

## Communication in Motion

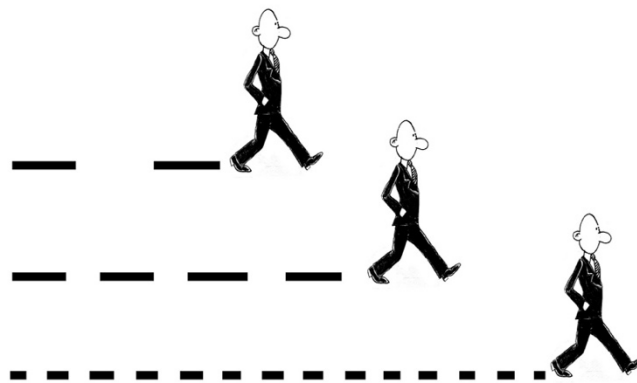
Music	Son Thomsen
Dance	Maria Speth
Time	4/4 (I and II) open (III)
Intro	none
Musical genre	minimal music, dance, new age
Formation	differs per part
Target group	suggested 10 – 18 years
Equipment	drawing materials

### Communication in Motion I

#### Warming-up in motion

##### *Working with spatial orientation*

The students walk in straight, strict lines and corners through the room. Changing direction also occurs in the same strict, angular style of motion. Allow them to cover the length and the width of the room. Do not use diagonal directions. Encourage the students to make use of all of the available space (look for the open spaces...). No talking to each other or miming or any other form of communication! Emphasize the importance of the non-verbal part of the assignment by offering stimulation through statements such as: ‘only you are important’, ‘it is as though there is no one else here’.



##### **Variation 1:** *working with spatial orientation*

This variation can be quickly applied. Through offering various tempos you give the students an extra opportunity to apply variation. Working with varying tempos creates an active and shifting image of motion. The students may keep up with the beat but they may also need to speed up to a run, or slow down to very slow to allow others to pass. Encourage the students to alternate the varied possibilities, but allow each individual student to decide whether the tempo is speeding up or slowing down.

### **Variation 2** *developing the communicative aspect*

The communication in this variation concerns understanding each other and reacting with motion. This means that you are not only busy with your own initiative but also alert to others. You can come across someone, approach someone, or bump into someone. You can work with leading and following; you can walk beside each other, behind, or stop together, etc. You can walk forwards or backwards (without bumping another, of course). During all of these assignments the number one rule is no verbal communication or mimicking. What happens when you come across someone, because physical contact (bumping or pushing) is not allowed? You can stay standing where you are, you can back up, but what do you do if the other reacts the same? Speed up? Stop again? Walk the other way? What happens if you planned to stop by a certain person and discovered that others had the same idea? How long can all of you remain standing there?

The assignment to search for others, can be extended with ideas such as: *'detective'*, *'pursuing'*, *-trying to 'shake someone off'*, *'find your way through without being noticed'*, *'allow everyone else to pass first'*, or *'join in for a bit before finding your own way'*. This heightens the intensity with which the students give meaning to their movements. Continue to encourage the students to continue working within the different tempos and to use all of the available space.

*Working Concepts: improvisation and reaction.*

I can imagine that the above assignments may result in difficult experiences, because you need to keep a hold on the students. That is why I offer a number of tips to support you:

- Be consequent with the rules that you create for the assignments, a defined framework provides clarity.
- Realise the importance of repetition for good results.
- Pace yourself, variations can be spread out over different (lesson) periods.
- Wait to step into the next variation until the students have attained the last.
- Work with examples, this can ignite the fantasy and provide concrete ideas.

A joint evaluation at the end of the assignment is very important. Allow the students to express their ideas about the lesson. What was difficult about the assignment and why; were there moments of tension, how can that be? Who found it difficult to not talk or mimic? Was there communication or not? Did you have unexpected encounters with others, how can that be?

Through evaluation and sharing each other's findings new possibilities arise and inspire a new attempt at the assignment.

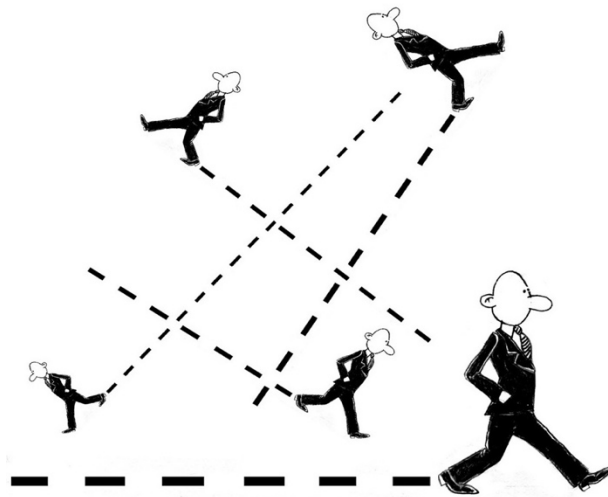
## **Communication in Motion II** Optional Practice music :11

### **Patterns**

Each student thinks of and walks out a pattern that uses as much of the space as possible. The pattern ends where it begins, you can, in fact, continue. Try not to make too complicated a pattern that can make it difficult to remember and work with. Allow each student to draw its own pattern on paper.

### **Variation 1**

In pairs number 2 watches and draws the pattern of number 1 while number 1 is walking the pattern. Then switch roles. It is fun to follow-up with sharing each other's drawings. Did your partner draw your pattern the way you did? Tip: don't begin directly with drawing, look first at the pattern of the dance and then try to follow it on paper.



### Variation 2

Everyone stands somewhere on their pattern. It does not need to be at the beginning. Encourage the students to be spread out in the room, but on their own pattern.

One student begins to walk their pattern. The others must wait until they are 'set in motion'. This happens when someone passes them. In this way not all of the students begin moving at the same time!

Once the student is back at the starting point he has to wait until someone passes again, to be set into motion again. It is exciting to watch.

### Variation 3

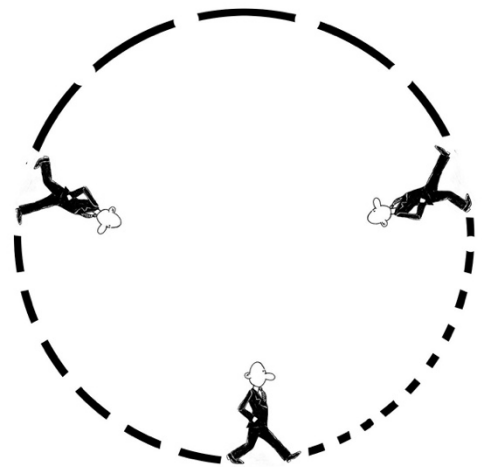
As in variation 2, but now using changing tempos. Complete your pattern super-fast or so very, very slowly. What are the consequences to the starting of others? Does the entire image of motion change? This is a good opportunity to divide the group into two groups to allow each group to be able to observe.

*Working Concepts: improvisation, demonstration, reaction, reflection, cooperation.*

## Communication in Motion III practice music: nr 11

### Warming-up in a circle

One student begins with one movement (total movement or isolated movement) that is continuously repeated. The rest of the group adopts this movement. If you do this with younger students you may want to concentrate on copying the general movements (do it together). With older students you can insist that they mimic as precisely as possible (mirror image, attend to small details). The next student then takes a turn and thus you move around the circle.



### Variation 1

The assignment is the same as above; the entire group performs the movement at the same time. Then, beginning on a signal (hand clap, or signalling) each student tries to improvise with the original movement.

The following are a number of possibilities for the students to experiment with:

- perform the original movement in different directions;
- perform the movement slower/faster;
- further develop one piece of the movement;
- improvise with the rhythm of the movement;
- perform the original movement with other body parts;
- work from one of the elements (time, effort, space)
- work in pairs and offer ideas to each other etc.

On a new signal everyone reverts back to the original movement. When the entire group is synchronised, another student takes a turn to lead with a new movement.

*Working Concepts: improvisation, reaction, demonstration.*

## **Communication in Motion IV practice music: nr 12**

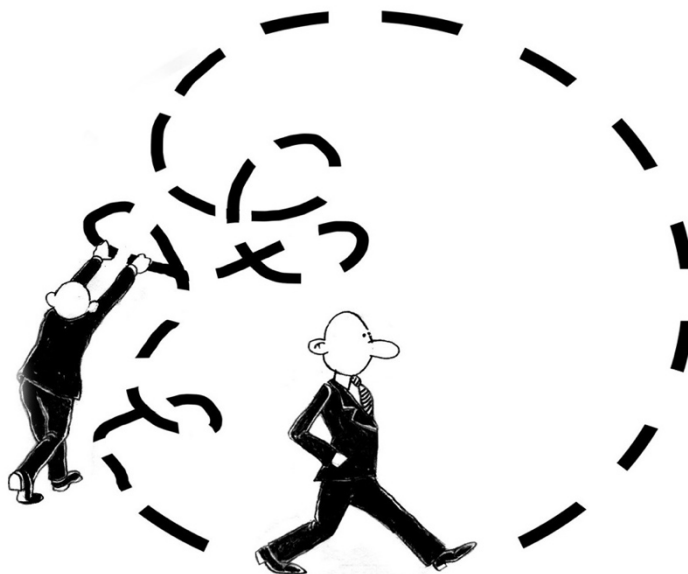
### **Sculpting each other**

Working in pairs, one sculpts the other into a form. This can be lying down, or standing, or sitting, etc. This will be done without talking. The ‘sculptor’ is completely focused upon the form he is creating, keeping an eye open for details, searching for new forms. The sculpture allows itself to be formed, tries to adopt each curve, each change. When the sculpture is complete the sculptor gives a signal (clapping the hands) and the sculpture may move freely, jumping, flapping, twisting, using every part of its body. Then it tries to crawl back into the sculpted form as the sculptor observes and offers corrections where necessary. Switch roles and repeat.

#### **Variation 1:**

An excellent observation session can be created by allowing one pair (sculpture and sculptor) to work while everyone else is watching. Allow the corrections to be made by an observer, under supervision of the sculptor. This is a wonderful activity to use in relation to exploring form and change in form.

*Working Concepts: improvisation, reaction, demonstration, cooperation*



## **'knead' yourself**

Changing form through isolated and total movement.

It is important that before beginning with this activity the students have a concrete understanding of isolated and total movement. The following is a fun activity to clarify isolated movement: all of the students sit in a circle. Ask one student to move their hands only. While that student is doing that, ask the next student also to move only their hands, but in another way. This student also continues with the movement. Ask the next student if there is another possible movement for the hands. Finally, you have 3 students sitting beside each other creating different isolated moves with the same isolated body part. Stop the students and begin further along in the circle using another body part and building up to 3 different moves. This activity meets two objectives. You clarify the term 'isolated movement' in an active way while attention is focused upon another person. At the same time, you are stimulating the students to think of new movement ideas.

### **Variation 1**

The students stand spread out throughout the room. Use, for example, a small drum. Tick on the wooden edge and the students change the form of one part of their body (isolated movement), hit the drum surface and they change the form of their whole body (total movement). Alternate the intentions but not too fast, especially not in the beginning because it can be challenging to think quickly of new moves particularly with the isolated movements. Movement is usually focused upon the hands, arms, legs and head but moving the body and using more refined moves with the joints are not so easy. These moves often need to be encouraged.

### **Variation 2**

Offer variation in the above activity by indicating some intentions with the total movement such as change in level or change of direction. Sometimes it is best to commence with a clear framework, for example 3 ticks on the side of the drum (=3 isolated moves) and after a hit on the drum surface (= total movement). This provides solid guidelines.

*Working Concepts: improvisation, reaction*

## **Communication in Motion V practice music: nr 12**

### **Exercises in Slow Motion**

Our understanding of slow motion is clarified during the replays we see on TV. especially during the sports shows. Most students are familiar with this. This image is the basis for the following whole group activity. It is an assignment in 3 phases.

Phase 1: the students illustrate their objective with sound and image

Phase 2: same as above, without sound

Phase 3: same as above, but in slow motion

Sketch the following image: the group sits, lies or stands, close together, breathless, watching an exciting football game on TV... There are 30 seconds left to the game and... GOAL! The observers react. This may be uncontrollable joy or deep frustration, disbelief etc.

**1st assignment:** *“if I call GOAL! You must call out and react right away, I want to see, hear and feel your reaction! If I signal to you that the goal did not qualify, let me hear and see your change in reaction”.*

**2nd assignment:** *“we'll do it again, but take away the sound. I only want to see your reactions and not hear a sound”.*

Sometimes you need to repeat this part a few times until you have no sound.

**3rd assignment:** “we’ll do it again, but now we will do it with no sound and in slow motion”. This assignment is absolutely worth the effort... but also to observe. Therefore, it is a good idea to first do this with the entire group and then split into two groups, allowing each group to watch the other perform. Guaranteed success!

### **Variation**

The following variation is a more serious approach. Work in pairs. Number 1 moves from standing straight to lying down on the back in slow motion. Number 2 stands or sits besides, observing and correcting if needed and suggests to ‘slow down’ or ‘speed up’.

Otherwise, there is no talking. Particularly for the one who is moving, he must focus upon the activity. When the goal is satisfactorily achieved then he may sit and observe those still busy. When everyone is finished then the partners switch roles. Now number 2 moves from lying down to standing up, thus the opposite direction. Number 1 observes and offers advice where needed.

Noticeable during this exercise is the habit of the students to move too quickly and with little concentration. The observation and comments of the partner provides ‘food for thought’.

When repeated more often, you will notice that the concentration of the students improves.

Discussion afterwards is also helpful. Allow the students to share the difficult moments when trying to stay in slow motion and why it was so. It is also an exercise that requires a lot of thought about the best way to attain the goal of moving from low to high or the other direction. Sometimes it is very difficult to keep moving in slow motion if your muscles are very tense!

*Working Concepts: improvisation, observation, reaction, reflection, cooperation*

