Below is an overview of what was covered in our first training session. **All of the activities below can be used in your first class** with students to facilitate **relationship building** and **boundary setting**, and should be done **in a circle** to create a sense of community.

**Check-in Circle**: begins every class to facilitate **relationship building** and create **understanding**, so that the class can be modified to suit the needs of the students that day.
- Mood gage between 1 - 10 (1 = low, 10 = high)
- Check-in Question: *This question can change every day, and be modified to suit your students. Questions can be serious, silly, or informative. Example for a first class: What is your dance/music/theater experience?*

**Name Game**: activity to be done in the first class to create a sense of **community** and **shared vulnerability**, while empowering **individual creativity** and utilizing **movement**.
Instructions: While standing in a circle, have each person (teachers included) create a gesture for **one letter of their name** and a gesture representing the **meaning of their name**, or something they are passionate about. One by one, have participants share this gesture with the group as they speak their name. The rest of the group responds by mimicking the gesture and repeating the individual’s name. If you have time, this can become a choreographic phrase by putting everyone’s name and gesture together, creating a “first dance” with the group.

**Create your Community Agreement**: activity to be done in the first class to **establish boundaries**, and to be returned to as needed in your group.
Instructions: Work together to create a shared agreement of classroom expectations. Facilitate a discussion about each expectation to make sure there is clear understanding (example: What does *respect* mean in the context of this classroom?). Write expectations down on a posterboard and have everyone sign the agreement. Keep agreement in the classroom so it can be referenced or added to as needed.

**Check-out Circle and Closing Ritual**: ends every class to facilitate a sense of **community**.
- Mood gage between 1-10
- Closing ritual: Create a final movement, sound, or activity for the class to do together at the end of the class. *Example: one clap all together.*

**Post-Training Assignment**:
For the next training on August 17th, we requested that the teachers bring an example of an exercise or concept they would teach in their curriculum. They can demonstrate it or describe how they would teach this concept, and we will use their examples to further discuss the Keshet teaching model.
Keshet/Pchylolka Training Session 2
August 17th, 2020

In our second training, we focused on the concepts of affirmation and empowerment, and the importance of creating lessons that facilitate student decision making. We explored how these concepts can be applied to any lesson or discipline, and how they help students develop a sense of agency over their lives and bodies. We discussed teaching examples from the Pchylolka team, and how they are already implementing these concepts in their classes.

Check-in Circle:
- Mood gauge between 1-10
- Check-in Question Example from training: “If you were an element (air, water, fire, earth), what element would you be?”

Keshet’s Transferrable Curriculum: The Keshet approach is based in affirmation, empowerment, relationship building, and artist to artist connection. These concepts can be integrated into any discipline or lesson. Below are key tools to facilitate this approach.
- **Remember that each student is different**: Make an effort to get to know each student, and be flexible in tailoring your approach to suit their needs.
- **Communicate from curiosity**: Listen actively, ask questions, recognize your biases, and do your best not to make assumptions or judgments.
- **Create situations in which students can make choices**: Acknowledge and encourage the creative decisions your students make. Giving your students the opportunity to make choices in class gives them a sense of agency over their own bodies and ideas, and empowers them to take charge in other areas of their lives.
- **Artist to artist connection**: Create experiences of shared vulnerability where students and teachers collaborate, share with each other, and learn from each other.
- **Maintain boundaries**: Make sure that boundaries are clear so that students feel safe and respected when expressing themselves.
- **Look toward the future**: Give your students the opportunity to dream. Help them to identify where they have control over their lives.

*Keshet teaching example from training*: The instructor teaches a simple step touch, then encourages each person to add their own style in their upper body. The instructor then acknowledges the choices each student has made and celebrates their choices.

Check-out Circle and Closing Ritual:
- Mood gauge between 1-10
- Closing ritual Example from training: one big clap together.

Post-Training Assignment:
For our next training on August 24th, we requested that the teachers bring an example of a challenge they foresee in working with the Pchylolka community. In the next session we will continue discussing the Pchylolka team’s teaching examples in relation to the topics above.
In our third training we focused on **choreographic tools** and how the elements of space, time, and energy can influence and add layers to movement. We also began discussing potential **class challenges**, and different approaches to addressing them.

**Check-in Circle:**
- Mood gauge between 1 - 10
- Check-in Question *Example from training:* “If you were a superhero, what superpower would you have?" 

**Spatial Orientation Exercise:** *This exercise introduces the basic choreographic tools of space, time, and energy. Simple choreographic exercises such as this one provide low-stakes opportunities to facilitate student decision making, while encouraging artistic expression and shared vulnerability.*

**Materials needed:** Pens/pencils, paper, music

**Instructions:** Instruct each student to draw a pathway or pattern on their paper without letting the pen come off of the paper. Have students orient their drawing to the room you are in, and take a few moments to use their drawing as a map, walking the pattern they drew in the room. Once students have walked through their pattern, spend some time as a group coming up with movements (you can write them down on individual slips of paper). These movements can be as simple, complex, silly, or serious as your group wants (ex. Spin around, do push ups, act like chicken, raise your hand, etc.). Have the students select between 3 - 5 movements, and write them down on specific points in their pathway. Then facilitate a discussion about the choreographic tools of space, time, and energy, being sure to define each in the context of movement and choreography:
  - **Space** = High, low, wide, narrow
  - **Time** = Slow, fast, repetition
  - **Energy** = Emotion, quality, intention

Once there is an understanding of these choreographic elements, have the students apply them to the movements they have selected. Give students time to experiment with how these tools alter their movements, and how they can integrate them into their pathway. When students have finished creating their pathways with their movements and choreographic layers, each student can present their project individually, or everyone can perform together in order to find new pathways and interactions.

*While this exercise was presented as interconnecting all the choreographic tools in one exercise, you can also expand this over several classes. If completed over several classes, have students explore each element individually, and then layer them together.*
Addressing Class Challenges
It is important to acknowledge that class challenges will differ based on the individuals you are teaching and the dynamics of the groups they are in. By acknowledging that each individual and group is different, you can remind yourself to be patient, responsive, and adaptable when challenges arise.

Important things to remember when addressing class challenges:
- Remain in control of your own emotions. Respond with calm and control, and don’t take things personally.
- Be mindful of what your tone of voice and body language are communicating - these often have more of an effect than the words you say.
- Validate students’ feelings and experiences while maintaining expectations of respectful language and behavior. Don’t tell them how they should feel. Example: if a student is being disrespectful because they are angry, acknowledge and validate their anger, whatever the reason, while reminding them that disrespectful behavior is unacceptable in class.
- Encourage students to self-regulate, and support the decisions they make to do so. Example: If a student is frustrated or irritated and says they need to sit out to recollect themselves, acknowledge the maturity of that decision, and continue to check in with them until they are ready to rejoin the class.

Check-out Circle and Closing Ritual:
- Mood gauge between 1-10
- Closing ritual Example from training: one big clap together.

Post-Training Assignment:
For our next training on August 31st, we requested that one of the Pchylolka team members come ready to lead the check-in circle at the beginning of the session. In our next training session we will continue discussing tools for responding to class challenges, and begin a multi-week poetry exercise. Please bring pen and paper, and be in a space where you can remain present with your camera on.
In our fourth session, the Pchylolka team members who are currently teaching shared how their classes are going. We also completed the first part of a multi-week writing and movement activity, the “I Am” Poem Project.

Check-in Circle:
- Mood gage between 1 - 10
- Check-in Question (led by Pchylolka team members Ksusha and Lola)
  Example from training: Give a compliment to another person in the training!

“I Am” Poem Project (part 1 - writing): This writing exercise offers students time for self-reflection through artistic expression, and allows opportunities for self-affirmation, goal setting, and visualization of the future.

Materials needed: Pens/pencils, paper

Instructions: Have students write a poem with three sections - past, present, and future. Each section will consist of 3 to 5 statements using the basic beginning structure of “I am...” The verb can change to better communicate the student’s story, and the tense of the verb will change based on the section of the poem (past, present, or future). Below are examples of how to begin each section, as well as an example of a finished poem.

Example Poem Structure:

PAST (focusing on your story and past experiences - positive or negative)
  I was...
  I thought...
  I dreamt... Etc...

PRESENT (focusing on who you are now)
  I am...
  I love...
  I wish... Etc...

FUTURE (focusing on positive, dreams, and crafting who you want to be)
  I will become ...
  I will have...
  I will feel... Etc...

*reminder, the verbs above are suggestions, and can be changed to suit the writer’s poem.
**Example Poem:**

I grew up in warmth, surrounded by fire and song.
I felt a constant ache in my stomach, reminding me of all I feared.
My voice stayed quiet, unsure.
I was worried.
I dreamed of living in the forest, surrounded by trees and wildflowers.

I assert myself more each day. I doubt myself.
I yearn for what is to come, and drift away from what is happening now.
I am profoundly grateful.
I dream of living in the forest, surrounded by trees and wildflowers.
I am loved.

I will grow stronger, more sure, more me.
I will make clear decisions and trust my intuition.
I will stay hopeful and humble.
I will live in the forest, surrounded by trees and wildflowers.

By Sophia Phillips

The intent of this poem is to allow students to create a self portrait of themselves as a whole person (with the good, the bad, the hard, the easy), while allowing themselves to **focus and dream toward the future**. Instructors will write their own poems with the students. Be sure to allow time for students and instructors to volunteer to share their poems, creating space for **shared vulnerability** and **artist to artist connections**.

**Closing Ritual:**

*Example from training: Everyone says “we’re happy (мы счастливы)” together, and blows a kiss!*

**Post-Training Assignment:**

For our next training on September 14th, we requested that everyone keep their poems, as we will continue sharing them next session and begin the next part of the “I Am” Poem Project process.
Keshet/Pchylolka Training Session 5  
September 14th, 2020

In our fifth training session, we received an update from the Pchylolka team on how their first week of classes went. We continued working on the “I Am” Poem Project, and discussed several tools for creating accessible entry points to choreography, by translating words into movements.

Check-in Circle:
- Mood gauge between 1 - 10
- Check-in Question (led by Pchylolka team member Elmir)
  
  *Example from training: Describe how you are feeling with a shape. Due to technical issues, we weren’t able to hear Elmir, but he improvised and shifted the question so that we used movement to show our shape!*

Pchylolka Team Update:
The Pchylolka specialists shared that the first week of classes went very well! They described the exercises and techniques they used, drawn from this training and their own expertise, to begin building relationships and trust with their students.

Creating Movement from Words: These tools give students concrete ways to translate language into movement, which creates an accessible entry point to choreography.

We have 3 main ways of encouraging students to create movements inspired by words. *(Example word: Dog)*

1. **Literal Representation**: Act out the word (i.e. acting as a dog would move)
2. **Spelling**: Write the word with your body (i.e. using any body parts to draw the word in the air)
3. **Emotional Representation**: Use inspiration from the emotion the word elicits (i.e. if dogs make you happy, move how “happy” feels to you)

After discussing and demonstrating these three tools, you can ask students to suggest different words and then practice the three tools as a group. It is recommended that this be done in a circle.

“I Am” Poem Project (Part 2 - Creating Movement From Words): The second activity related to the “I Am” Poem Project provides students with a new way to **express themselves**, and allows students to **embody** their thoughts, feelings, and goals.

**Materials needed:** “I Am” poem (see Session 4 for details), pen/pencil

**Instructions:** Have students choose 5 words from their “I Am” poem, and then ask them to construct a movement for each word using the 3 tools described above. After each
individual has chosen their poem words and created movement, everyone can share their short movement phrase and share the words they were based on.

**It is useful to go through several practice rounds before having students delve into their poem words to help them build confidence in the tools before using more personal words.

**Closing Ritual:**
Example from training: Everyone says “we’re happy (мы счастливы)” together, and blows a kiss!

**Post Training Assignment**
For our next session on September 28th, 2020, we request that each person add the choreographic elements of time, space, and energy into the movements created in this session from their “I Am” poems. The concepts of time, space, and energy were discussed in detail in Session 3. Due to limited time in this session, we will continue sharing “I Am” poems through email.
I awake in darkness parading as light
Struggled never to tip the scales
I excelled at walking on eggshells as if it were broken glass

I journey away from rigid color lines
Reject invisible borders and rules of black and white
Find reason in the shades of grey and joy in the never ending spectrum of color

I will peel off the mask of falsehood
Look inside, listen and hold authenticity over pretend
Become a mirror, reflecting truth and light

- Lara Segura

I grew up in warmth, surrounded by fire and song.
I felt a constant ache in my stomach, reminding me of all I feared.
My voice stayed quiet, unsure.
I was worried.
I dreamed of living in the forest, surrounded by trees and wildflowers.

I assert myself more each day. I doubt myself.
I yearn for what is to come, and drift away from what is happening now.
I am profoundly grateful.
I dream of living in the forest, surrounded by trees and wildflowers.
I am loved.

I will grow stronger, more sure, more me.
I will make clear decisions and trust my intuition.
I will stay hopeful and humble.
I will live in the forest, surrounded by trees and wildflowers.

- Sophia Phillips
I was naive and trusted too much
I lived spatial insanity
I loved and dreamt too much
I felt I could escape my own demons

I am present, stern, distant yet alarmed
I dream of confusion, future, and peace
I proclaim beliefs, yet ballet from within

I will seek rhythm, challenges, and dreams
I will find my calling
I will seek peace and find my niche

-Ana Lopes Aréchiga

I come from a very different place, whose impact on me I don’t fully understand.
I was always afraid of making mistakes.
I exhausted myself trying the person I thought others expected me to be

I try to be present in space and time.
I look to the natural world for inspiration.
I am learning to flow with change.

I will do my best.
I will listen to myself and others.
I will deepen my connection with the world.

-Sonia Bologa
In our sixth training session we received an update from the Pchylka Team, and discussed what direction we would like to take the training for our remaining weeks. We then continued with the creation of a collaborative piece of choreography to finish the “I Am” Poem Project. Our training sessions have now been moved to Thursdays to better accommodate everyone’s schedules.

Check-in Circle:
- Mood gauge between 1 - 10
- Check-in Question (led by Pchylka team member Ksusha)

  Example from training: If you were a flower, what kind of flower would you be? -- We used images to help learn about more flowers as well!

Update from Pchylka Team and Direction for Remaining Trainings
From the Pchylka Team’s updates it sounds like over all classes are going very well! The team shared specific lessons they have done, and what they have discovered in the process of working with this new population of students. It sounds like the students have begun to open up more over the course of the past few weeks.

There were several specific requests when looking forward to our remaining trainings, which included:

- Focusing on specific activities rather than theory
- Addressing how to modify activities for different ages and abilities
- Giving specific examples of activities to
  - Motivate students
  - Build trust and relationships
  - Help transform the mood and energy of the class when students express “low numbers” during their check-in or seem to be having a hard day. (Sometimes this is a sudden change or pivot from your original lesson plan)
- Continuing to provide tools for how to engage and support students who have experienced trauma

I Am Poem Project (Part 3 - Building Collaborative Choreography): the third part of this project fosters a sense of community, facilitates shared vulnerability, honors the experience and creative voice of each individual, and engages thought toward the future.

Materials Needed: “I Am” Poem and movements (see Session 5 for details), music

Instructions: Give each person a few moments to review the movements they created for the words they selected from their “I Am” poems. Have each person select one of their
movements and teach the group (leave it up to them whether they share the meaning behind it or not). Put everyone’s movements together into a piece of choreography, and play with how different music affects the dance.

** Reminder that all activities can and should be adapted to suit the needs and abilities of your students. For example, this whole project could be simplified from a written poem to single words, images, or drawings for younger or nonverbal individuals. Similarly, if a student is unable to recreate a movement due to lack of mobility or other reasons, allow the student to be creative and find their own way to represent or express the movement to fit their body.

**Post Training Assignment**
In our next session on October 15th, 2020, we will explore specific exercises and tools that address the requests of the Pchyolka team.
In our seventh session we focused on specific tools and exercises to help motivate, uplift, and refocus students. We also proposed a movement exchange between our M3 students and the students taking classes with the Pchylolka specialists.

“What We Have in Common” Ice Breaker Exercise: This exercise helps build group trust and offers opportunities for people to open up in a low-stakes situation by helping people connect and find things they share in common with others in the group. It is also a great way to get to know more about your students!

Instructions: Stand in a circle. One by one, have everyone share a fact about themselves. It can be very personal and vulnerable, or something simple like a favorite color (i.e. I struggle with anxiety, or my favorite color is purple). After they have shared a fact, have the rest of the group respond by taking a step forward if they also share that fact, or take a step back if it does not apply to them. (i.e. I step in because I also struggle with anxiety, I step back because my favorite color is not purple). Have students reset in the circle and then move on to the next person to share a fact about themselves and repeat. **This can also be done “musical chairs” style with chairs or places to stand, so that whoever agrees trades places, and whoever doesn’t find a seat says the next thing.

Use Popular Dances to Elevate Mood: simple, repetitive dances can help bring the group together, lighten the mood, and get students into their bodies.

Experiment with using popular dances to have students warm-up. Using movement that is familiar, simple, and fun is a low-stakes way to help students feel more confident about learning something new. Use something that they might have seen or heard before, even if they may find it silly i.e. “cupid shuffle”, “electric slide”, or the “macarena”.

Use Self-Touch and Breathing Exercises to Refocus and Soothe: self-touch and breathing exercises can help calm and refocus students when they express low energy, or when the class energy seems chaotic. These tools can be used in the classroom, but are also great tools for students to use in their own lives to help them self-regulate and self-soothe. This helps individuals concentrate on the sensory stimulation they are receiving from their self-touch which helps them bring awareness back into the body. **Note: not all students will be comfortable with the same level of touch, so make sure to leave prompts open ended so that students can engage at their own comfort level.

- **Compression** - provide compression to our own body by using your hands to squeeze along your arms, neck, torso, legs, head, etc.. You can start small by simply pressing your hands together as hard as you can, or by squeezing one finger at a time.

- **Self-massage** - massage your neck, feet, hands, legs, shoulders, head, etc.. Make sure you do not create pain, but rather create pressure that feels comfortable and helps to relieve tension.
- **Brushing** - use your hands to brush your limbs, and torso as if you were brushing energy or negativity off.
- **Tapping** - use light quick taps of the fingertips to visit your arms, neck, torso, etc..
- **Breathing Exercises** - there are a lot of ways you can incorporate breathing exercises. Below are several examples, feel free to create your own.
  - Inhale for four counts, hold your breath for four counts, exhale for four counts. Repeat 4 times.
  - As you inhale, contract your muscles, as you exhale, release them (can do this with specific sections of the body and/or with the entire body).
  - Take a big inhale, and as you exhale release your breath with a sound.

**Provide Student Leadership Opportunities:** Allow students to take leadership of classes to help build confidence, affirm student voices and interests, and facilitate group connections.

By building a structure of student leadership into your class you set clear expectations for students to feel comfortable and confident in sharing their interests. One way to do this is to have student leadership opportunities happen on a regular basis, as often as it works within the structure of your meeting times; have the students rotate who is in the leader role. There are many ways in which you can provide student leadership opportunities, here are some examples:

- Have students rotate leading class check-ins
- Have a student lead a fitness class
- Have a student lead a class about something of their choice that they are passionate about, interested in, or curious about (i.e. sports, music, visual art, games, etc.)

**“Remember that even though you are teaching a class in your specialty, your approach must remain flexible and adapt to the students that are present in the room. Frequently this means the focus of the class is less on what you planned to “teach” and more on listening to students and talking with them.”**

**Post Training Assignment - Movement Exchange**

We discussed the option to do a movement exchange between students served in our M3 Program and students in classes with Pchyolka specialists. This exchange would include each group creating movement-phrases in response to the question “What is a dream or goal that you have for your future?”. The Keshet and Pchyolka teams will then teach each other the movement phrase created in class, so they can in turn teach and share the phrase with their own students. This way Keshet’s students will have an opportunity to embody the Pcholyka students movement and vice versa.

In our next session on October 29th we will continue exploring specific activities and tools to help support and empower students.
In our eighth training session we continued to work through specific exercises that focus on student engagement and motivation. We also had a brief update about the movement collaboration and discussed next steps.

**Blind Portraits:** this exercise creates an opportunity for students to connect and have fun with each other while engaging in a *visual art project.*

**Materials Needed:** pens/pencils, paper

**Instructions:** Assign each person someone else in the room to draw. Set a timer for 1 minute, and have everyone draw their assigned person without looking at the paper during the full minute. Not looking at the paper while drawing removes the pressure for the portrait to look like the subject or be “good,” and allows it to be a fun, low-stakes, silly exercise.

**Note:** You can extend this exercise by switching around artists and subjects, changing the amount of time everyone has to draw, or by using the drawings as inspiration for other projects (a dance, a composition, a play, more visual art, etc.)

**Body Orchestra:** this exercise is a great way to engage a group in a silly, embodied, and collective activity that utilizes *non-verbal communication.*

**Instructions:** Designate one individual as the “conductor” (the rest of the group will make up the "orchestra"). Have the conductor create a sound for each person in the orchestra. As each person in the orchestra receives their sound, it is their task to embody it in whatever way they feel is most accurate. Each person continues their movement until the conductor has given a sound to each member of the orchestra to embody.

The conductor can adjust the volume or tone of each sound in order to continue altering the movements of the orchestra.

**Note:** The tasks of the conductor and orchestra can be exchanged, so that the conductor uses movement to make the orchestra create sounds. In this scenario the conductor must use non-verbal communication to alter the sounds that the orchestra makes. Feel free to switch conductors and have different people try this role.

**Mirroring:** this exercise works very well with students of all ages to help build trust through *non-verbal communication.*

**Instructions:** Have students break up into pairs. Have pairs face one another and decide which person will start as the leader. Each leader will then create movement and transition between movements slowly. It is the job of the partner to recreate the movement of the leader as accurately and in real time as possible, as if they were their partner's reflection in a mirror. Partners can explore levels and different body parts, but should remain facing one another to keep the mirror effect.
After a few minutes, have everyone switch who is leading and who is following. You can do a third round where there is no designated leader, and it is up to the pairs to trade back and forth without talking.

**Blind Leading/ “Giving Way”:** this exercise focuses on **building trust** and **teaching and practicing consent** between individuals.

**Instructions:** Split the group into pairs. Have each pair designate a leader and a follower. Ask each pair to discuss how they feel most comfortable being led/leading (i.e. hand in hand, a hand on the shoulder, or a hand on the waist - this could be different for each person). The aim of this exercise is to have the follower close their eyes, while the leader (with eyes open) leads their partner around the space. Once the follower has verbally consented to be led by the leader and the leader has taken responsibility to keep the follower safe, they will start by connecting through their contact of choice (hand, shoulder, waist). This relationship can then evolve into swaying in place (to help perceive weight changes) and eventually into walking through space. This entire exercise requires a lot of trust, so it must be done slowly and while the instructor is alert. Though it is the responsibility of the leader to keep the follower safe, it is the responsibility of the instructor to terminate the exercise if there is anything unsafe happening. Have each pair reverse the roles they were in, having the leader become a follower and vice versa. You can then facilitate a discussion about how each person felt in both roles, which they found more comfortable, etc.

**Note:** Not everyone will feel comfortable with the same level of touch, or with closing their eyes. Remind students that they have the agency to determine what their boundaries are and validate them in these choices. Acknowledge that this process can be difficult, and that trusting relationships will be created over time.

**Additional Information:** Anne Gehman evolved this exercise into a community practice and performance element called “Giving Way”. The included document provided by her serves as additional information about how this concept can be approached and developed when working with professional artists.

**Post Training Assignment - Movement Exchange**
In this session we discussed the movement exchange between Keshet M3 Students and Pchylolka students, and decided to share the choreography created by students through the WhatsApp group.
Giving Way is both a practice and a dance performance. The Giving Way practice is rooted in embodying questions. These questions give-way to some common agreements, which then serve to build a dance collectively.

what if?
what if we could loco-mote through the space side by side? walking, running, curving, pausing, swaying, forwards and backwards?
what if the only place of contact is through our hands?
what if we could feel the ground not only through our own feet but through the way our partner shifts their weight?
what if only one person in the partnership has their eyes open?
what if your heart organ could help you “see” in the dark?
what if your heart organ could sense what’s happening in the room, helping each other to navigate the space?
what if we could dismantle the hierarchy of roles... and both dancers could be leader and follower simultaneously?
what if the eyes closed person could chose to do a solo (free style-dance) at any time?
what if the eyes open person just witnessed and served to protect the solo-ing person’s moment?
what if working with attention, awareness & perception in partnership gives us super-powers?
what if presence is a gift?
how can I give and receive simultaneously to this moment and the next?
how can practicing these things together give us the opportunity to take risks?
push boundaries?
how can I drop agendas with myself and my partner and listen?
listen with my organs, feet, hands, skin, nose, eyes, ears, head, weight, momentum, or with silence?
can we practice noticing “how” we are seeing, not just “what” we see?

Giving Way is an attempt to meet each other in a co-creative dance. As an audience member it would be easy to assume that the dancers in the eyes closed role are following or surrendering to the dancers in the eyes open role. Actually, both people in partnership are leaders and followers simultaneously, because they are working on adaptability and responsive-ness. Rather than creating a hierarchy or rule, the dancers are working together to deepen their experience of what is possible. The score of the dance is created in a way where the dancers change partners and sometimes go the whole dance not knowing who they were dancing with. It takes courage to listen that deeply to yourself and to the space. It takes time and practice to build that kind of trust. In this dance, trust-making happens as the dancers begin to trust their own bodies and their own processes of listening. The collective agreements and questions help to build community, presence and belonging.
In our ninth session we further developed the concepts behind “follow the leader” to continue building trust, group awareness, and student leadership through non verbal communication. We also discussed the importance of self-care as an important component when working with students that have experienced trauma.

Check-In Circle
- Mood gauge between 1 - 10

Follow the Leader: Follow the leader is a fun and simple exercise that works great for all ages and abilities to help build trust, encourage individual expression, and facilitate student leadership.
In instructions: Have someone volunteer to start off as leader. The leader chose any movement they want as long as it is at a speed that the rest of the group can follow. The leader can move in place or around the room. The rest of the group will do their best to copy the movements of the leader. Periodically change who the leader is until everyone has had a chance to experience the role of the leader.

Flocking: this is a continuation on “Follow the Leader”, which helps to further develop group awareness, student leadership, and non verbal communication.
In instructions: Have students begin standing in a clump. This is a continuation of “follow the leader”, and the idea of this exercise is for participants to transition seamlessly and wordlessly between leaders, and have the group move as one unit. There will be times when multiple movements are happening -- that is wonderful and a part of this process. The group will naturally and organically shift to move together, as a flock of birds does while flying (hence the name “flocking”). You can use music during this exercise. Music is not the important part here, but can help students focus on the task at hand.

Positive and Negative Space: This basic dance concept works great for all ages and abilities to help build trust and encourage individuals to explore movement in a low stakes environment. It is also a great group exercise to bond and have everyone participate.
In the context of this exercise, positive space refers to space occupied by a body or object (ie the body or object itself), while negative space refers to the unoccupied space around a body or object.
In instructions: Have students split into pairs or small groups. Ask one individual to choose a pose and hold it, and then instruct the others in the group or pair to find a pose that either engages with the negative (something around the person’s body), or positive space (something coming into contact with the person’s body) that is created by their pose.
**Note: This exercise can be an introduction to finding comfort in touch, given that negative space allows for the exploration of proximity without touch. It also allows students to engage with proximity and touch according to their individual comfort level.
Self-Care: When working with and caring for individuals that have experienced trauma, it is important to also find time and space to care for yourself, as we can take on “secondary trauma”. It is easy to get caught up with wanting to do work that is meaningful and impacts students positively that we forget to be gentle with ourselves. Create habits and routines that allow you to unwind and process material that happens during class. This can be talking to fellow instructors, or finding time to journal, or to do something that brings you peace and restores your energy. Working with students who have experienced trauma can be extremely draining - remember that if you don’t take care of yourself you can’t take care of others.

Reminders About Trust: Trust is a process that builds very slowly. Though we want to remind students that we are there to support them, it is also up to them to engage in the relationship. Try not to push students, or set expectations that make them feel uncomfortable. Remember that sometimes there may be another teacher or individual in the group that your student connects with more easily and is more willing to have difficult conversations with. Support them in building those relationships, and don’t take it personally if you are not who they naturally go to. Not all students will connect with you, that’s okay. You can still remind them you are there for them and support them. “Move at the speed of trust”, be gentle with yourself and your students.

Post Training Notes
We have one last training in this series. However, we would like to continue meeting once a month until the final event in March to continue talking and working through any situations that may come up over time. We will send out a potential calendar to find times that will work to have these meetings.
In our tenth training session we explored the relationship between visual art and movement. We also discussed strategies for effectively teaching via Zoom, adapting classes and potentially the final event to be effective in a virtual platform.

Check-In Circle
- Mood gauge between 1 - 10
- Check-in question: *What is something kind you have done for yourself recently? (Self-care)*

Visual Art and Movement: *This exercise can be used to expand and explore the connections between different art forms. Feel free to adapt this exercise to your population.*

Instructions: Explore having people draw something and then having someone else represent their drawing via movement. In our training we did this by having everyone draw an object or something abstract, without allowing others to see what they drew. Then have everyone pair up and show their drawings to one another. Have each individual use movement to recreate what they saw in their partner’s drawing.

**Note:** Feel free to rotate the students or have them explore specific objects, or abstract concepts. It is less about guessing and replicating via movement what other people drew, but more about establishing and exploring connections between something 2D and a 3D body.

Puppet Master: *This exercise allows for students to build trust and explore movement on another body in a low stakes environment without needing to engage in touch.*

Instructions: Have students work in pairs. Each pair decides who is the puppet and who is the puppetmaster. The puppetmaster then pulls on the puppet's imaginary “strings” to initiate movement from a body part of their choice. For example, the puppetmaster pulls on a “string” attached to an elbow, which makes the puppet elevate their arm (the puppet can choose the exact way). Remind students that this exercise facilitates movements nonverbally, so the puppetmaster cannot use their voice to move the puppet, only the imaginary strings. You can continue to explore this concept and have the puppetmaster work on more than one puppet, having them leave a puppet as a statue that the puppetmaster built, while working with a different puppet.

Strategies for Teaching via Zoom: *Teaching online presents new challenges, especially when it comes to communicating, building strong individual relationships, and effective classroom management. Below are some strategies to help.*

- Use gestures to communicate: since technology makes continuous verbal communication more difficult, consider establishing gestures to communicate with your class. For example, a physical gesture to get everyone’s attention.
• **Rotate groups of students in front of the camera so they have one on one time with the teachers:** because you don’t have the ability to move around the room and check in with individual students, consider splitting students into small groups to work on material, and then have each group come close to the camera for several minutes at a time to allow an opportunity for one on one interaction.

• **Create low stake situations where everyone shares:** certain people feel more comfortable sharing in front of a group than others, and trust takes even longer to build through a virtual platform. Providing consistent opportunities for everyone to share without feeling pressured will help build trust and allow for everyone’s voice to be heard.

• **Keep communication open and clear:** even more than usual you will need to be flexible and responsive to what the students need and ask for, as technology will present new and different challenges. In addition to clear communication with your students, it is important to establish relationships and dialogue with the adults in the room with your students, so you can be on the same page regarding classroom management.

• **Examine and adjust the expectations you have for yourself and your students:** teaching online simply isn’t the same as being in person. Allow yourself to be flexible in your expectations, and keep checking in about what it is you really want to accomplish (ex. connecting with the students and bringing joy, rather than producing a specific product). Explore how you can be creative and let go of preconceived plans.

• **Be gracious with yourself, your students, and technology:** keep doing your best, and know that that is enough. Allow yourself to be open and build genuine, honest relationships with your students.

**Post Training Notes**

This was our last official training session. However, we will continue to do monthly check-ins to continue conversations about how the program develops. Additionally, we are including a summary of some of the activities we have done over the last few weeks as a “Toolkit”. Please see below. We also recommend that you continue to explore the concepts and ideas behind the exercises we explored in our training and you let them become your own. Feel free to adapt, and allow your students to propose new ideas.
Below is a compilation of the exercises we explored throughout our 10 training sessions. Many of these exercises build over time, and can become a consistent part of class. Allow your students to get acquainted with them, and don’t hesitate to adapt them to suit your students and areas of expertise. You can approach all of these exercises from the standpoint of Healing Centered Engagement by focusing on positive reinforcement, trust building, highlighting student strengths, and helping them to build a vision for their future.

Build your own rituals/signs to communicate with your students. Nonverbal communication cues can be an important part of trust building. Recognize that each group is different, and establish class norms that work best for each individual group you have. For example, you can have phrases, rhythms, or songs that you repeat and they complete. You can build buddy groups that help students support one another. Build on the group dynamic to strengthen their trust and develop their work.

Remember that all exercises and concepts should be continuously adapted to best suit your students.

**Mood changing/Refocusing Exercises (should be done in a circle)**
- Self-massage/Compression/Brushing (see session 7)
- Breathing Exercises (see session 7)
- Popular Line Dances (see session 7)
- Body Orchestra (see session 8)
- Blind Portraits (see session 8)

**Trust Building Exercises**
- Name Gestures (see session 1)
- Check-ins/Check-out (see session 1, used in all sessions)
- Creating and Revisiting Community Agreements (see session 1)
- What We Have in Common Ice-Breaker (see session 7)
- Mirroring (see session 8)
- Blind leading (“Giving Way”) (see session 8)
- Negative Space/Positive Space (see session 9)
- Weight Sharing: *this is an advanced contemporary dance concept. However, it can be explored in a basic way, just as “blind leading”. Doing so can complement the building of trust, and help individuals with touch as well. Explore how through basic points of contact such as hands individuals can create oppositional forces that balance each other. For example, as both individuals lead on pull away while touching or holding hands, highlighting how the energy of both is needed to achieve balance.*
Simple Adaptations for All Ages and Abilities

- Pathway Map (see session 3)
- Collaborative Choreography (see session 6 and 7)
- Mirroring (see session 8)
- Follow the Leader (see session 9)
- Flocking (see session 9)
- Puppet Master (see session 10)
- Draw visual art and then create choreography based on that (see session 10)
- Move Like Animals: *you can add time space and energy to make it a more complex activity*
- Simple Improvisational Cues: *for example move like... imagery (you can add time space and energy)*
- Use Inclusive Language: Offer opportunities to interpret instructions with their own bodies/abilities. Think about an equivalent movement or intention for each person, for example what is their “standing level”
- Red Light, Green Light (you can add intention or time and energy): *Imagine the concept of street lights, red= stop, green=go yellow=slow down, to have students move across the room and explore movement.*
- Freeze Dance (options to add props or other objects): *Have students move freely with music on, they have to freeze when the music stops.*
- Moving on the Grid -- *Have students walk around the room, they are only allowed to make sharp 90° or 180° turns. Once they have explored this after some time, start to slowly add different prompts and layers, new “rules” they can use for when they come across a situation (i.e. if you come into close contact with another individual, you must fall to the floor before standing up to walk again). Use different prompts that explore time, space, and energy.*
- Play with different genres of music see *how their movement changes in the elements of time, space and energy.*

**Student Led Activities**

- I Am Poem (see session 4, 5, and 6)
- Student Teaching opportunities (see session 7)
- Warming up/cooling down by each student leading an exercise (see session 7)
- Improvisation/Freestyle after a choreographic phrase: *allow students to explore their own movement after a set phrase of choreography.*