

## Training Module #8

### Keys to a Successful Dance for PD Class

There are many considerations that go into teaching a Dance for PD class. At the end of your training, you may feel overwhelmed by the information you have absorbed, and may not feel ready to start teaching. We suggest reviewing all of the Modules and resources we've provided here and online. But the best way to get comfortable with teaching this class is simply to start teaching and gain experience by doing. We have provided a brief 'take-away' for you to keep in mind as you plan your first class. There are dozens of small things that make classes successful, but these are the elements we remind ourselves of every week as we teach our group.

- ✓ Make everyone feel welcome before, during and after the class, and help people stay involved the whole time whether they are sitting or standing.
- ✓ Create stimulating and dynamic movement sequences, but present the material in small blocks of 4 or 8 count phrases and repeat them to encourage confidence and mastery.
- ✓ Use vivid, memorable imagery to describe the choreographed or improvised movements.
- ✓ Vary your pace by alternating activities that require a longer explanation with those that you can just jump into. Break up longer explanations by letting people try part of the longer phrase with music.
- ✓ Aim for a 70/30 ratio of repeated movement material to new movement material each class.
- ✓ Slow down but don't dumb down. Teach and do things at a comfortable tempo for the group. You're probably going too fast.
- ✓ Use appropriate and inspiring music with a clear rhythmic and melodic structure and emotional tone.
- ✓ Include opportunities for co-creation, in which participants generate and share ideas, movements, or phrases with the rest of the group. Co-creation can lead into a choreographed dance or an improvisation.
- ✓ Give general qualitative and aesthetic notes but keep the tone fun and humorous.
- ✓ Keep adjusting the ratio of seated, supported standing and locomotive activities to suit the needs, abilities and requests of your group. Don't assume everyone wants to sit a long time, but also make sure people who stay seated always have someone guiding them through seated modifications.
- ✓ Stay calm, friendly, focused, and relax enough so that you have a good time in the class. Anxiety and fun are both contagious.
- ✓ Make sure there is a co-teacher, assistant, volunteer, or group coordinator to help you in the class.
- ✓ Start and end in a circle.