

4 Phases Practice

This practice can be done anywhere and for any amount of time. It is an all abilities practice, adaptable for a solo, duet or group. This dance practice can happen in a dance studio or in your kitchen, in one-minute increments, fifty minute increments, or in an unfolding continuum throughout your day. This practice is also patterned after the infinity concept—layered within each phase is the whole.

For example: You have fifty minutes to devote to the 4 phases practice. For each phase you spend seven minutes in the physical practice, and then three minutes in documentation (this ratio between phases and documentation is adaptable). When practicing with another person or a group, this will allow time for both parties to witness one another in phase four. When practicing phase four alone, as you continue to dance, imagine watching yourself and direct your awareness to witnessing your dance.

Phase 1: Begin to prepare yourself to move.

- How do you begin?
- What is important?
- What is needed?

Timed Documentation: Write, draw or scribe responses to questions in phase 1.

Phase 2: Start moving.

- How are you moving?
- What do you like to do?
- What are you noticing?

Timed Documentation: Write, draw or scribe responses to questions in phase 2.

Phase 3: Dance.

- How are you dancing?
- What do you think about?
- What do you imagine?

Timed Documentation: Write, draw or scribe responses to questions in phase 3.

Phase 4: Witness.

- How are you watching?
- What do you look for?
- What do you see?

Timed Documentation: Write, draw or scribe responses to questions in phase 4.

Phase 1: Intention

This phase alerts us to what we need and what is important in order to prepare or “align” our body to the environment, task, or situation at hand. This phase also alerts us to consider what is needed and important in order to function. This phase represents the individual within the community, individualization, and discernment of whether the environment is safe and supportive. Movement Fundamentals I: Practices of Alignment & Function—Practicing Embodiment

Phase 2 Intention:

This phase alerts us to what it is we are doing, and what it is we like to do. For example, what are the habitual ways I move? What are the customary ways I think? What do I always do with my body or where does my thinking always seem to go? When we stop to consider what we think, how we feel and what we do, we may realize the thought, word and action are not in alignment, due to these habitual or highly practiced ways of adapting to our society and/or culture. This awareness of our range and how efficient we are within that range, alerts us to the choices we have and helps us become accountable to the choices we make. We become aware of the impact of our choices on our formation. This phase represents awareness of what we contribute to our community and builds relationships with others and the environment. Movement Fundamentals II: Practices of Range & Efficiency—Refining Movement

Phase 3 Intention:

This phase alerts us to what it is we have to say or express about our experience and our questions of the world around us. Images, metaphors, and sensations allow sophistication and artistry to enhance or further develop intentional expression. We begin to understand our own forming and how our intentions (what we think about) shape our vocabulary (what we say and how we take action). This phase reflects the intention (thought) behind the movement choices (vocabulary). The dance artist considers, then, if that intention is needed, necessary, supportive or constructive to the community or the environment. This phase represents the artist within the community and the environment. Movement Fundamentals III: Practices of Vocabulary & Intention—Designing Expression

Phase 4 Intention:

This phase alerts the viewer and the performer, simultaneously, to the idea of dance making and performing movement. This practice develops sophistication of intent in what the dance artist wants to communicate through the moving body. The collaborative relationship between dance artist and witness is emphasized and revitalized as the two engage in a reciprocal offering. This phase represents the responsibility of the dance artist to engage, educate, and evolve with community; to support the exchange. Dance for Art & Life—Engaging Practice