

manual for advanced n o t i c i n g



DANCE 98T: PERCEPTION, ATTENTION, AND ACTION IN POSTMODERN DANCE

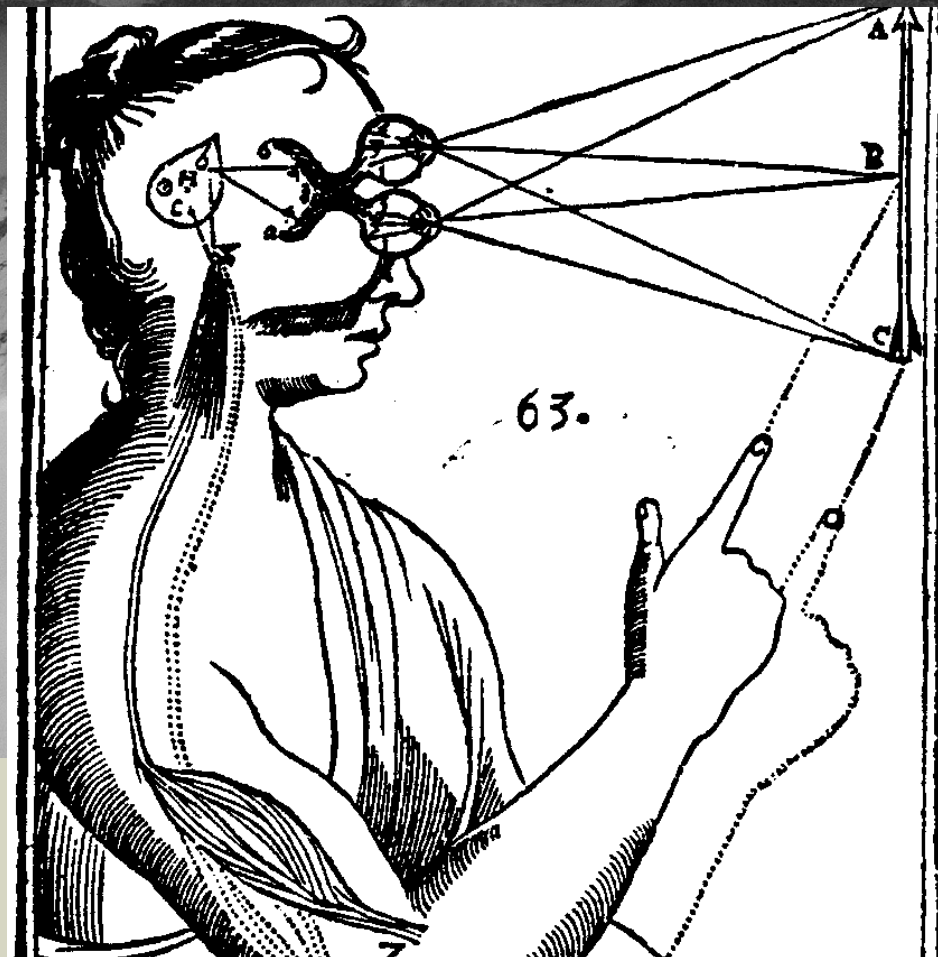


perception as a skillful practice

How do our perceptual abilities and habits affect the ways we move?

How do our specific ways of moving determine what we can perceive?

Can we use dance improvisation as a method for researching these connections?



SOME DEFINITIONS BORROWED FROM JJ GIBSON:

- Perception is the process of obtaining stimulus (actively or passively)
- Perception is a skillful activity of measuring time, space, and change
- Perception is a series of coordinated activities that include the body's capacity to move its sensory organs and to move in its environment
- Movement is crucial to perception! We move to learn about our environments; we track movement; we respond to what we perceive through movement.

attention & choreography



A dance score is a set of directives for movement or attention...or both.

- What and how is the score asking me to perceive?
- How is it asking me to organize my body in relationship to what I perceive?
- What actions and experiences become possible as a result of this perceptual practice?



orientations

Orientations involve different ways of registering the proximity of objects and others.

Orientations shape not only how we inhabit space, but how we apprehend this world of shared inhabitation, as well as “who” or “what” we direct our energy toward.

(Sara Ahmed)

ORIENTATION PRACTICE

ANNIE KAHANE



Let's do an experiment



Check your space for hazards



Close your eyes and turn in a circle 3 times, now turn in a circle the other way



Now – keeping your eyes closed, find the door to your space





techniques

Techniques are specific ways of doing things learned over time and through practice.

(adapted from Marcel Mauss)

"TECHNIQUES OF ATTENTION"

- How did you learn to “do” attention?
- Who taught you?
- What (or who) does it orient you toward?
- What factors determine whether something is in the foreground or the background of your attention?
- What does this technique allow you to do in the world?
- What does it prevent you from doing or experiencing?
- After describing in narrative form, write out your habits of attention as a “score”



space

How does environment inform perception?

How might dancing shift our sense of what it means to be in a place?

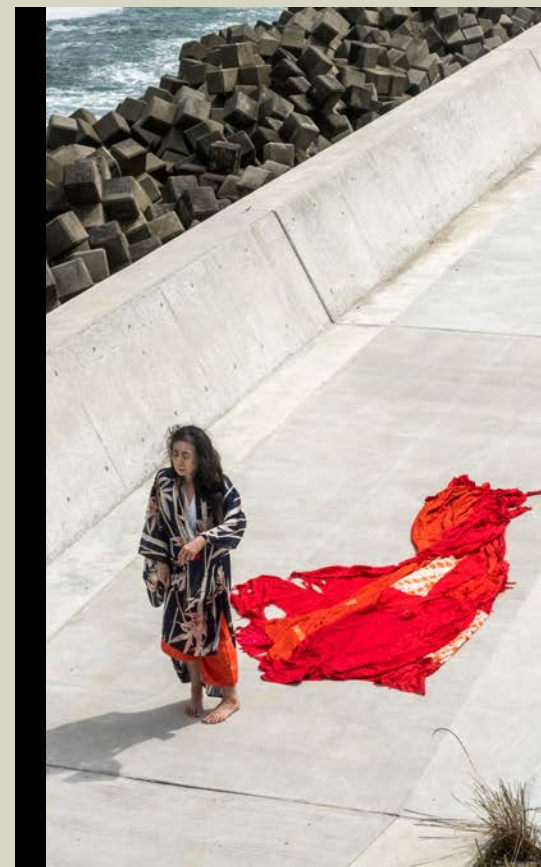
Can dance offer a different way of understanding where we are?

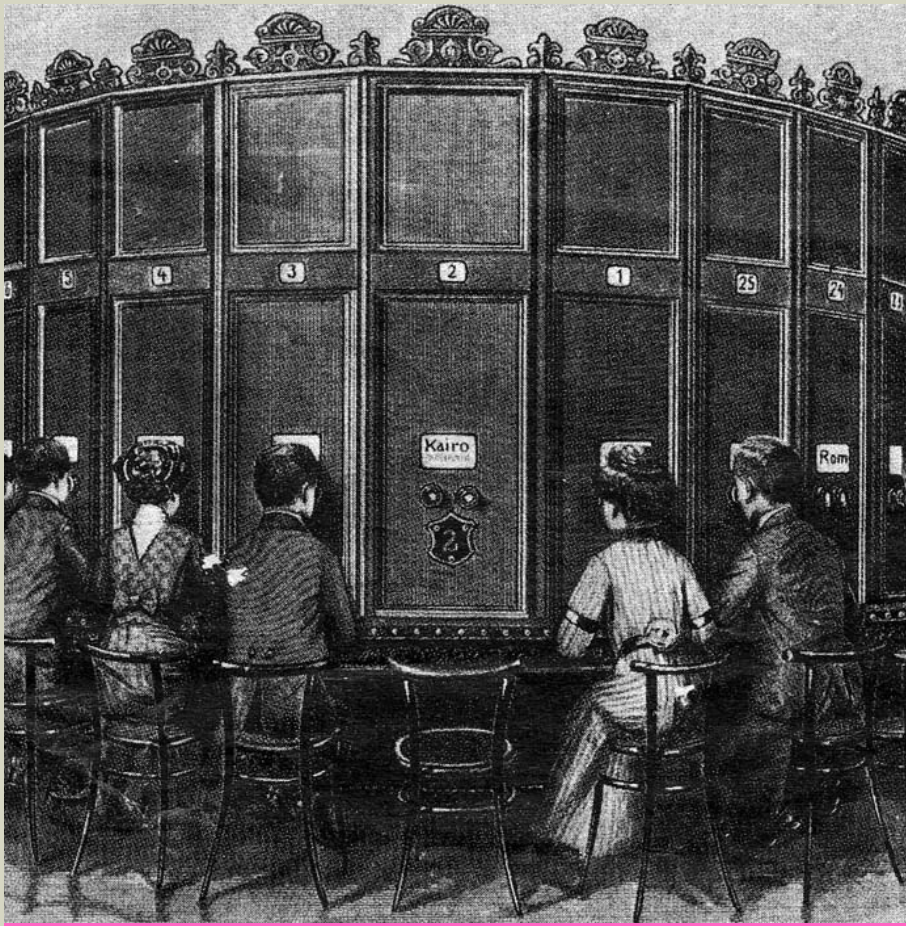


SPACE PRACTICE

ANA NGUYEN, MOLLY ERWIN, GIFT RILEY-NORMAN

Make yourself as small as possible, and then think about a place that holds a lot of significance to you. This can be a good or bad place, whatever you are comfortable with exploring. Think of one aspect of the place, maybe a swing, a body of water, a pothole, and try to embody it. What do you see from the point of view of this aspect? What do you sense? When you are done exploring, come back to yourself standing and looking at that aspect.





time

How does our movement shape our sense of time (and vice versa)?

How have our perceptual habits (attention-spans, perceptual priorities, ways of using individual senses) changed over time?

TIME/HISTORY PRACTICE

SARAH BORTON AND SOFIA ODESTE

You can be sitting for this score, or moving, whatever floats your boat. Take a look around your room. As you do this, allow your attention to settle wherever it wants. Are you looking out the window, at your phone, feeling your clothes? Whatever feels right.

Narrow your focus to one thing. Whether that be the smell of the room, the feeling in your scalp as your hair is pulled back. As long as it's one thing at a time.

Now, activate every one of your senses at once. Divide your attention to what you are touching, seeing, tasting. Are you actively listening and smelling? Don't let a single thing go unnoticed.

images: Kaiserpanorama, and "Bwana Devil", Eyerman, *TIME* magazine 1952





nothing

What types of experience become available when we stop "doing"?

Is nothing something we can perceive? How can we use movement to reflect on absence?

How might paying attention to "nothing" shift our experience out of its habitual modes?

NOTHING PRACTICE

COURTNEY PARK, NATALIE GARAY, RACHAEL ODEBUNMI

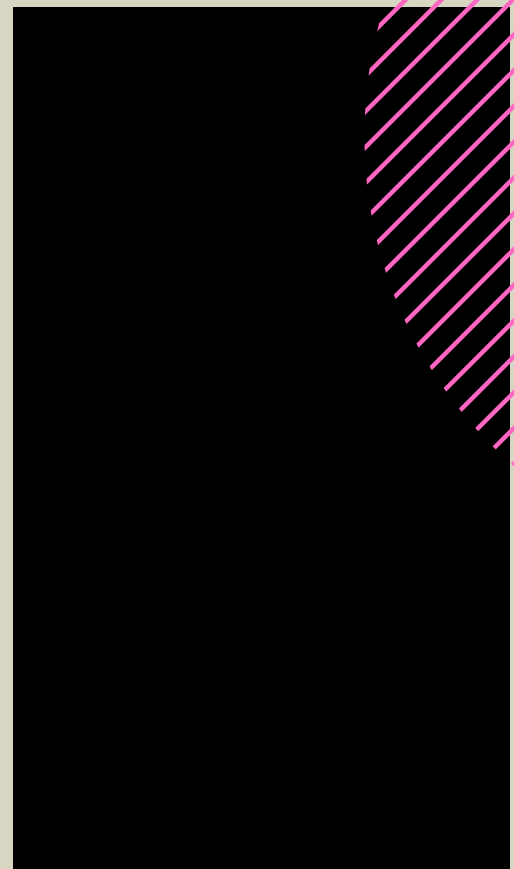
Take four minutes to turn off your Zoom camera and do nothing.

After experiencing nothing within your individual body, begin to reflect on your experience. You may write it down or just think about what occurred during that time.

Some things to notice may be: How were you breathing? Where was your focus? Where were your thoughts traveling to? Any memories, epiphanies, worries? What emotions arose?

What sensations did you notice? What did you hear, feel, smell, taste? Were you having any trouble or difficulties doing nothing?

images: Shutterstock, Mark Garlick, Getty Images





dis-orientation

Falling off center, flailing arms, spiraling spine, loose neck and head, threatened consciousness, inviting danger, sadness, poetry, and failure. In this disoriented state, I entered into the embodied experience of partially disembodied dancing: dancing that disrupts, misbehaves, and moves out of the line and form of Euro- American modern dance, tells stories, honors ancestors, asks questions, breaks rules, and improvises while black.

(mayfield brooks)

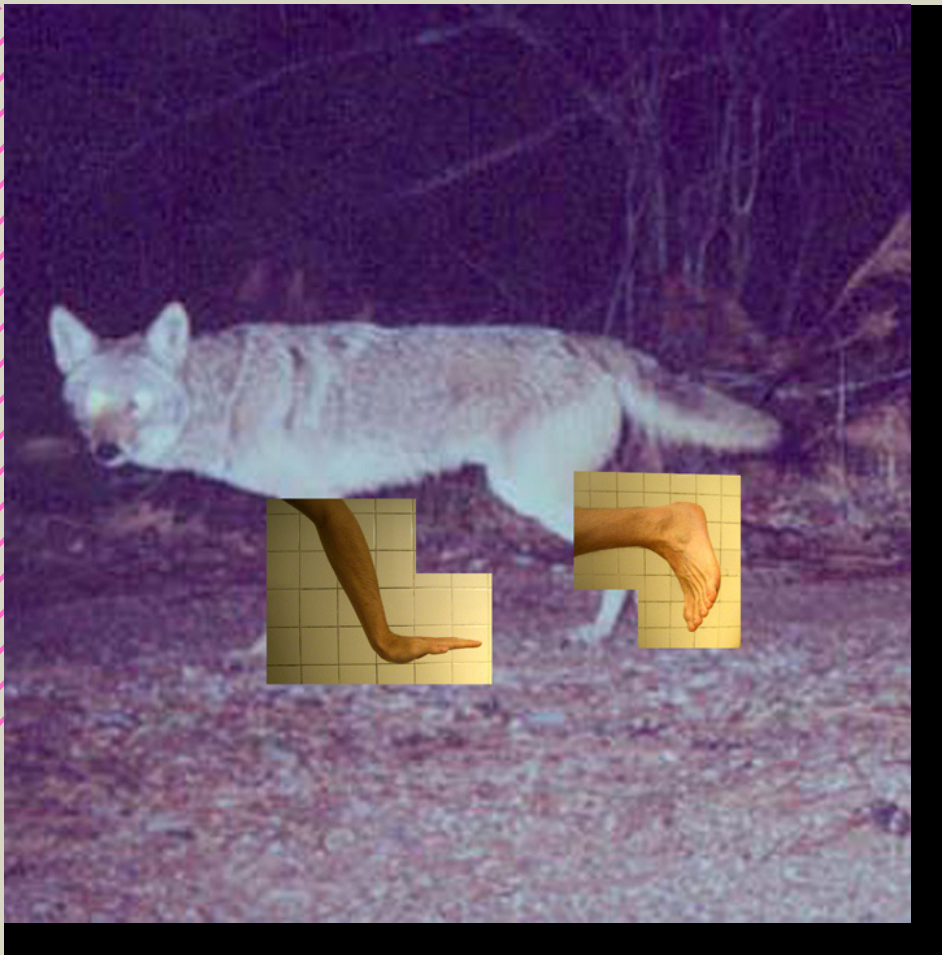
DISORIENTATION SCORE



ecologies

How can we use improvisation as a practice of relating the more-than-human?

What types of creative connections are possible between species?



PRACTICE FOR OBSERVING THE MORE-THAN-HUMAN

ZENA BIBLER

Take a walk outside. Notice the impact of your travel.

(Are you leaving a mark?)

How has the environment been modified to accommodate your presence?)

Set an intention to become receptive to an incoming message from a different species *(remembering that the concepts of "species" and "difference" are both human inventions)*

Find a place that you like and prepare to stay still for 12 minutes.

Focus your attention on who else is there in the place with you.

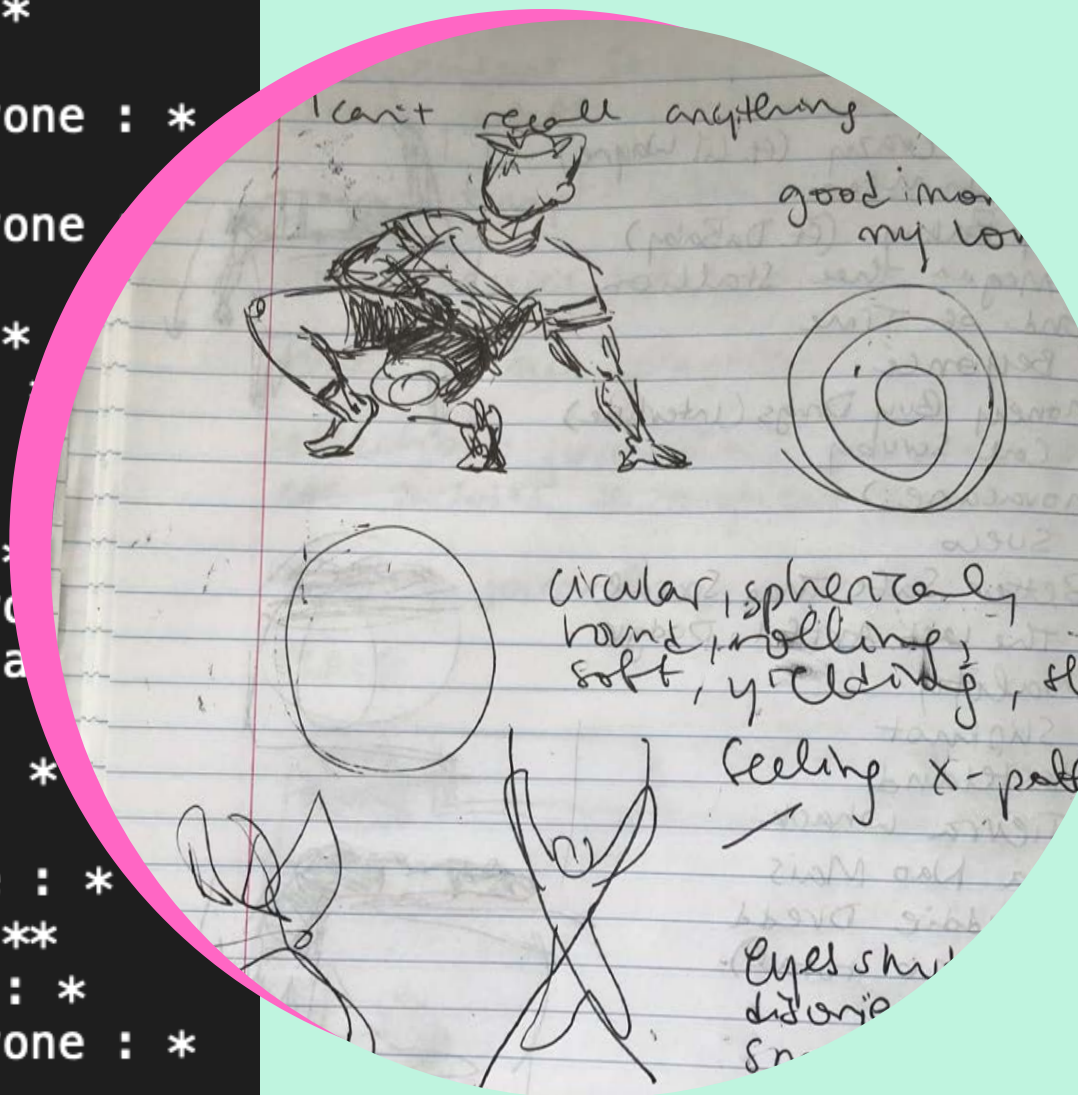
Focus on one particular being to observe. (remembering again that "individuality" is also a human construct)

- What are they doing?
- How are they perceiving? How do their sensory organs work?
- How are they moving?
- How are they relating to the ground? To space?
- What are they moving towards? Moving to avoid?
- How does observing this being (in their process of being) change your being?

Jot down some notes/diagrams/impressions. Distill these notes into a simple score that will enable you to move according to this other being's priorities.

images: iLANDing Laboratories (Coyote Walk and Dead Horse Bay)

score-making as research method



The Forgotten Portal

This score is to be performed three times in one day. Try to do it in the morning, the afternoon, and the evening.

Go to your front door and prop it open if possible. Stand in the middle of the doorway and allow yourself to become acclimated with the audience you are presented with. Whether that be bypassers on the street, your roommates looking at you, a confused pet, or the curious gaze of your parents.

Observe the door frame, how does it present itself to you? Is it wooden? Are there baseboards from the inside? How does it feel to touch?

If your doorway leads to the outside, do you feel the temperature against your body? Allow the warmth, cold, or rain to create movement in your body.

Allow your mind to wander back to the past year. What informed your decision to pass through this

doorway?

Were you ever leaving in a hurry? Did you run through this space in tears? With a smile? Take the time to explore your interactions with this space.

Walk into one of the spaces the doorway offers. What memories are conjured from this area? Does a strong memory present itself? Or has this space gone overlooked? Are you looking into a hallway that directs your gaze? Are you moving to the rhythm of a peaceful living area? Take a moment to conjure your past in this space.

Pass through the doorway into the other area. How does this space inform your movement? Does it carry a different tone?

Does the transition make you forget your previous movement quality? How does a few feet of distance change your movement? Allow yourself to travel through the doorway freely and note the different sensations that are presented to you.

Depending on the time of day, is there a shadow cast upon the floor? (Granted the sun casts upon you). Dance with the shadow and create a duet with your past self. If no shadow is available, create a duet with your future self. Are you creating memories that will later inform your interactions in this space?

When you feel ready, conclude your movement in appreciation for the space you have explored.

**Sarah
Borton**

Cross Stopping Score



Cross Stopping Score

Take your body into the public eye.

Start by warming yourself up to the street, recognizing who lives there and how they interact with the world, or the world interacts with them.

Find a crosswalk

Maybe this is a place you cross often or one you have never seen, take that into account.

Notice where the signal is to watch and sit down on sidewalk if you feel safe from cars.

Even when people move, you sit

Do not feign ignorance or close your eyes or get on your phone

Sit

Let 2 cycles of "walk" pass and then walk when you see someone who makes you want to follow

Try twice more at different cross walks,

The second time dance across the street when you get up

The third time, look for beams of love

If you receive recognition or acknowledgement, return the favor.



**Molly
Erwin**

Three Ways to Perceive Wind

Three Ways to Perceive Wind

(Find an open place outside where wind is available)

Blurring the line between your surroundings and yourself

- Observing Section:** Can you observe to acknowledge wind's effects on your surroundings?
Find a comfortable position where you can observe the wind.
For this section only, take 5 minutes to observe the wind in your space.
After these 5 minutes are up, take 5 more minutes to create a map of what you observed.
 - You may note wind intensities, things that you see being affected by the wind, etc.
 - You may also use different colors or patterns to represent what you see, etc.After you have concluded observing and creating your map, identify three things that were affected by the wind.
Label these three things as 'Observation 1', 'Observation 2', and 'Observation 3' (not in any specific rank).
Through movement, begin embodying 'Observation 1' for 2 minutes.
 - Did it have a specific texture/weight, a specific type of movement pathway/ style, was it constantly moving?After the 2 minutes are done, use these same questions to embody 'Observation 2' for 2 minutes.
Once you have finished embodying 'Observation 2', embody 'Observation 3' for 2 minutes (using the same guiding questions).
When you have finished the movement for 'Observation 3', the Observing section has concluded.
- Listening Section:** Can you hear the nature around you through listening to the wind?
Find an open space.
During this portion you will be walking.
Listen to the sounds of the wind/ things being moved by the wind.
Once you identify one distinct sound, move towards it until it is as loud as you think it will get. You can also think about getting as close to the sound as possible.
 - Do you have to get lower or higher to discover the sound at its loudest? Do you have to move backwards or with your head at a certain angle?Continue moving towards the sound until another wind sound overpowers it, then follow that sound.
- Feeling Section:** Can you find direct contact with your surroundings/nature through the wind?
Focus on how the wind touches your hair and skin (the parts of your body you can feel directly getting moved/touched by the wind).
The wind is pulling you from these parts of your body, follow it with your movement for 5 minutes.
 - Can you match the intensity of your movement to the wind's? Think of the wind as "air in motion." Can you be moved by the air's motion?

Conflict in Intimate Relationships



Conflict in Intimate Relationships

There are many different dynamics that encapsulate conflict in intimate relationships. Social learning theory shows that behaviors of a partner as a response or initiator are dependent upon the behaviors of the partner, both influence each other. The most simplistic form of dynamics within the realm of conflict entails a passive and active partner as an initiator or responder. Various types of moods and emotions can create subtext for the type of interaction couples exchange.

Score

Your Dynamic

Flip a coin. This will be your position as a partner

Heads- passive
Tails - active



Your Position

Random number generator 1-10

even - initiator
Odd- responder



Explore movement in these combinations. During or after. Reflect on these questions

1. What are the feelings that may arise or come with this specific aspect of a couple dynamic?
2. What types of movement did you use to express your specific dynamic? What did you notice about these movements and your ideas of aggressiveness and passivity?

Write down anything that arose for you.



Sub Score

Do this with a partner. You can either chose to repeat your previous combination or choose another.

What changes when physically interacting with another person? What do you notice about your partner's movement? Does it share similarities with your own? Is it different than your own

Heaven Lee
Holloway

A Score on Orientation



Go to a public place, where people often walk or run or bike

Choose a place with a defined starting point and stopping point -- like a trail with an endpoint, or a loop

Find yourself at the starting point and begin walking backwards slowly

Notice how it feels to move through space leading with your back

Turn your head to look where you are going if you need to

At any point during the score you can sit down to rest, but sit down in a place that doesn't make sense for sitting. Be in the way somehow or engage with the space "abnormally" -- for example, squat in the middle of the path or sit backwards on a bench

If you make eye contact with someone pause then take ten steps forward, before resuming your backwards walk

If someone speaks to you, turn around and walk facing forward, in the same direction they are walking, until the conversation is finished. Then resume walking backwards. If no one speaks to you, feel free to initiate a conversation and continue conversing until you've had enough

If something startles you, stop and look at the sky for five cycles of breath

If you hear the words yes or no in scraps of conversation, stop walking and create ten circles without moving your feet, then resume walking backwards

If you see a red shirt run forward while counting to ten out loud

If you forget these instructions, remake your own in real time.

The score is complete when you have completed the path, the loop, the trail

a score on orientation

Annie
Kahane

A Dance in Detaching from Upright Habits

SCORE: A DANCE IN DETACHING FROM UPRIGHT HABITS

MAKE A PLAYLIST AROUND 30 MINUTES TOTAL (ABOUT 9 SONGS). CHOOSE SONGS THAT YOU FEEL STRONGLY PULLED INTO OR SONGS THAT MAKE YOU DIZZY.



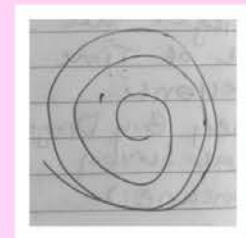
SPEND THE FIRST SONG OR TWO TIPPED FORWARD. EITHER LAY FACE DOWN OR STAND AND HANG YOUR TORSO OVER YOUR LEGS; THE HEAD SHOULD BE EQUAL TO OR BELOW THE PELVIS. FEEL GRAVITY STRONGLY.



WHEN THIS FEELING SOLIDIFIES, BEGIN TO MOVE. HOW CAN YOU MAINTAIN YOUR DISORIENTATION?

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- KEEP YOUR WEIGHT IN HANDS OR BALANCED BETWEEN HANDS AND FEET
- KEEP YOUR EYES SHUT
- RETURN TO A TIPPED POSITION
- SPIRAL, ROLL, YIELD, X-PATHWAY, MULTIDIMENSIONAL
- CHOOSE A DIFFERENT PATH



WHEN YOU ARE SATISFIED, REST HORIZONTALLY ON YOUR BACK, HEAD AND PELVIS LEVEL ON THE BED OR FLOOR.



UNDERSCORE: REST, STRETCH, RETURN, DRAW, WRITE, GET BORED, GET INTERESTED AGAIN.

Roni
Nelson

Cleansing Score

Turn on your shower.
Get your hair wet.
Shampoo, condition, and
wash your body.
Only focus on getting clean.
Don't let your mind wander.
Be present in the task.

If your mind does start to wander,
verbally remind yourself of the task.

Anabela Nguyen



Ana
Nguyen

Slowing Down Time With Discomfort and Music Score

Play your favorite song

Stand still and listen

Try to notice something new in the song

If there are lyrics, notice how the singer pronounces the letter S

Identify the rhythm of the song

Attempt to compare it to the rhythm of your heartbeat

Move your body as slowly as possible

Move your body as quickly as possible

Stand still and move your face in opposition to the music (whatever that means to you)

Continue moving your face in opposition, but let the music move your body

Move your body freely but do not emphasize any sounds you hear in the music

Let go of all parameters and move instinctively to the music

Now resist this and consciously do the opposite of every instinct you have

Reminder: Perfection is not the goal, but stay present the whole time

**Rachael
Odebunmi**

Memory Paint

MEMORY PAINT

By Sofia Odeste

Read through the score twice before you begin to perform it. Since the score is in sections, feel free to reread a section before you perform it.

Move your body through your home, investigating different spaces, until you feel a **shift in emotion**. Do you feel **nervous**? **Amused**? **Scared**? **Comfortable**? Be sure to **look at all sorts of spaces**, being sure to not neglect the transitional places or the nooks and crannies of your home. **Pause** where you feel the most emotion. With either words or drawings, use **two minutes** to take note of your **current associations** with the space: what feelings arise, or if they are particularly strong, any memories that come to mind.



Next, return to the space at a time when you're **not normally there**. If it's usually a busy place, go when there's no one around, or vice versa. Maybe you've only been in this space during daytime; go at midnight. **Reread the reflection** you wrote when you selected your location. Set a timer for **five minutes**, and **meditate** on when you've been here **before**. What were you doing? How did you feel at the time?

Now, make your way through the space like you're caught in maple syrup. **Carefully inch** your way through it, using your movements as a method of investigation. Notice how **each movement** changes your perspective and relation to the space; what **new facets** are brought to your attention with each shift? Move with the goal of **gaining new perception**, trying to experience the space in new ways. **Allow your mind to adjust** to these new perceptions, and note what **thoughts** are brought to the surface. Take **at least five minutes** to cross the area, but depending on size a bigger space may require more time. Use as much as necessary.

OPTIONAL: There may be people and objects in the space; since these are often central to how the space takes on meaning, I encourage you to interact with them at your discretion. For example, move the objects around and see new parts of the space, or speak to the people you encounter.

Finally, **write for five minutes** in response to the following questions:

- What **emotions** did you feel during the practice? Were they related to your **previous reflection** at all, and if so, how?
- What **thoughts** came into your mind as you investigated the space?

If you **interacted** with any objects/people in the room, how did it affect your movement?

OPTIONAL: Repeat the practice in the same space but with new contexts, such as varying the time or the amount of people around.

Sofia
Odeste

Systems in Sound

Begin by joining the class for a zoom meeting. If this score is being done outside of a class, have at least 3 other people, who would like to practice this experience, join you in a zoom meeting.

Change your zoom settings to “hide all non-video participants”

Have each person decide whether they would like to start the exercise in the role of the *dancer* or as the *soundmaker*.

Whoever is the role of the *dancer* will turn their cameras on and create movement on the zoom screen.

Whoever is the *soundmaker* will keep their cameras off. They will keep their microphones unmuted, so that the dancers and other soundmakers are able to hear their audio choices.

All individuals have the option to switch roles as many times as they would like too. They also have the choice of when they would like to switch as well.

When you are the dancer, you can create whatever movement comes to mind. Although the soundmakers are creating a source of information for you, you also have the ability to disregard the sounds you are hearing. Maybe you are finding a different source of sound in your own personal space that is inspiring you. Maybe the chaos of multiple sounds is inspiring something different. Maybe you are trying to find moments of silence.

When you are the soundmaker, you are creating audible information for the dancers and other soundmakers. Are they sounds you are creating purposefully? Are these sounds vocalized or are they requiring you to create movement too? Are they sounds that are occurring naturally in your space? Are you being influenced by the sounds you are hearing? Are you choosing silence?

Begin practicing the score together, and continue working for 10 minutes.

During this time, think about your movement’s relationship to the sounds you are hearing. Are you able to isolate your sense of sound, or is it continuing to work together as a perceptual system with your other senses? How is it shifting your movement? During which times do you feel most stuck as the dancer and as the soundmaker?

Once the score is complete, discuss with the group what you discovered together.

If possible, try the score again with a new group of people and recognize the changes and differences that occurred.

Active Lounging



1. Go to *your spot* (the place you most often go to lay down and relax).
2. Sit or lie down in *your spot* and start to get comfortable. Move freely and position yourself however feels best.
3. Direct your attention to the sounds around you. If you hear an interesting sound, remain in *your spot* while you move your body so that you can hear it better (e.g. turning your head or body, sitting up, being still to make less sound).
4. If you have an itch, scratch it.
5. If you feel unclean, rub or wipe yourself off.
6. If you're not comfortable, change position.
7. If someone is watching you, watch them back.
8. If you feel unsure, look to some(thing/one) in the room that you trust the most.
9. When you are comfortable and the sounds aren't interesting anymore, rest your head and feel free to close your eyes and sleep.
10. When you leave *your spot* make sure to have a good stretch.

**Gift
Riley-
Norman**

Dance Like Everybody's Watching and You Don't Care

Set up a camera that can stream video to the internet with a view of an area where you can dance.

Start streaming video in such a way that people could watch you (e.g. Instagram/TikTok live, Omegle, Zoom, Discord, Google Hangouts, Skype...).

Obscure your identity in some way so that it is more difficult for the people that could be watching to identify you (e.g. obscure part or all of your camera, move entirely or partially out of frame, wear a disguise), so that you feel you are hard to surveil.

Try and dance like nobody is watching.

If you are struggling, dance like everybody is watching until you're too tired to care if people are watching.

Have fun.

**Gift
Riley-
Norman**

Achieving Nothing with Something But Getting Nothing Out of It

Begin non stop moving (2 minutes)

(during non stop dancing...)

- Create pauses in between, Do these pauses affect your breath?, What are you thinking about?
- Feel your feet connected to the ground

Begin active listening (2 minutes)

(during active listening...)

- Close your eyes and rotate the head slowly in different directions
- Find one sound you hear and focus on listening to it, Can you focus on one noise at a time? Is your body still or moving?

Begin “Floating”

(during “floating”...)

- Can you separate the mind from the body?, Check in with yourself and ask what are you doing?,

SHARED HISTORIES SCORE: PART 1

BY: JESSICA WARSHAL

-Choose one location that is filled with many memories for you.

-Enter the space and set a timer for 13 minutes.

-Use your different perceptual systems to explore the space through sensory exploration (ex: the basic orienting system, the auditory system, the haptic system, the visual system and the taste-smell system)

-Try to start by focusing on one system, and explore until you feel your exploration for the system is complete before moving on to the next one

-Play with attempting to hinder or limit certain systems to heighten other systems

-Through this sensory exploration, use your senses to remember various memories in this space and the history you have lived in this space

-Now, go past yourself and try to use your senses to gather information on the history of this space outside of your own connection and experiences with it

-How does the space exist without you in it?

-How did the space exist before it?

-Break down the materials of the space and think of what physically makes up the space

-Try to explore the aging process, and examine the way the space has aged

-How has and does this space interact with the world around it?

-Now, how does the space, with all of its history, connect to you, and the history you carry?

SHARED HISTORIES SCORE: PART 2

BY: JESSICA WARSHAL

- Have an outside person choose a second location for you to dance in. This space must be a place where you have no memories with and have never been before. Take as much travel time to this space as necessary.

-Enter the space and set a timer for 13 minutes.

-Use your different perceptual systems to explore the space through sensory exploration (ex: the basic orienting system, the auditory system, the haptic system, the visual system and the taste-smell system)

-Try to start by focusing on one system, and explore until you feel your exploration for the system is complete before moving on to the next one

-Play with attempting to hinder or limit certain systems to heighten other systems

-Through this sensory exploration, use your senses to explore how you are interacting with this space for the first time

-How does the history you carry with you interact with the history of the space

-Try to use your senses to gather information on the history of this space, exploring it for the first time, but also trying to explore it not just as a new space, but as an old friend

-How did this space exist before you entered it?

-Break down the materials of the space and think of what physically makes up the space

-Try to explore the aging process, and examine the way the space has aged

-How has and does this space interact with the world around it?

-What memories does this space hold?

-As you physically build a new memory/history/experience with this space, how do you create a dance which honors both of your histories and both of your new interactions within this new relationship you are building with the space?

Jessica
Warshal

Shared Histories
Score

END





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