thought it an issue by the end of *Rezart*, although they were nervous about what their peers might think of the performance, as they had been teased about dancing.

- By the third week, the women Motionhouse dancers remarked about how normal dancing with the residents felt and they had begun to forget about the special situation they were in. The male dancers were more anxious about the residents dancing with the women, but they relished the chance to dance with strong, bigger men, which they did not often get the chance to do.
- Although there were no outward signs of any problem with touching with the male group members and dancers, it took slightly longer for the residents to dance with the female Motionhouse dancers. V, one of the female dancers, noted that, for her, initially the biggest barrier faced was building a working relationship with the group: “*It was trying it feel like we’d got past them looking at us as ‘women’, objectifying us as female and all that comes with it. Once that had happened...we could start working together*” (V, 2003b: no.4). On the first day, no one partnered the two women and there was little eye contact. But on that day, the women and men both helped to carry out and fit the mats on the floor together and some of the participants asked the women for advice on how to do something better or more safely.
- KF used women dancers to demonstrate much of the strength work during those first two weeks, as if to emphasise how a slight, short woman could cope very well with physically arduous movement. From their surprised and awed reactions, the men were affected by this message and gradually relaxed into the realisation that it would be fine to give a woman all their weight, for example. KF emphasised the importance of relaxing into movement, rather than trying to use tensed muscles and this helped in their acceptance that the women were able to cope lifting a much heavier body.
- Touch, therefore, was not a big issue during the sessions. This was mainly due to the manner in which the sessions were led and the positive attitude of the dancers and participants. Evidence suggests that the sessions have helped the men with regard to social interaction, and enable them to interact physically with both male and female dance partners. There is some emerging evidence that the TC dance participants could articulate some

subjective improvement in their ability to relate to others and draw on emotional resources.

Confidence in making aesthetic choices (SH)

- Through CI participants learned to make their own choices as to what movement to perform and how they would do it. Beforehand, they had learnt several ways of moving, falling, rolling and catching with a partner. They had utilised these to structure improvisation with a partner, in the knowledge that if they fell, they had a way of recovering; or if their partner wanted to 'fly' high they would know how to hold and manipulate them safely. They obtained a high level of skill in this area and were able to go beyond regurgitation of material to manipulating and developing it to create their own dance. They could sustain improvising for several hours. CI does not allow the dancer to rely on didactic methods and so creates a situation where he has to make his own aesthetic choices in order to continue dancing. In order to do so effectively for long periods where concentration is high shows not only physical stamina, but also confidence to move and create.
- Through learnt material and improvisation, participants also gained considerable confidence to create their own set movement sequences. From choosing the order of three phrases of movement on the second day, participants were able to make up on their own very long sequences of approximately 31 phrases by the end of the first *Rezart* week. It was noticeable that much development had been made in this area over the time period.
- Suggestions as to what to put into the composition in the last workshop session and in the final performance piece indicated that participants had taken on board the skill of making their own aesthetic choices. As noted above, the men not only volunteered specific movements, but also aesthetic qualities of movement. In choosing the music for the performance work, participants made a specific choice as to the mood of the work and its overall artistic direction. The first piece of music chosen was a country and western song, "Bubbles in my beer". Full of irony and rather laid back in style it forced KF to consider carefully the angle of the work. It was not an immediate popular 'crowd pleasing' tune that lent

itself to large acrobatic, dynamic movement, so the first section had to be structured in a different, gentler and subtler way to the virtuosic second part.

Value of achievements (SH)

- While making the performance work, constructive, critical comments by some participants about how the composition looked and was being performed indicated that not only were movement choices being capitalised on, but discerning judgements about value were being made. A sense of value and respect for the process and performance work was seen in the highly concentrated sessions, where duets were rehearsed over and over again voluntarily by the men. Also, some would enter many of the workshops to stretch by themselves before the session began.
- By the positive way the men talked of the performance work it was clear that they considered it theirs and were happy to accept it as such. This was made easier by the fact that duets created by participants formed a major part of the performance. In a piece where team work was vital to its success, the willingness of members of the group to participate fully and be aware of what other dancers were doing and where was extremely important. In showing a work that fulfilled this criterion, it demonstrated the collective importance that the group placed on the performance.
- The men also spoke highly of the experience and of Motionhouse to the extent that some of them wanted to pursue dance once they left prison. Several mentioned that they would have liked their families to have seen the performance and asked whether the filmed material could be shown on family day. One participant remarked that he has not done much in life to make his mother proud of him, but he felt certain that this was something that would. To be eager to share something that they had created in order that their families could be proud of them demonstrates the pride that the participants themselves felt in the work and that they wanted to share the experience beyond its short life time. It certainly suggested that they placed much value on the performance.
- When asked whether they felt they had achieved something after the show, all said they had. They referred to performing in front of their fellow residents and

receiving a positive reaction as the main achievement on that day.

Empowerment (SH)

Feelings of empowerment are difficult to ascertain, partly because the word 'empowerment' is not easy to define and partly because it is difficult as an outsider only observing the dancing to observe change in participants of an empowering kind, that go beyond the scope of the workshops. For KF, giving the individual the tools and experience to pursue development in dance can empower people, giving them integrity and a depth of communication.

- Participants were given the skills to create their own performance material. The improvisation skills used, however, did not create contrived movement. It was honest in the sense that spontaneity and unforced positions were a focus. In this way, their movement did have a sense of integrity about it and they did use their skills to create an impact on their audience. Not only were their peers vocal in their appreciation of what the dance group did, they also showed how the performance had affected them by giving some of the members a standing ovation when they came back to the wing.
- Whether the dance sessions had empowered the residents in a more permanent, transforming way is more difficult and too early to judge. Having said that, in a filmed group interview with the residents on the day of their performance they were all vocal in how the dance classes had given them a sense of achievement and pride in their work. One man volunteered the opinion that the project had given him the opportunity to rethink his life on the Outside. He now felt he could take another choice other than crime and the dance sessions had given him the confidence to see this. Whether the post-performance euphoria had pushed him into saying this, or that because he was speaking to a camera, it is not certain. Even if he was serious about the statement, the study would have to wait several years until he gets his chance to take that opportunity. With this in mind, a long-

term dance project would certainly have more chance of empowering residents than a short term one. But with a system where prisoners move from institution to institution, dance will not always be accessible to them, particularly in the form in which Motionhouse work.

Changes in self relative to physical activities (KB)

In order to monitor changes in individuals through the period of the workshops a qualitative multiple sorting task was devised. This comprised a series of physical activities printed onto cards which the TC dance participants were asked to sort into categories. One card had 'self' printed on it. The object was to chart change relative to self in relation to the listed physical activities.

The multiple sorting procedure involved the residents categorising the cards into three groups: Male Activities, Female Activities and Multi-Gender Activities. A second sorting asked the men to divide the cards into activities they were prepared to try and those that they would not wish to attempt.

Once the sorts have been completed they are subjected to a statistical procedure, Multiple Scalogram Analysis (MSA). This profiles the categories assigned to each activity and plots them as points in a space (map) such that those assigned to similar categories appear closer together in the map.

Analysis can be undertaken for individuals and also collectively and it is the latter which is presented here showing movement of self as a reflection of the individuals' changing conceptualisations.

Box 19 Sorting task instructions

We are going to carry out an exercise to see if we can record what you think about the Dance sessions so far, and how they have made you think about yourself. One of you will be acting as the 'researcher' by recording the information made by this exercise, and the other as the 'participant', you will then swap over.

An important reason why we want to do this is so that you can see the changes that go on in yourself as we lead up to the Arts Festival Performance, and how your views change after the Arts festival has finished in two weeks time.

The way we will do this is by looking at the cards in front of you and sorting them into groups in such a way that all the cards in any group are similar to each other in some important way and different from those in the other groups.

Firstly, we will do what is called a 'fixed sort' where the groups names are already decided for you, but the cards can still be placed where you want.

Secondly we will do a 'free sort' where you can put the cards into as many groups as you like, and put as many cards in each group as you like. You do not have to use all the spaces for Group Names, just use as many as you feel that you need. It is your views that count here as you decide the names of the groups yourself.

When you have carried out a sorting you can tell your 'researcher' the reasons for your sorting and he can write them in the boxes provided on his sheet.

At the end, when you have both played the role of the 'researcher' and 'participant', we will collect the sheets from you for analysis. This will be done by computer and we can then feed back to you next week. This can be repeated so that you will be able to see how things change over the next few weeks.

No names will be given out, and they are only on the sheets so that the researchers can compare the same individuals across the next few weeks, and report back to you.

Box 20 Cards used in the Sorting Task

- 1) **Karate**- A Japanese Martial Art, involving solid, hard movements.
- 2) **Judo**- A Japanese Martial Art involving throws and holds.
- 3) **Tai-Qi**- A Chinese Martial Art that is slow, relaxed and soft. It is supposed to be good for health.
- 4) **Yoga**- A set of physical and mental exercises, Indian in origin, which is intended to give control over the body and mind.
- 5) **Aerobics**- Energetic physical exercises often performed with a group of other people to music, which make the heart, lungs and muscles stronger.
- 6) **Contemporary Dance**- Modern Dance styles.
- 7) **Ballet**- A types of dancing where carefully organised movements tell a story or express an idea.
- 8) **Club/Disco Dancing**- An event where people dance in a nightclub environment, to modern recorded music.
- 9) **Street Fighting**- Bare-knuckle boxing held in abandoned areas. Often bets are placed on who will win the match.
- 10) **Wrestling**- A sport that involves fighting with someone by holding them and trying to throw them to the ground.
- 11) **Boxing**- A sport in which competitors hit each other with their hands. Protective gloves are worn to reduce injury.
- 12) **Weight training**- The activity of lifting heavy objects for exercise, especially to improve the strength of muscles and the appearance of the body.
- 13) **Rugby**- a sport where two teams try to score points by carrying an oval ball across a particular line or kicking it over and between an H-shaped set of posts.
- 14) **YOU**

Figure 2 Multiple sort plot of activities by gender at time 2

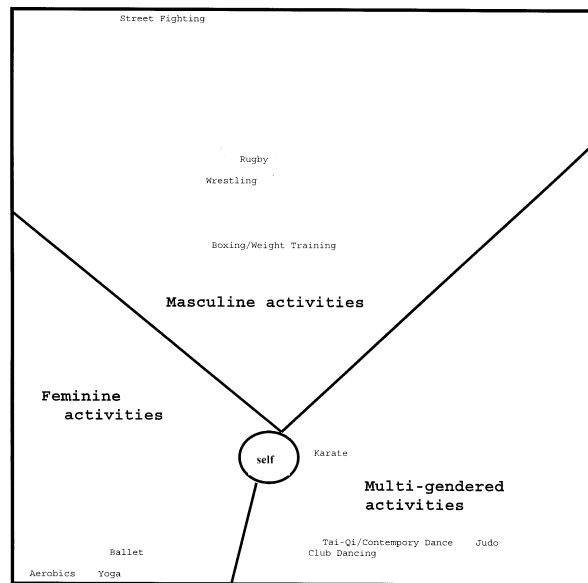
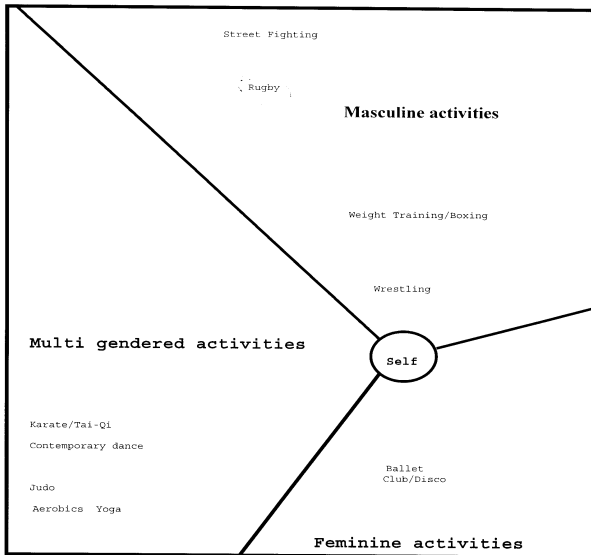


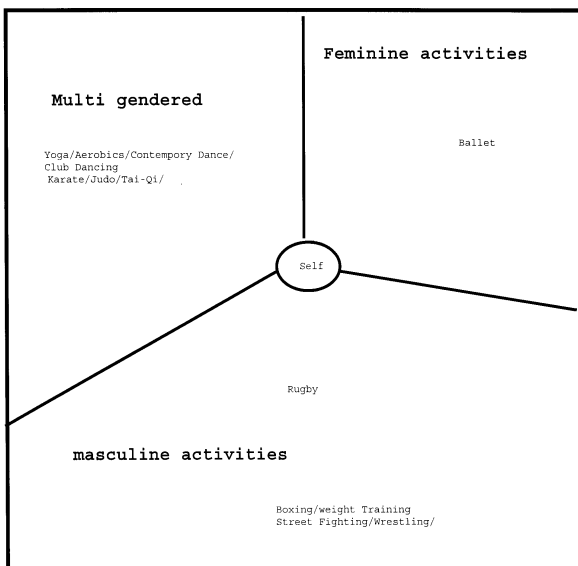
Figure 1 Multiple sort plot of activities by gender at time 1



Some structural changes in the placement of activities over the three time samples indicated that TC dance participants considered fewer to be classed as solely 'female' as time in the dance sessions went on. At Time 3, two thirds of the sorts contained cards in male and multi-gender activities only, with only ballet remaining in the solely female realm. The plots indicate location of gendered activities into clearer and more defined categories. Initially the residents had different, more individual, conceptions of what gendered activities meant, but as Time 2 and Time 3 sorts show, they seemed to converge into a shared perception, evidenced by the progressively closer positioning of dance activities.

The men's idea of SELF relative to gendered activities also moved through the three time periods. At Time 1, self was aligned most closely to wrestling suggesting that the self card would have been placed in the masculine activity category and linked to a more combative one to one activity. The items in the map are widely separated indicating a lack of consensus about the activities. This can be interpreted as a degree of divergence in definitions of gendered activities. By Time 2 there is some movement of self away from the masculine dominated activities and location between multi gendered and feminine orientated activities. By Time 3 self is located at the centre of the plot. This time there is a consensus and greater clarity of the gendered nature of the activities as evidenced by the closer positioning of items. SELF is now located nearer rugby, indicative of a physical contact sport requiring team effort.

Figure 3 Multiple sort plot of activities by gender at time 3



The main findings of a second sorting procedure “Things I have done” suggested a lower level of change than the Gendered Activities sort. The T2 plots showed some shift in that several of the residents indicated a desire to try some more multi-gendered activities such as Tai-Qi, Aerobics and Yoga, as well as Karate and Contemporary Dance. Ballet was split between Like to Try and No Interest in Trying, with about half of the residents wanting to try it, and the other half not.

Reflections post performance (JB)

Whilst there was considerable apprehension about the performance, there was no doubt of the positive sense of achievement that resulted and the pleasure gained from the affirmation of others. There was also a notable shift in emphasis away from the physical (evident in the earlier interviews) to more personal material.

“You could see it in their eyes when you went back to the wing they just went whoa when people see you doing it that’s a respect for you in the community”

“When everyone clapped it was absolutely excellent. It was probably one of the best feelings I’ve ever had in my life”

“I loved it... especially when we ran off and came on a second time”

“We were expecting a certain thing when you’d got a few jeers and heckling. There was none of that. It was brilliant absolutely brilliant”

“One of my friends on the TC, a serious man he’s doing a life sentence when he says that looked good you’ve done well that shocked me when he says them words”

“It was at the end when we got the round of applause when we done the fireworks display when we stood in the line facing the crowd and when there was all that cheering and they were waving their hands in the air and whistling . It

was incredible. It couldn’t go any higher. It was the ultimate feeling. That’s better than any psychotic drug”

“When we went back to the wing when we went in all we heard was hurrah and whistling. We thought oh no as we walked in there were people on the landings, by the pool table, people were whistling and clapping”.

“When we started off with the cowboy stuff and the ye ha and all that they thought it would belike that all the way through and then when it came to the fleas and we were hopping and the music went boove boove. They went ohh and they couldn’t believe it You was in the air and you were fucking doing somersaults and that”

KF commented

“You are learning faster than most people I have taught. They were cheering you because you were doing things they couldn’t imagine doing. I pushed you hard, the flashy bits gets you the respect but the quiet moments is really where you communicate.”

This strengthening of self esteem through their achievement of physical prowess, impressive technical feats of dance and the resulting affirming responses from their fellow TC residents went beyond the walls of the prison

“to prove to your families that you’ve been doing something in prison and what you’ve achieved by showing a different character to the one they are used to seeing from a troubled life show them something different”

“I don’t think there has been many times any parents have wanted to turn around and say that’s my son. For her to see me. Me Mum would be proud to death. She knows what I am like as a person. I’m a drug dealer. Me Mum knows me as a certain guy and she would be dead proud of me I know she would”

“Means a lot for your family to be proud of you”

“You’ve done a lot wrong. They haven’t seen this part of us”

“I can see my daughter running around school the next day saying my Dad’s a dancer”

The participants were able to articulate the impact that both the workshops and the performance had on them. They were aware that some important learning had taken place. Other themes to emerge from this analysis included: increasing group cohesion; self respect and respect for others; re-assessment of past behaviours.

Group cohesion

The workshops did achieve a sense of group cohesion.

“I think all 8 of us clicked perfectly. I think we bonded straight away, done everything and pulled together”

“I wasn’t nervous I wasn’t anything till I hit that doorway and saw that amount of people that was out there. That when it dawned on me and I thought flippin hell and I turned around and there was nowhere to go and everyone spun me back and after that I was ok”

“It’s got a lot to do with the lads they carried each other along”

Respect

“If you are lacking in confidence and your emotions have the ability to get the better of you I’d say go and do this especially with Kev. He’s got a real gift as he has the ability to bring the best out of you and he knows that it’s in there.”

“To be honest I’m one of them that’s pretty confident. If I take something on I like to get through it. I don’t like to fail at anything but on the other hand there has been times when I think I can’t go on [with the dancing]. But I pull myself through that or the group’s pulled me through. The feeling you get from a day like today makes everything worthwhile and it makes me want to do it again and again”.

This demonstrates a cooperative rather than competitive spirit as the participants created a company to achieve what was asked of them. A company that engaged in mutuality and pleasure in the success of others’ progress and

achievement. There was also a sense of appreciation and awareness of KF’s abilities and what he was giving to the men. The men were able to recognise this and say thanks.

Re-assessment

The participants were rather bemused at finding themselves being dancers. This realisation resulted in some interesting comparisons with their past and a re-definition of themselves.

“I’m a convicted armed robber and I was dancing today. If you had asked me 12 months ago would I be doing this. Today it all about me and the guys I was dancing with. I was apprehensive when I had to go out and do that. I thought I was going to get lots of stick but I didn’t. After the dance it was all compliments”

“It’s like I said before I put myself in the karaoke situation because my confidence was lacking. It’s a different confidence I got into the criminal fraternity you don’t see armed robbers jumping about doing things like that”

“It challenges your confidence. Today you needed confidence. When you go into a shop with a gun that needs confidence but you’ve changed that confidence into something good”

“I’ve done a lot of things in my life that I ain’t proud of but this is one of the best things I have ever experienced without having to take anything or have anything in my pocket. It’s just me - not a drug - know what I mean - better than any drug - it’s good, a great feeling”

“I’ve been away for three years this sentence and I’ve had a lot of negativity this is the first positive thing I’ve done”

Change

The participants commented on the contribution that the dance project had made towards change.

“if someone said to me do the waltz, I’d say ‘no that’s not for me’. But now I’d do it. I’d do anything now. I am much more open minded”

“When I was in [a previous] prison I couldn’t progress there. It’s all sorts of mixed races - loads of drugs - people getting stabbed left,

right, and centre. I'm in the middle of all that I just heard about this place and I wanted to escape all that... I thought 'yes I'll give [Dovegate] a go'. Here I am dancing and never looked back"

"[dancing] is a release.. a mental release it just takes you places you just you're not in prison"

"when you get put in jail, you put masks on because you think shit I've got to put masks on to face all them people on the landing because they've all got masks on.-acting tough. It starts falling off at a later time and this [the dance project] has brought another layer off"

Others were more circumspect, not sure how sustained or what the impact might be.

"I don't think it's like changing. It might change my life in the future".

"It might change your life down the line. I don't know that yet. For me it's been a very big boost"

"It's not going to change my life but it's just an experience in life"

Overall, the sense of excitement, the buzz was palpable in the focus group. The non-verbal signals of positive energy and laughter testified to the enjoyment and savouring of the achievement.

"It felt like let's do this. Let's do this right. It felt good from the first step. None of it went wrong"

"I've done it for me and I'm proud of myself"

"When we started we were just crashing about but when we were out there it was just poetry in motion".

Motionhouse's working style (SH)

Flexibility

- KF allowed a very high degree of flexibility when leading each session. What happened in the room depended on the general mood of the participants and where they were in developing and accepting skills. This meant that particular exercises might be decided upon within the

session, rather than relying on pre-planned material.

- At all times, though, there were aims that were followed throughout the session and an end goal which was to get the residents to the point where they could perform a dance piece to the TC. This meant that any exercise in the session was not randomly picked, but used to forward a particular aim. For example, in the first session, participants were given a task of walking up the wall of the room starting from a handstand position with a partner to help. It was difficult to do, but in the end all had accomplished it to a certain extent. The object was to leave residents with the sense that they had achieved something hard to do. The whole session had been very fast paced and residents had been willingly pushed physically in order to entice them. The session was meant to be challenging but exciting, with a chance to use energy and workout physically. Walking up walls, among other more dance-orientated exercises, served this purpose.
- KF's approach was not orthodox and, indeed, involved much risk on his part. He was able easily to alter tasks on the spur of the moment and the session was fresher and more relevant to the participants' needs because of it. Because activities could be changed to reflect the group's immediate mental and physical state, participants learned quickly. The material was moulded to suit how participants were responding and so was able to reach them in a much more immediate and relevant way, whilst keeping the overall aims of the project in mind. Such a flexible approach worked very well with a facilitator who could also read the mood of the group quickly. Because this approach needs someone who takes risks, it is also a very individual approach and may not suit every workshop leader.

Leadership

- KF did not take a traditional didactic route when leading sessions. He tried to steer clear from too many orders that forced participants to do something in a particular way. This was borne out by his aim in allowing residents a personal interpretation of movement, rather than basing the sessions on the perfection of technique, which has a tendency to make movement right or wrong. KF was careful not to

shout to control the group. His manner of speaking was nearly always calm and never rushed, at the same time as always making explicit what his agenda was. The residents responded to this manner and talked of the respect that KF and the dancers gave them and in return, they gave Motionhouse their full attention. Many of the men talked of how mutual respect was rare in their lives and it was a good feeling to feel valued. By KF not shouting, getting angry or being domineering, the participants were able to work in an environment that was not related to their normal one, where abusive or macho behaviour was common. Faced with a different environment, they were given the chance to step out of their normal pattern of experience.

- The minimal authoritarian stance also gave a sense of team work, rather than a structure of teacher versus pupil. Both Motionhouse and the Dovegate residents worked together and so shared a mutual learning and creative experience.
- The only time that KF became more authoritarian in voice and instruction was on the day before the performance. The situation was different to the workshop sessions in that the men had to learn and polish the routine to show their peers. With the men rather anxious and slightly panicky, KF had to raise his voice and give more specific, direct instructions than before so that they could get work done in time. It seems that the manner of the facilitator in this case changed according to what he wanted to get out of the participants. For a workshop situation, where the men were learning and exploring movement and getting used to relating to one another, a minimal authoritarian stance helped relax the participants and helped establish a bond of trust between them and Motionhouse. It also allowed them to explore and play with movement more openly. In a rehearsal situation, where the men's credibility was reliant on a good performance to the other residents, the important factor was getting the work polished to as good a standard as it could during that very short period. The men knew this and so were especially anxious during this time. More guidance and coaxing therefore were needed by the facilitator in order to achieve the end goal in the limited time available. But even in rehearsal, KF never showed himself to be

panicked or angry and so the participants never resented the change of approach. They too were eager to perfect their choreography to show the TC.

Use of dancers

- Many of the residents' fears were allayed by the three or four dancers who were there to help out and dance with them from the beginning. OS noted in his diary that one of the men admitted to him that he found it easier to work with OS and KF, because it was easier to trust them and he felt secure (OS, Diary, 1.5.03). Certainly some of the participants' best work during workshop sessions came when they partnered one of the dancers. They worked harder and many of the men who were quick learners liked dancing with them because it meant they could go at a faster pace and learn more. Similarly, one male dancer commented that he had to work very hard all the time when partnering two of the men because they always gave maximum concentration and effort. The dancers in turn had to give their best work too and dancing with the men allowed them to explore creatively, as already noted above.

Pace of sessions

- The pace of sessions was fast. For this specific group of people, this worked well in firstly gaining their attention and secondly in keeping them from becoming too anxious about dancing with other men or women and executing difficult movement. The pace was much higher than usual for a dance workshop and the level of difficulty of movement was also much higher for a beginner group. This specific group of people were stronger than the average dance beginner due to the large amount of gym work they did inside prison. Their maturity in years and sex also meant that they were in general stronger than the children and teenagers that make up the majority of dance participants in this country. The strength of the men meant that they were able to cope with the level of difficulty of movement. Challenging them also kept their interest and distracted them from being troubled by initial derogatory comments by their peers. By challenging them, the sessions also made the men work physically in a different way to usual, enabling them to discover new muscles,

breathe deeper, relax more and gain a new (legal) adrenalin rush.

- Many of the men complained after about three or four days of dancing that they were physically and mentally exhausted, which is a normal response to this amount of activity. KF usually responded by working them through their aches, keeping them going and this warmed their muscles. If the participants came in mentally tired then KF often gave them Contact Improvisation exercises that required a high level of relaxation or tiredness to perform well. It was at this stage that KF worked the men in a different way but still sensitive work was produced. By gauging the session content to suit the participants, KF coaxed good work out of them, even if they were physically and mentally tired.

Timing

- The first stage of the project was divided up into blocks of several days, every few weeks (see section 2). The longer the block of days, the more the men progressed. This was certainly the case for the two *Rezart* weeks, where some participants' physicality changed and the team began to bond in a deeper way.
- Several weeks of absence from the prison, followed by only one or two days inside, however, did not work in the project's favour. There were also a couple of days where the workshop did not happen at all even though it was scheduled, which was also disruptive. The project had a high drop-out rate, starting with thirteen and ending up with five for the last workshop session in May, although numbers were bolstered in the *Rezart* weeks by three new recruits. Several of the ones that dropped out had articulated their enthusiasm for the project beforehand, but the absence of Motionhouse for several weeks could have disrupted the continuity the men needed to keep going with the initiative. During this time, they could have also been more vulnerable to peer group pressure, which may have influenced their decision to stop.
- Recruiting new dancers for the *Rezart* weeks was a good idea as most of the new participants injected more energy and encouragement into the group. One of them did not, however, and there is no way of telling whether, at another time, all the new recruits will lack the energy of the

original group. It was also sensible not to allow residents to drop in on the workshops for a day at a time. This would have disrupted the development of the group and probably their concentration, as well as slowing down the bonding of the team.

- The core group of participants who kept going did ask whether they could have a space where they could practice whilst Motionhouse were away. This shows not only their enthusiasm, but also points to a solution to keep residents interested and physically more attuned. Motionhouse have decided to change the weeks when they will come in for the next stage. Two week intensives will ensure that participants are kept motivated for the whole initiative, although they may not keep the same participants for all of the intensives for the reasons linked to long gaps listed above.

Working with residents

- The dancers joined in for each session and took turns demonstrating tasks with KF. They helped and guided the men when they wanted or needed it and partnered them or each other for the activities.
- By the beginning of the second week, KF changed their relationship slightly. He started giving guidance on movements and tasks to the dancers, as well as participants. This had the effect of creating more of a sense of equality between Motionhouse and residents. They were working as one team. KF argued that this sense of mutual learning is important, as it forges the sense of an on-going process of learning and a culture without rigid hierarchies.
- When rehearsing for the performance, the dancers helped to create parts of the work with small groups of the residents. One of the dancers also took one of the roles in the work when one resident dropped out. By the *Rezart* weeks, KF was also using some of the residents to demonstrate movement, rather than the dancers.

The impact of professional development on Motionhouse dancers

All the dancers were asked to go through a written process of self-reflection on each day, all were used to the process of reflecting after performing and teaching, either through writing, discussion or thinking. The level of analysis was high amongst the team and this could have contributed to the amount that the dancers gained from the project.

Apprehensions

- Of the original team, HP and V, the two female dancers, were much less anxious about the project than the two males, JC and OS. Both men were concerned about the safety of their female colleagues, as well as for themselves. JC was unhappy working within a prison because it held negative connotations for him. By the end of the workshop sessions in May, however, his viewpoint had changed and he declared that he was “*more than happy*” to go back to help with other projects in a prison environment. He had even begun to enjoy the experience, which he had not at the beginning. JC was used to demonstrate Contact exercises with KF a lot over the first week. There was a worry that in a prison where most of the population was white, he might experience problems with the residents being possibly the only black man in the room. There were no problems and this dancer was widely admired amongst the participants and even danced with them in the *Rezart* performance.
- HP, OS and JC voiced concern over disclosure of personal information. This concern was alleviated slightly after a security briefing by the Director of Therapy at Dovegate and dissipated over the weeks, as they got used to fencing questions of a personal nature. V felt confident because she implicitly trusted the joint artistic directors, KF and LR (V, 2003a: no.15). Having said that, the women took precautions so as not to inflame any potential situation by dressing in long trousers and long sleeved tops and acting in a ‘sexually neutral’ way (V, 2003b: no.4).

- Most noted before the project started that when being shown around the TC, they were rather apprehensive about associating with people who had murdered. The man showing them round openly admitted that he had killed someone and this was commented on in most of the Diaries. But by the 19th May, one of the dancers wrote: “*I’ve got to a place now where I quite enjoy myself when I’m here...I kind of forget where I am. I know not to give too much of myself away but I still...just look at these guys as normal guys sometimes*” (JC, Diary, 19.5.03). Relaxation for this particular dancer had increased during sessions by then. In conversation, his other colleagues agreed with him, commenting that sessions felt like any other session they would lead for community groups.
- The company performed their work *Volatile* in the afternoon of the day the residents showed their piece. Apart from the usual pre-show nerves, one of the female dancers confided that she and her female colleagues felt slightly apprehensive wearing their costumes in front of the whole TC. Their costumes were figure-hugging unitards, with short mesh tunics. Their fears were confirmed with several wolf-whistles and comments made by the men in the audience, particularly when bottoms or legs were prominent in the movement. The dancers were gratified to see that these subsided as the performance went on and the men were more interested in the dancing than in the female figure. V said that she coped with the audience’s reaction at the beginning by staring very hard and sternly at particularly vocal spectators in her role as an angel on top of the scaffold.

Expectations

- These differed from person to person and at what moment in time. One dancer thought that the project had potential to be very rewarding for the participants, but also challenging for himself (OS, 2003a: no.14). Similarly, another anticipated learning more about herself as a teacher with a different group of students. She also anticipated that the participants would enjoy the movement more than they anticipate (V, 2003a: no.14). One dancer tried not to hold any expectations about the project as she took the view that it would be a rather different, unique project, so she

needed to take each day as it came (HP, 2003a: no.14). In a slightly different way, another did not hold any expectations going into the project as he was sceptical about the idea of teaching dance in an adult male prison (NC, 2003b:no.2). NC brought up the notion of it changing the residents' lives or outlook. He argued initially that he was not particularly excited about bringing art to adult prisoners as they were not going to change their lives because of it (unlike young offenders) and why should they have dance workshops if they are in prison to be punished (NC, 2003b:no2; 4)?

- NC's viewpoint changed while on the project. Although he was still sceptical that dance could change people's lives, he believed that some hope, happiness and respect could be given through the medium (NC, 2003b:no.2). HP also said that although she did try not to hold any expectations initially, they did develop during this first stage of the project. For HP, those were met and exceeded. She believes that the impact of the project, both physically and mentally, has been successful and positive for those involved (HP, 2003b: no.1). She stated that she was proud to be involved in the project, as she had seen the results of the work, which had changed people's outlook into something more positive (HP, 2003b: no.2). In a similar vein, JC admitted that he is looking forward to going back, even though he was not keen on going into a prison at the beginning. As an "*eye opener and a challenge*" working with large men who learn quickly, the project has changed his expectations about the client group (JC, 2003b: no.1; 2). The style of dance used for the project was also an area where expectations were developed. V's belief that Contact can be used with any group has been strengthened from working with a 'socially excluded' group, which would rarely be connected to dance. She argues that her understanding of how Contact can be used in a "*socially universal*" way has increased (V, 2003b: no.2).
- All of the dancers were surprised about some things the project threw up. NC changed his viewpoint on how a prison can act as a punishment from experiencing being in an enclosed space for two weeks (NC, 2003b:no.5). He realised that just because they were receiving dance classes, did not mean they were not being punished

in other ways. NC was surprised at how good the performance was and the general level that the residents attained (NC, 2003b: no.5). HP was surprised about how clearly participants changed physically and altered their body language. She was surprised about how focused they were in working safely. Lastly, both she and NC felt overwhelmed by the positive response the other residents gave to the participants' performance, which she was not expecting to happen (HP, 2003b: no5). Likewise, V was surprised at how satisfied she felt by the performance. She was also surprised by the level of attachment she felt for "our" residents as they performed. By this she meant that she felt anxious for the men because of their pre-show nerves and was willing each individual to get everything right. V admitted that she would never have believed that she would develop such an attachment and level of concern for them on her first day in Dovegate (V, 2003b: no. 5).

- It is evident that most of the dancers had faith that participants could find the project rewarding, but all were surprised about how positive it seemed to be for the residents. The project also seemed to have a very positive effect on the dancers, even cathartic, particularly for those involved in it from the beginning. The dancers commented that the experience had been a beneficial and enlightening one. They also mentioned how after coming home from a workshop, particularly in the first two weeks, they had to talk to someone about it because they were "buzzing" from it. Because they were closely involved in seeing the development of the project in its first stage, they had to experience the highs and lows of the residents during this time. They saw the rapid and surprising development of skills and confidence in the residents and were an integral part of the bonding of the group.

Challenges

- For a couple of the male dancers, one initial challenge was not to let personal feelings affect work. Since they were not so enthusiastic about working in a prison, they had to by-pass these feelings to work well. One of the dancers concentrated on the dancing and found that he was looking forward to doing classes and working with the residents, even though he did not like being in a prison. In both cases they

relatively quickly changed their minds about the project and so it was no longer a problem. Another challenge that presented itself to NC was looking after his body. He argued that the main challenge became concentrating on lifting fifteen stone plus men, as one wrong move “*could cause serious damage*” (NC, 2003b: no. 4).

- It is interesting to note, though, that even though there were challenges during the project, one dancer commented that it was a really easy group to deal with on the whole because the participants jumped at the tasks given without any questioning. They were a rare group in that they were so strong and committed. This might explain why, even though some days were mentally, as well as physically, exhausting, the dancers were also so positive about the experience. The intensity of the experience brought both challenges and emotional highs.

Benefits

- The dancers were working with strangers who were beginners, but with strong bodies and who learned relatively fast. Because of this, the dancers were learning how to communicate more effectively and clearly as facilitators. Similarly, one dancer noted that she had to give 100% when dancing with a resident, watching exactly what they were doing. She felt she had to do this so that her partners could overcome any insecurities about working with a woman and by working full out, she could not fall into old habits.
- Because the dancers were out of their “easy zone”, they had to apply what they knew to a different environment and to different bodies. They found that there had to be mutual negotiation when partnering residents and that different methods for moving with a partner worked for different people. In other words, the dancers could not afford to become lazy or sloppy in their work. As a result, their skills in communication and adaptation of methods of moving were improved.
- Some of the male dancers relished working with the other men, who were bigger and strong. They found they could dance differently and learn new skills, particularly in terms of high level ‘flying’ because they had the chance to partner the men. One dancer later wrote in his diary: “*I don’t get to dance with men much so*

that was another bonus. They seemed to look after me and I don’t know what else to say, it was amazing” (JC, Diary: 29.4.03). Another wrote: *The residents were treated as dance partners in this case, not merely as students. Their unique strength, willingness and care made them ideal partners for the Motionhouse men to practice exercises that they would not often get the chance to do. In this way, dance skills, especially in high level ‘flying’ were enhanced. JC added that one unique benefit from Dancing Inside was “being able to join in and get as much out of it as possible. Very few times can I be lifted in a workshop by a participant. In fact it’s rare I’m lifted at all even when it’s company class*” (JC 2003b: no.11). Here, the project posed itself as a unique opportunity for the dancers to develop partnering skills.

- It was not only the men that gained from partner work with the residents. V commented that, “*it’s not every day that you can run and jump at ten men and be caught*” (V, in conversation, 17.7.03). She added later that the project “has given me a huge – and unrepeatable because of the nature of our schedule – opportunity to experiment as both a liftee and lifter with many different sized partners” (V, 2003b: no.10). Even for a female dancer, who may be used to being lifted more than the male dancers, the situation gave her unique opportunities. HP remarked: “*I worked again with Paul and it was great. I was finding time with him to really push my own boundaries and discover many new things myself and this can only be achieved by partner work*” (HP, Diary: 30.4.03).
- All of the dancers commented that they also started to remember ways of moving and certain phrases of movement that they had forgotten about. By going through a lot of material, the dancers were able to cover old sequences or methods of moving that they could not have revisited in less intense workshops. Because the men were willing to take on board so much material, it was a chance for the dancers to also refresh their skills. HP wrote: “*The sessions have improved my core strength and have reminded me of some basic skills that needed to be re-visited*” (HP, 2003b: no.10). Some of the material was new to some of the newer members of the company, so they had the opportunity to learn some of the Motionhouse techniques

and movement. One dancer commented that KF taught “*a lot of both basic and advanced material that I had not done before*” (JC, 2003b: no.6). V expanded: “*In many ways we were learning Contact skills side-by-side. There were some skills that I felt competent with but there were many briefs we were given that were new to me too*” (V, 2003b: no.7). The workshops were therefore a learning experience and a refresher course for the dancers in terms of movement skills and knowledge.

- By working with the residents, the dancers also learned from them. V argued that, “*Because of the nature of the briefs, it is rarely the fact that one person achieves without the other person achieving. As with many dance forms...two people have to work together. So the participants facilitated my learning of new skills through the process of physical negotiation. Maybe because explanation and negotiation is so necessary with this type of participant I learned to do this more and to ensure that I listened as well*” (V, 2003b: no.7).
- JC also mentioned that learning from some of their mistakes was useful knowledge when experimenting in how to execute movements (JC, 2003b: no.7). Not only were their teaching and movement skills worked upon, but also other elements were highlighted. For example, several dancers remarked on the ability of the prisoners to take risks. HP wrote: “*Their flying capabilities were amazing because of this. They committed themselves to the movements required and quite often looked spectacular*” (HP, 2003b: no.7).
- Some of the dancers also re-evaluated the benefits of doing dance and its potential to bring respect and a sense of achievement to participants. NC also commented that in working with the residents, he had begun to understand those that commit crimes a little bit more. He had stepped away from thinking they were so “*evil*” and had begun to think about how social deprivation can lead to crime (NC, 2003b: no.7).
- JC wrote in his diary: “*I also got to dance with KF which was rare, also soft but at a different level. He took me up a lot more and a lot higher. I’m not used to going up but felt totally relaxed*” (JC, Diary: 29.4.03). Not only does this suggest that

this dancer was able to participate in movement and movement qualities that were unusual to him, but also that he felt very comfortable and trusted KF.

- HP noted that she saw how KF used different methods to deliver particular contact work to those with particular interests and disinterests. This was partly done through letting participants find their own way in the movement, without any unnecessary pressure (HP, 2003b: no.6).
- NC elaborates: “*He (KF) was extremely good at getting their attention and knowing how and when to push them. He was extremely successful because he gave everyone a lot of respect and in exchange, received. He would quickly calm things down if individuals got too confident or too distracted*” (NC, 2003b: no.6).
- Similarly, JC added that it was interesting to watch how KF changed his tone of voice and body language in order to hold the attention of the group (JC, 2003b: no.6). V also observed his way of talking with the residents, particularly when they had issues about continuing with the sessions: “*I think he talked about choices, them making their own choices and was very explicit about everyone’s agendas. I think this is important with any group*” (V, 2003b: no.6).
- HP explained that she has now taken more time to experiment and has learnt not to be so pre-occupied with a ‘result’, particularly for one-off workshops. She also admits that varying what she teaches has made the lessons fresh again (HP, 2003b: no.8). HP also had a little bit of practice by leading two of the warm ups in two of the later sessions instead of KF. For the first one, her voice was unusually quiet, but her confidence had grown by the second warm up. This must have given her the space to practice some of the things she had observed when KF led and, indeed, it has given her confidence to consider as part of a team leading other sessions in prisons again as it would be an interesting and challenging experience. JC, however, notes that he has not had the right group with which to try out the athletic material. Children cannot do the sequences the men were attempting (JC, 2003b: no.8). Likewise, V points out that most groups she works with are for a shorter term and are not willing to throw themselves into

Contact, even if they were able. She did add, though, that the style in which *Dancing Inside* was led reinforced her own ideas on teaching (V, 2003b: no.8).

- Working as a support for KF also had its benefits in that the dancers were able to receive feedback on their own skills and knowledge. OS commented that it was helpful to receive feedback from him, although much guidance was more specific than this: “*KF said to me that I have improved a great deal over this week...I know how great it is to have strong blokes to be lifted. Speeds up learning*” (OS, Diary, 30.4.03).
- By demonstrating with KF, the dancers were also able to understand KF’s working practices and the overall logic to the workshop. OS writes: “*Demonstrated with KF Contact to the group...it gives a sense of where the work is leading and it really helps*” (OS, Diary, 15.4.03).
- Being in a support capacity in the workshop made it easier for the dancers to learn skills in facilitation within the prison environment, increase knowledge of movement and receive feedback on dancing.
- All said that they would take a dance project to a prison again, even the two dancers who were not so keen initially on working in that environment. All thought that they would prefer and cope better by team-leading again, rather than doing solo work. V elaborated on this, saying that she would definitely joint-lead a workshop in a prison if the group had already been “*won over*” by KF. Being male, large in stature, very experienced and older were factors that she believed won over the residents (V, 2003b: no. 3b). One dancer argued that he is not ready to go into the general prison population, as distinct from a TC environment, even to team lead (JC, 2003b: no. 3). It is clear from these answers that all the dancers were very positive in going back to support KF or possibly to team teach within a TC environment. Going into the general population and facilitating dance alone was much more daunting.

Artistic development

- While practising Contact work with other participants, as well as with KF, the dancers were able to explore and play with movement. HP observed in her diary: “*Nick again really opened up and really allowed himself to play and dance. We experimented a lot with pulling away and coming together where we discovered a ‘rock&roll’ move, which was fun! It’s great when you find yourself in a place where you can find new things without necessarily being taught them*” (HP, Diary: 30.4.03).
- The residents’ facility for this type of work helped the dancers explore movement that in another workshops with other participants they would not necessarily be able to do. Motionhouse put a lot of emphasis on the importance of playing with movement as a means to creativity and also as a valid way of dancing. Even whilst waiting for the residents to arrive, or after they had left, the dancers liked to play around with movement. For them to have the chance to explore all day, without pressure of learning material for a show, was stimulating.
- Playing with movement was not just a relaxing pastime, however. JC commented that he is now able to conserve his energy better from participating in the intensive sessions. He and V also found they are able to execute lifts with more understanding (2003b: no.9; 10). HP noted that Contact work had given her the time to find new ways, dynamics and different pathways to take her partner work in devising and performing. She also noted that the project did affect the intensity and emotive levels of some of the duet work in *Volatile* (HP, 2003b:no.9). Likewise, V commented on how performing to 160 residents had affected how she has approached the main theme in *Volatile* of letting people down in how she performs it. Here, not only has Contact with residents been useful to performance work, but also the emotional side to the project.
- Another dancer thought that the project could fuel themes and images for a choreographic work, as well as movement and emotional intensity. He argued that the experience of being in a prison lends itself well to the investigation of emotions

produced when being shut away, the relationship with the Outside and with families, as well as to the study of a prisoner's physicality; how they might walk, for example (Anon, in conversation, 10.7.03). He did not say whether he would actually use these ideas to definitely create a dance work, but the possibility and ideas were there. The unusual working environment, therefore, had the potential to be tapped into by the dancers to develop creative ideas for future performance projects.

The project does seem to have begun to influence artistic development of some of the dancers, thereby fulfilling one of Motionhouse's principles that outreach work feeds performance work and vice versa. The project at this stage has affected the dancers in a positive way in terms of their own learning and how they approach facilitation. They have also cultivated a sense of enjoyment and willingness to carry on with this type of work.

Reflections of the research team

SH found *Dancing Inside* a very interesting project to be involved in. She had not been in a prison before and it was an experience she was glad to have had. What stood out was how stifling a place can be when one is locked inside. In getting to know the residents, she came to understand how the crime a person commits does not have to be, or subsume, the whole person standing in front of you. In fact, being in the dance sessions at Dovegate was often a fun experience, even though at times the testosterone levels in the air were far too high to be comfortable with.

The project was an intense and fairly tiring experience, but feeling part of the team that went into Dovegate made it enjoyable.

"Motionhouse made me feel very welcome and I appreciated this as it not only made my research trips a very pleasant experience, it also helped take away any apprehension I had on going into Dovegate. Kevin and his dancers gave me a lot of their time and were very generous with their comments about the dance process. This was extremely useful as it really bolstered the research data and allowed me to extend the research into something very interesting indeed. Because I was made to feel part of the team, I had a sense of ownership of the project too, along with all the other participants, which makes it easier to talk and write about it afterwards".

JB found the project be an unusual challenge. There was a need to find imaginative and creative ways of conducting the evaluation especially with the psychometric techniques failing to demonstrate differences that subjectively were obviously experienced.

Motionhouse have a philosophy and vision for the work they do. It was hard not to be infected by their enthusiasm and commitment. They, as a routine, go the extra mile and deliver far in excess of what objectively they are paid. This seems obvious to those in the Arts, and perhaps particularly Dance, where under funding is a way of life. This can set up some tensions when undertaking an evaluation which is resource limited. It is important to manage expectations about what is possible and set clear parameters for the work. However these intentions were thwarted because of the inspiration and dedication of Motionhouse and the achievements of the TC participants. The evaluation too becomes a mission that goes beyond the limits of the cheque book. Thus it is important to be aware of this and preserve the degrees of separation necessary to conduct a rigorous evaluation.

Conversations with KF and LR were a facilitating and illuminating cross fertilisation of ideas. Notions implicit in Contact Improvisation did cut across therapeutic principles. The idea of “getting it” i.e. when working with Contact Improvisation and the point of therapy, emerged out of these discussions. This is explained at greater length in another paper (“Identifying key aspects of therapeutic change in residents of a prison based therapeutic community; a qualitative approach” by Sarah Miller, Carly Sees and Jennifer Brown).

Conclusions

This report set out to investigate

- Motionhouse Dance Theatre’s working method
- the development of dance skills in residents
- the impact of the project on the professional development of the dancers
- change in TC residents as a consequence of their participation

In evaluating the impact of the experience of *Dancing Inside* it was important to reflect the perspectives of all those involved; participants, dancers and researchers. Given the particular nature of the context, a therapeutic community, a key point was the need to situate the evaluators in a space that did not violate principles of good research yet gave them an involvement that did not disrupt the natural flow of the workshop. This was largely achieved by SH. As a consequence, this enhanced the candour of information she was able to obtain from participants. KB however was less successful. He failed to demonstrate his commitment by being absent at several

crucial points in the programme. He alienated Motionhouse and to some extent the residents such that some repair work was necessary to facilitate subsequent phases of the research. Careful research briefing and establishment of a social contract between evaluator, dancers and participants is a critical part of conducting research of this kind.

Motionhouse Dance Theatre’s working method

The combination of KF’s experience as a facilitator, the type of dance used during sessions and the positive energy and physicality of the residents, made this stage of the project so successful. It is clear that the participants responded well to the informal, calm manner that KF put across and that they were inspired by the athletic movement with which they were faced. Although Contact Improvisation demanded intimate, often slow and tender movement, it did not faze the men because they had been taught skills to deal with partner dancing. The participants could also cope with doing such challenging movement because of their initial strength and energy. They used this energy in a positive and focused manner in general and so were able to progress quickly. The pace of the sessions helped them focus on the movement, rather than any anxieties they might have had. The time lapse between workshops did seem to impede progress. The concentrated work prior to the *Rezart* performance both consolidated skill development and increased cohesion and sense of achievement.

Residents’ dance skills

The participants rapidly developed a variety of dance skills to a competent level. With more time and with the same energy and

commitment, these and more should be developed further. Some skills, such as the ability to perform Contact Improvisation and awareness of safety whilst dancing, were executed at a very good level of competency, which surprised and enthused the Motionhouse dancers. Although others, such as fluidity of movement and artistic nuance, were not developed to the same degree, for beginner dancers, they had grasped much within a relatively short time. For some elements, including that of empowerment, it is too early to make an informed judgement, although, as stated above, there are clues to how the residents are developing these elements. Even the performance, which was not prioritised by the men, became a major highlight and a culmination of skills learnt, as well as demonstrating team work and confidence. The general dance skills looked at were also fairly well covered, despite not being prioritised by Motionhouse. The skills that were taught in detail during sessions were much more comprehensive, therefore, than the initial description warranted.

The *Rezart* performance made clear how much the men had worked. It was a sparky, risky and engaging performance that demonstrated their creative abilities, as well as their technical skills in executing challenging material. It did not overtly show the beautiful, sensitive movement that the men had achieved through some of their Contact Improvisation, but it did demonstrate a good degree of competence, a high level of confidence and a good level of team work. It also allowed the men to use humour in a constructive and positive way.

Impact on the Company

In a project that, in its intensity, had a fairly high level of emotion, the experience for the dancers was quite pronounced. One of them summarised: *“Their [the residents’] sense of achievement was magnificent. To see their faces after the show was great, it really made me feel extremely happy about what I do and why”* (OC, 2003b: no.11). But even though the initiative was very rewarding for the dancers because they could see the outcomes generated by the residents, it also gave them a unique opportunity to develop their own skills. By supporting KF, the dancers were able to spend much of their time within sessions dancing. With this specific group of people, they were able to explore, execute and practice movement that they would not necessarily have found with any other group. Both the male and female dancers were equally affected by this factor. In dancing with the residents, as well as with KF and each other, they were able to experiment and practice movement that they would not normally get the chance to do.

Although more evidence may appear in time, some of the dancers have already started to try out certain facilitation techniques learnt within *Dancing Inside* in other workshops they lead. In terms of devising movement, the project has given them the time to explore new ways of moving and inspiration for choreographic themes or ideas. In performance, the emotional intensity within the project has affected some of the work and practice has led to the honing of technique.

But the project has affected the dancers in less direct ways, forcing them to rethink ideas and notions that they held regarding work in

prisons, and about prisoners themselves, which was seen in their expectations and apprehensions. This has caused them to develop a wider understanding of this particular socially excluded group and given them the courage and enthusiasm to consider leading similar workshops. Their experience, which affected them all in quite a profound way, has given them openings with which to explore creative and artistic avenues that may never have come to them had they not participated in the project. Moreover, *Dancing Inside* has given the dancers the opportunity to explore their own attitudes and places in life, which is something that can be very artistically fruitful. One dancer stated that the project “*caused me to be greatly introspective about my own behaviour and ask myself lots of questions about my own perceptions of myself and others....I feel [my] view has been challenged; no one place has a monopoly on goodness, talent, co-operation and vice versa. My level of involvement with the participants and its implications about human nature has surprised me* (V, 2003v: no.11).

Changes in resident dance participants

It was hoped that, as a consequence of their involvement in the dance workshop, and performance, participants would exhibit change with respect to:

- Stress (by becoming more relaxed)
- Self-esteem (by having more confidence)
- Confronting past behaviours (such as violence and drug taking)
- Increasing respect for others (learning to give and receive and acknowledge contribution of others)
- Addressing emotional material

- Learning different (positive) meanings associated with touch

The Psychometric Measures (locus of control, self-esteem and readiness to change) yielded few statistically significant results. This may have been because they were not the most appropriate measures to use, the time scale was too short for significant change to have taken place, the kinds of change were not amenable to measurement by these means, or that sustainable changes were not achieved.

Attempts to partial out the specific contribution of dance by having a comparison group of TC residents who worked out was unsuccessful.

All groups showed a general increase in psychometric scores as time went on, suggesting that therapy is aiding all members of the TC. Those who completed the dance programme had higher Self-Esteem scores than the Low Workout Group, but not the High Workout Group. This suggests that exercise in general, and not the dance experience itself, may demonstrate physical fitness, being in control and proud of your body as a positive experience.

However, the qualitative methods did detect shifts and provided plausible evidence of the added value that the dance experience gave over and above working out. Whilst more labour intensive and demanding, observations, the sorting task, movement analysis, interviews and focus groups proved more amenable methods to elicit reactions and deeper reflections on the impact of the totality of the dancing inside experience. These findings confirm the importance of qualitative methods. Ritter and Graff Low (1996) suggest that

qualitative research is necessary to clarify the usefulness of “non-traditional therapies”.

Stress reduction

The movement analysis revealed a relaxation of bodies, and by inference, a reduction of physical indicators of stress. As the workshops continued participants stopped vocal and non-verbal grunts, controlled their breathing more and were less tense. Shoulders and necks were freer and several of the men had opened up their chests rather than being hunched over. Smiling faces, laughter and other visible signs of enjoyment, feeling comfortable dancing with men were all indicative of tension release. The focus group revealed natural pre-performance anxiety and a post-performance adrenaline high. These were interpreted as excitement or a “buzz” and again were indicators of positive stress associated with strong sense of affirmation as opposed to the negative impacts of adverse stress experiences. The willingness to talk about more personal material later in the workshop series when the group had gained greater coherence and the men were more relaxed again was an indicator of stress reduction.

Self esteem

The qualitative material from the talking head interviews and focus groups provide rich examples from the men of the lift they experienced from the applause and admiration that their dance performance elicited. The recognition of their progress and achievement of a high degree of technical proficiency both by themselves, others and Motionhouse introduced a sense of pride that generalised to their families. Several comments related to the contrast effect of their persona as a dance performer as a source of gratification compared

to the distress caused to their families by their criminal activities.

Confronting past behaviours

The talking head interviews revealed some challenge and changes in their concepts of masculinity and femininity. The sorting task also indicated some shifts in thinking about gender. This evidence suggests that the TC dance participants attempted to alter beliefs about maleness and strength as a consequence of their practice sessions with Motionhouse dancers.

The video analysis of the talking head interviews also provided evidence of an emerging ability to talk about the emotional content of the sessions. There was a reserve in the interviews and certain defensiveness as much of the commentary was in terms of the physicality offered by the exercise, technique and practice component. These were conducted before the performance. In contrast the focus group conducted as a de-briefing session after the performance yielded more open and frank admissions about the adrenaline buzz afforded by the experience as a stark contrast to that experienced as a result of drug or criminal activities.

There were also some insightful comments about the changing meaning of confidence from being required to undertake criminal activity and that required to engaged in a more constructive creative activity.

The involvement in the dance workshop demonstrated that, beyond the physical fitness component, the dance participants were able to make tentative aesthetic decisions and

appreciate the artistic dimensions of humour, tenderness as well as strength. While there is suggestive evidence that this has taken place, a shift from solely physical discourses to aesthetic and potentially emotional ones is promising.

Increased respect

It was expected as a consequence of the collaborative nature of the workshops that participants would develop a greater degree of cooperation and mutual support for fellow workshop participants that enhance their interpersonal skills. There is evidence for positive social changes in the dance participants (from SH's movement analysis, KB's secondary analysis of the interview material, JB's analysis of the focus group as well as the observations reported by SH from the Motionhouse dancers). Cooperation and mutual support have increased for those within the dance group. The participants indeed developed great respect for Kevin and conveyed their gratitude and appreciation during the focus group.

Learning about touch

From SH's observations and movement analysis she concluded that touch was not a big issue during the sessions due to the unself-conscious manner in which the sessions were led and the positive attitude of the dancers not to make it an issue. The sessions did appear to help the men's social interactional skills by enabling them to physically interact with both male and female dance partners. The interview material provided some further evidence that the TC dance participants could articulate a

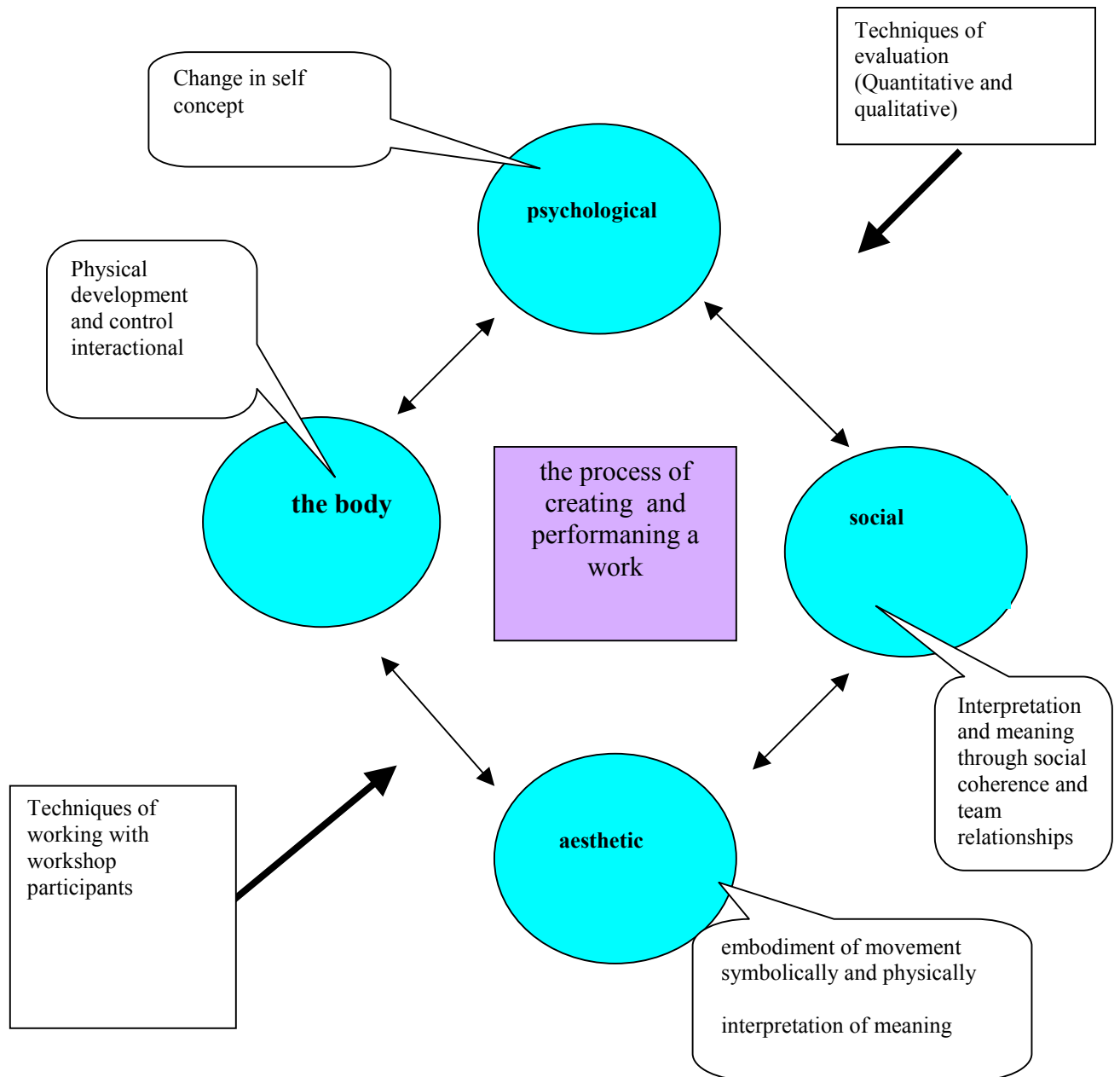
subjective improvement in their ability to relate to others and draw on emotional resources through touch.

With regard to addressing emotional material and social interaction, Matarasso (1997, cited in Houston 2002) writes “*(dance has the) ability to help people think critically about and question their experiences and those of others, not in a discussion group but with all the excitement, danger, magic, colour, symbolism, feeling, metaphor and creativity that the arts can offer*”. This certainly seemed to be the case throughout the sessions, as in the interviews reference was made to trust, interpersonal communication and self-esteem and how the sessions had helped the residents with these issues.

An emerging model

In trying to conceptualise the processes of evaluation and dance work with excluded groups, the present study concludes by offering a tentative model. We are suggesting an intersection of the psychological, social, corporeal and aesthetic domains that culminate in the performance. The physical development is associated with the social experience of working in this medium and together with the interpretive skill through aesthetic meaning all contribute to the change process. This is presented as a framework for discussion and development. As yet such a model probably proffers more questions than answers. For example in the 'body' circle, we could also have the social body of the residents, which in the end played quite an important role in the prisoners' experience of the project. It may be that a subsequent element of further evaluative work can develop such a model.

Figure 4 An emerging model of delivery and evaluation of dance as a medium of change



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