

Dance Therapy: Movement Metaphor - Grades 6-12

Needed Materials: music, white board & dry erase marker, or paper & pen

Instructions: Movement metaphor is a dance therapeutic activity that allows participants to express feelings to verbs or phrases through movement. It can relieve stress, tension, and depression. If you have a group of students or you're by yourself, write down a list range of emotions from happy to sad (an example is below).

Next, generate movement(s) to each emotion. For example, for joy the movement could be spreading your arms up high and twirling around with a smile on your face, or if the word is sad drop your shoulders, arms, and head and sway side to side with a sad look on your face. Whatever is most comfortable to the students or yourself give it a try.

Once you've established the movements, now call out the different words and allow the students to move to each word. You can also create emotion sentences and let the students create choreography to them. After you've taken the designated time to develop movements, dancers may show what they've created individually or in groups of two or three while other participants watch. Ask for their responses by asking "What did you observe?" but keeping in mind the generating of movements, performing them, or watching others.

Range of emotions: Happy, joyful, amazement, pride, trust, humble, peace, love, compassion, adoration, grateful, content, amused, confident, carefree, sweet, kind, funny, hopeful, patient, focused, distracted, grieved, guilt, apologetic, nervous, overwhelmed, jealous, anger, distrust, rage, fear, disgust, sadness.