



Facilitators Shared Values in Conducting a DYB Session

We demonstrate ongoing respect for the DYB Purpose, Values, Responsibilities and Guidelines.

We do our best to maintain an open, supportive presence as we monitor the dance floor with engaged awareness.

We celebrate the diversity of the tribe. We do our best to accept and embrace differences in age, race, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, weight, dress, and abilities. We ask this of the participants as well.

We approach this dance as a practice. We enter with intention, whether it is for self-expression and discovery, prayer, transformation, fitness, play, or community. Each has his/her own relationship to the dance. Facilitators model and encourage this personal commitment.

We witness with curiosity and without judgment. We honour and encourage each person's form of expression, and ask dancers to do the same for each other.

We model the practice throughout the event. We are one of the dancers. We dance our own dance while we remain aware and accessible to the dancers. We scan the room and engage dancers here and there maintaining a respectful distance. We do our best not to show favouritism. We attempt to monitor the energy and help it along, as we are able.

We trust ourselves. Each facilitator has a slightly different approach. We help the dancers be true to themselves by being true to ourselves.

We recognize our own limits and self-monitor. When we're not up to facilitating, we're responsible for recognizing this and asking someone to sub for us, even if it's in the middle of a dance session.

We encourage dancers to experiment and let loose. To be ugly, to be different, to be wild or angry or childlike; in other words, to surprise themselves and others. Sometimes we go out of our way to encourage a person by mirroring them and practicing with them.

We hold space; we support; we do not rescue. We encourage dancers to keep moving, because things will shift with movement. Crying and distress are okay! Sometimes all that is needed is a touch, a word, and a gentle acknowledgement that someone is witnessed and cared for. We encourage dancers to stay in their own dance and may gently ask any “rescuers” to allow space for others to move through their own experiences.¹

We recognize this is a self-monitored practice and we remind dancers of this. Facilitators are there to assist others in their practice but not to play the role of therapist. We periodically suggest that dancers know where to get support should the dance stir anything up.

We are prepared to intervene when dancers are not demonstrating respect for guidelines, keeping personal distance, or not showing a reasonable limit to sexual or emotional expression... This could involve asking someone to leave. These are judgment calls - we limit only when actions are dangerous or overly intrusive to others.

We believe that any movement is dance. It is the intention to stay connected to the music and keep moving, even in a tiny way, that is important.

¹ "Sometimes the hardest thing about holding space is it can feel and look a lot like doing nothing. Giving people our presence can feel a whole lot harder than giving them our advice. When a [dancer] is hurting, confused or overwhelmed, it's really hard not to step in and fix the situation, offer resources, or give advice."

Holding space is also about creating “a container for [moving with] complex emotions, fear, trauma, etc. When people feel that they are held in a deeper way than they are used to, they feel safe enough to allow complex emotions to surface that might normally remain hidden. Someone who is practiced at holding space knows that this can happen and will be prepared to hold it in a gentle, supportive, and non-judgemental way.”

- excerpts from blog posts by Heather Plett, wisdom-seeking, edge-walking, community-gathering, story-catching teacher, writer, coach and facilitator from Manitoba. You may have seen her viral blog post about holding space.

<http://heatherplett.com/2015/03/hold-space/>