

# Caring through Movement Prompts

September – October 2024

## Writing prompts

- What does care mean to you? What words do you associate with care?
- What is care?
- When I care, I want \_\_\_\_\_
- When I receive care from others, I want \_\_\_\_\_
- When I care for myself, I want \_\_\_\_\_
- In the world I want, I see...
- What do I need today?
- Describe a time you felt cared for in a way you wanted to feel cared for.

## Creative prompts

### ★ Movement grid

(adapted from Liz Lerman)

- o Draw a grid.
- o Put types of movement that you like to do on one side of the grid.
- o Put adjectives on the other side of the grid.
- o Move in the intersections!

### ★ Write and move

- o Free write in response to a prompt for five minutes.
- o Read over what you wrote and underline anything that feels sticky or important to you.
- o Get up and move.

## ★ Sculpture

(adapted from Liz Lerman)

- o Take about five minutes to find 3-5 objects.
- o Pose the objects to create a sculpture. Move fairly quickly and don't overthink it.
- o Share your sculpture with another person.
  - Physically describe your partner's sculpture.
  - Tell your partner a story about what you see in their sculpture.

## ★ Sculpture yourself!

- o Make a pose in reaction to something. It could be anything!
  - Examples of things to respond to: a writing prompt, a conversation, a current event, a work of art that you or someone else made
- o Share your pose with another person.
  - Physically describe what your partner is doing. What do you see?
  - Tell them what images, thoughts, or feelings their pose brings up for you.
  - Listen when they tell you what they see in your pose.
- o Move!
  - Let the list of qualities and images you used to describe your partner's pose inspire your own movement.

## ★ Mirroring

- o Move with a partner so that you are mirroring each other. There is no single leader or follower in your partnership.
- o Start facing each other and moving your hands. If you want, you can mirror other body parts, too.
- o This can be done sitting or standing.

- o Repeat the mirroring, with special attention to how you're taking care of your partner.

### **★ Collage it!**

- o Write in response to a prompt. Make a collage about it. Don't overthink it.

### **★ Authentic movement**

- o Move (spontaneously, authentically) with your eyes closed. Don't plan ahead. Try not to think about what it looks like.
- o Your partner will witness your movement and keep you safe.
  - Decide ahead of time whether you want your partner to use physical touch or spoken words to tell you how to stay safe.

### **★ Getting what you want**

- o With a partner, make a movement together in which you both get what you want.

### **★ Doing what you need**

- o Put on a song. Do what you need for the whole song.

### **★ Partner dance and witness**

(1 min. for each step)

- o Step 1, Partner A: Move how you want for one minute.
  - Partner B witnesses Partner A's movement.
- o Step 2, Partner B: Move in your interpretation of Partner A's movement for one minute.
  - A witnesses B's interpretation of their movement.
  - B's interpretation won't be an exact replica of A's movement.
- o Step 3, partners chat: A gives B feedback on B's interpretation of their movement.

- Questions to consider:
- Were you surprised when you saw your partner's interpretation of your movement? If so, what surprised you?
- How similar was your partner's movement to what you experienced when you were moving? How was it different?
- How did it feel to witness your partner's interpretation of your movement?
- What suggestions do you have for your partner to more closely capture how you experienced your movement?
- Step 4, both partners move: B repeats their interpretation of A's movement with A's feedback in mind. A witnesses B's movement *and* moves in response to witnessing B's movement.
- Partners A and B switch roles and repeat the four steps described above.

### ★ Group dance in relationship

- Sit in a circle.
- Decide how many people will be moving inside the circle at any time.
- Decide who is starting inside the circle and who is starting on the outside of the circle.
- The people moving inside the circle dance in relationship to each other.
- The people sitting on the outside of the circle witness the people moving inside the circle.
- When people inside the circle want to take a break from moving, they will move to the outside of the circle to witness the dance.
- When people on the outside of the circle want to move, they will join the dance inside the circle.
- Group members will pay attention to each other to maintain the pre-decided number of people inside and outside the circle.

### ★ Reaction dance

- Start with a group discussion to brainstorm movement ideas.

- Discussion question: What ways can we be in relationship with each other through movement?
- o Move in pairs.
  - One person does any movement they want.
  - The other person immediately does their gut reaction movement response to their partner's initial movement.
  - Partners switch roles and repeat.
- o Move as a group.
  - One person starts moving any way they want in the center of the room.
  - Everyone else stays on the edges of the room to witness their movement.
  - A second person comes into the center of the room and moves in reaction to the first person's movement
  - A third person comes into the center of the room and moves in reaction to the second person's movement.
  - This pattern continues, with additional people entering the movement space and reacting to what is happening through movement.
  - Each person can exit the center of the room after they have moved to witness other people's movement from the edges of the room. Or, they can stay in the center of the room and continue moving in reaction to others.

★ **Make a dance through group improvisation**

- o Decide on a prompt, theme, or question to inspire the dance.
  - Sample question: Where do we go from here?
- o Decide on a structure and rules for the group improvisation. This is sometimes called a score.
  - Sample score (from 10/21/24):
    - One person comes into the center of the room and responds to the question.
    - A second person comes into the center of the room and responds to the question *and* to the first person's movement.

- A third person comes into the center of the room and responds to the question *and* to the second person's movement.
- The dance starts in pairs but grows to include the whole group.
- Eventually people in the group will come together.
- People in the group will create bridges.
- We will use eye contact (and maybe words) to get consent to touch each other.
- We won't be self-conscious about our movement.
- It's okay to break the rules.
- Through movement, the group will create an ending for the dance together after finishing all parts of the score.
- If desired, the group can repeat this multiple times and discuss each version of the dance, editing or adding to the score each time.

## Warm-up prompts

Start in a circle. Each person shares a movement.

### ★ Movement ideas:

- Introduce yourself and do a movement to go with your name.
  - Option: Everyone says your name out loud and repeats your movement.
- Do a movement inspired by the weather.
- Do a movement inspired by a season or an upcoming holiday.
- Do a movement that embodies how you're feeling today.
- Do a movement to show what you're bringing into the space today.
- Do a fun movement that you would like to share with the group.
- Do a movement that feels good that you would like to share with the group.
- Do a movement with your feet.

### ★ Variations:

- Everyone repeats each other's movement once.

- o Everyone repeats each movement *and* the movements that people shared before it. The movements build on each other to create a sequence of movements.
- o Do the movements in silence.
- o Do the movements to a song. Then, if you want, try doing them to a very different song.
- o Reverse the order of the movements in the circle (ex. Go clockwise instead of counterclockwise).
- o People switch places in the circle to change the order of the movements.

Remember, when repeating each other's movements, you're repeating your interpretation of the movement. *Do what feels good!*

## Useful resources

- ★ Movement tools from Liz Lerman:  
<http://www.d-lab.org/toolbox/tools-and-tool-chooser>
- ★ The Dancemaker app, developed by the [Dance Education Laboratory](#)
- ★ [Laban Movement Analysis chart](#)