

Marta Neto **Visioning a Culture of Empathy**

What are the requirements for Empathy in its full expression?

Courage is the first step

In the presence of courage there is

Willingness to

- Vulnerability > We are/ I am enough; We are/ I am worthy
- **Curiosity** (let go of attachment) > meet the other where they are
- **Openness** (let go of aversion) > Tolerance (>Softening) > **Generosity** (forgiving, we are all doing the best we can) > Oneness (let go of separation and scarcity, what benefits you benefits me) > expression of Love/Care
- Self-responsibility > Mutuality > Collaboration > demands and builds Trust (in ourselves, in others, in the world; belief in inherent goodness)

Leads to

- Empowerment with
- Clarity of purpose
- Resilience
- Belonging

Dissolves

- Fear (powerlessness)
- Separation
- Scarcity (Judgement)
- Past hurt

Ultimately encourages, deepens and strengthens Courage

Courage is the last step

----- *Thoughts on the kind of humans we must become* -----

There is great power that comes from really embodying (our) vulnerability, accepting uncertainty, walking into the middle of the river and stopping to see who is there with us. Even if clumsy, if I/we fully own my/our vulnerability what powerlessness becomes empowerment. If I/we fully feel my/our love for the world what was hopelessness becomes purpose - in a way it makes one invincible. But it is an uncomfortable choice, that to go there we must let go of the shore, and we must each do this for ourselves. The crux though is to do it with such softness and care (visible love) for the world that people move in rather than feel alienated (like a matriarchal grandmother). That people trust that energy to be true and to be right. These days we are all jedi masters in training (or bodhisattvas). Only this way (I see at the moment) will we be building something lasting and beautiful, water the right seeds for *eachother*, and will we *our selves* weather the storms to come. It's like we want to be big majestic rainforest trees but being bamboo, willow or mangroves might serve us better. The abundance that is possible might look different from what we thought and still deliver on our dreams.

We did unfortunately mostly not experience the caring nurturing growing up that would have primed us for abundance and abandoned collaboration - we are mostly collectively stuck in scarcity mindsets that make us incredibly fearful and reactive, unable to truly dream and collaborate without attachment to outcome. We can't afford to create safe spaces anymore but we can create brave spaces and walk into them together (even if through different doors). Having leaders today that teach us self-parenting and co-soothing, so we can afford to embody this permanent emergent choice, is going to be crucial (I sense; hence the need for Sarah Peyton and co.).

- references Thich Nhat Hanh (The Art of Power), Pema Chodron (Living Beautifully With Uncertainty and Change), Miki Kashtan (various recordings), Sarah Peyton (Your Resonant Self; there's a video online with both Sarah and Miki too), Brené Brown (Daring Greatly; Braving the Wilderness), Joanna Macy (Coming Back to Life), adrienne maree brown (Emergent Strategy), Tara Brach (Radical Compassion), Starwars, Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon.

About the use of Empathy Circles

Recording an empathy circle can be important, as that particular moment will never come again, and not taking notes during frees up capacity to engage. Also talking about empathy circles to people can be odd; it's a bit like an altered state that has to be experienced to be accepted (and it usually only hits about 2/3 in).

Thinking and sensing direction from that deeper (probably more right brain) place is good muscle training, and the sharing quality leads to greater understanding. We also use it to accompany people through conflict as the time keeping and facilitation remove some forms of power from the equation.

[Brene Brown](#) - The 7 elements of [Trust](#)
Martin Luther King Jr on [Mutuality and Empathy](#)
[Hopi Prophecy](#)

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Spanish municipalist movement

These are the principles used in the Spanish municipalist movement:

1. We collaborate with existing community leaders, projects and organisations, supporting and honouring what exists already, without reinventing the wheel.
2. We practice power proximity; we stay as close to the community as possible, avoiding distant, top down approaches.
3. We include as many people as possible, particularly those not already engaging and making an effort to listen to the voices of those who have often been excluded by politics and activism.
4. We recognize trust as the crucial component of this work, taking the time to build it.
5. We build care and trust into our communities through active listening. Listen to each other's stories, concerns and ideas with kindness and openness. This is the foundation of community building.
6. We practice politics based on inclusivity, humility, collaboration and dialogue (aka feminization of politics) from community organising to international decision making.
7. We recognize that we have the power, skills and knowledge to create the change we want to see in the world. We can't wait for anyone else to fix it for us. It's up to us.

Extinction Rebellion

These are the principles which attract and organize rebels in a growing international movement.

1. We have a shared vision of change creating a world that is fit for the next 7 generations to live in.
2. We set our mission on what is necessary mobilising 3.5% of the population to achieve system change – such as “momentum-driven organising” to achieve this.
3. We need a regenerative culture which is healthy, resilient and adaptable.
4. We openly challenge ourselves and our toxic system leaving our comfort zones to take action for change.
5. We value reflecting and learning following a cycle of action, reflection, learning, and planning for more action. Learning from other movements and contexts as well as our own experiences.
6. We welcome everyone and every part of everyone working actively to create safer and more accessible spaces.
7. We actively mitigate power breaking down hierarchies of power for more equitable participation.
8. We avoid blaming and shaming. We live in a toxic system, but no one individual is to blame.
9. We are a non-violent network using nonviolent strategy and tactics as the most effective way to bring about change.
10. We are based on autonomy and decentralization. We collectively create the structures we need to challenge power.

Open Space Technology - Transition Movement

The Four Rules state:

1. Whoever come are the right people.
2. Whatever happens is the only thing that could have.
3. Whenever it starts is the right time.
4. When it's over, it's over.

Open Floor <https://openfloor.org/>

VISION

A world where conscious movement and dance ignites creativity, community, social justice, health and well-being.

MISSION

- To further the development of movement as a healing practice
- To integrate embodiment across disciplines such as, but not limited to, health care, education and the arts
- To create and support a diverse, international network of Open Floor teachers and communities.

AIMS

- To create and modify training curriculum that reflects new research in science and the arts
- To provide training, including mentorship and supervision
- To provide on-line technology and local hubs for the creation of conscious movement communities

- To recruit interdisciplinary attendance, such as nurses, school teachers, social workers, at OFI trainings
- To encourage underrepresented populations to participate in OFI trainings through fundraising and scholarships.
- To adopt, encourage and educate others in the skilled use of Sociocracy (Dynamic Governance) within the organization

COMMON GROUND

The dance floor is our common ground, where self expression, connection to others and connection to the spirit that animates us all is welcome.

Open Floor International is a creative collaboration of seasoned movement teachers from all corners of the globe.

Most of us grew up on the dance floor with Gabrielle Roth and consider her one of our most honored teachers. Regular practice grows our vocabulary for living and loving, both on and off the dance floor.

At Open Floor we believe that all creativity requires influence. Invention springs from a meeting of inspiration (teachers, artists, cultural trends, discoveries) and our own unique imagination.

Even the most radical artists and philosophers stand on the shoulders of those who have come before them. In turn they become the ground for those who come after.

The Open Floor curriculum is Open Source and registered with the Creative Commons.

COMMON SENSE

Dancing makes common sense because it's good for us. We are devoted to making embodied, conscious movement accessible.

We are committed to working with populations who would otherwise never have access to dance. We actively recruit from a wide range of professional fields for our training programs to integrate embodiment across disciplines including health care, education and the arts.

COMMON GOOD

When we dance, we unite for the common good.

On the Open Floor everybody matters. Every BODY, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, size and ability has the right to dance in a welcoming space. We are growing local and global communities, and encouraging under-represented populations to participate in OFI trainings through fundraising and scholarships. Our business model, Dynamic Governance, reflects the same values of inclusion that we teach on the dance floor – equality, radical honesty and transparency. It is an elegant business model for a rapidly changing world. While there are leaders, the power is held by the group rather than any one individual.

<https://openfloor.org/fundamentals>

What happens in an Open Floor class?

In our classes and workshops, we can focus on a particular theme or intention, or work with whatever is presenting itself in the moment.

In any 2-hour dance class there will typically be:

- A period of warmup (guided or unguided) ([Open Attention](#))
- Brief context-setting ([Enter](#))
- Guidance for establishing an embodied anchor (Enter)
- A few guided movement inquiries into the resource or theme for the day ([Explore](#))
- Free time to explore and integrate the material in your own way (Explore)
- Settling and Closing ([Settle](#))

As Open Floor teachers, we are passionate about helping our students resource themselves in movement and fully explore the potential of their unique and precious life. We have found that what really inspires us to transform, heal and enjoy the present moment, is to be embodied – to be present in our body – as we walk, talk, dance, connect, explore and pause.

You will be invited to Enter the body through an [anchor](#) – a part of your body – which could be your feet, your belly, your back body, or even your eyes. Once you can really feel that anchor, it's embodied. Then your whole body can go on a journey.

For that journey, you will be offered one or several movement resources from our curriculum, and supported by a wide range of music to encourage you to explore the material in your own way.

Each teacher will craft their own unique, delightful, fun, sacred, meaningful, healing movement landscapes to serve the exploration of the basic [4×4 weave](#).

The Open Floor 4x4 Weave

On the Open Floor, we bring mindful, embodied movement to our lives as human beings.

The Four Dimensions of Embodiment – Physical, Emotional, Mind and Soul – describe what it means to wholly inhabit our entire selves.

And the Four Relational Hungers – Solitude, Connection, Belonging and Spirit –describe the elemental needs and passions that call us to move in the first place.

There is no real separation between these aspects of ourselves. We cannot move the body without touching our feelings, activating thoughts, expressing through our one-of-a-kind soulfulness, whether we’re moving alone or connecting with another, the group, or with spirit. We differentiate them only to understand their particular essences; together they comprise an inseparable weave of our humanness.

The 4×4 weave is a dynamic, shifting, playing field of human experience, and is the terrain of all our dances. It is where and how we dance on the Open Floor.

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