

My favorite teaching sentences in Contactimprovisation 8.1.07

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Safety

Whenever something doesn't feel good for you say stop with your body or if necessary with your voice. It can be physically or emotionally too much, whatever. You don't need to explain.

Take care about yourself then the others don't have to waste energy in guessing your needs while forgetting about their needs.

Learn to read the physical YES and NO of your partner.

If you are not sure if what you do is okay for your partner: ask!

Don't be careful! Just listen and open your senses.

How to use my exercises?

My words and exercises are invitations, not orders. If you find something really interesting, go for it and ignore my suggestions. You are here to find something and not to please me. You can join the others later.

Don't push it! Don't try to be perfect, be honest. Notice when you stop listening. Especially in technical exercises when you know what should happen. If you can't get where you aim for find another way out or just go backwards. The way back is always allowed.

Notice your own habits. Do you drop out easily if something seems to be too difficult? Then stay with it longer. Do you always want to get it perfectly right? Then let it go earlier and open up, brake the rules.

There are many polarities in CI concerning an attitude or a physical state or quality. Two opposite poles counterbalance, support and clarify each other.

- Leading - following
- overtensed – collapsing
- wanting – doubting
- pushing - hesitating
- move quick – move slow
- internal awareness – external awareness
- feeling – shaping
- being nice – being naughty/ provocative

On which side are you on? Try consciously to include more from the other side. Take it as a personal score in technical exercises.

It's just an exercise or only a movement. There is hardly anything less important in life!
And it is the most important thing right now. Be passionate and give all you have.
Be aware of both at the same time. (This is actually the heart of playing.)

Technique is your servant. (YOU are the king or the queen not the technique!)

Improve your technique. It is the base of contact. But technique is not the dance.
For the dance you have to let go the technique. Trust your body that it will serve you with the best technique it has so far. For the dance you need to get your heart involved.

The floor

Make two good friends in CI and take care that they like each other: your body and the floor.
Learn to soften the floor. Imagine the floor as hands, which can massage you. Feel its invitation to take your weight. And take gratefully the uprising energy from it. The floor is incredibly reliable. It won't run away from you. Never!

Your body

Your body has a great knowledge about your needs. Learn to hear its YES and NOs. The big ones and the small ones.

Your body is a master in giving you pleasure. It is worth it to listen to your body when it likes a movement.

Technique offers you specific kinds of joy. And the joy will – in a specific way - fill a movement with yourself.

Allow your face to be a mirror of your sensations. Don't get lost inside. Share what you find.

Be kind with your body when it tells you its fear. Taste the edge of the comfortable zone and ask if you can go a little further. Push the border softly, stay listening and accept the NO. And eventually hug your body. Thank him.

The body is a very slow learner. If a movement, a movement principle or a pathway is new and you don't get it or you just get it ... let it go.

Your body needs time to digest information, to let it sink in. New neuronal pathways have to be built or widened. Just repeat patiently and wait alert. Your body will use these pathways in its own timing. Maybe it takes 10 minutes, an hour, a month or a couple of years. But once the information got through, the body is incredibly quick. The body will then serve the needs of a moment perfectly. Don't forget: Your conscious brain will always be really slow when it is about movements!

Improvisation

Improvisation is the awareness about all the options which are available and the decision for one. In every moment.

Don't judge your choice. Stay in the present. Use your energy for the next step. Maybe keep in mind: a bad choice is better than no choice.

When you get lost: hold in and be aware that you are breathing. Open your senses, first to the inside then to the outside. Arrive in the present.

When you get lost: just move, easy in a simple flow and listen to your body, which movement it likes.

When you get lost in tiredness or laziness make the choice to become awake or be happy how you are.

When you get stuck, in a dead end: see it as a door to a treasure. Here you are beyond your patterns. Don't jump to the next safe & familiar place.

Realize when you hesitate. Do you have to? Try not to and allow mistakes.

It is good to have plans and desires. You can go for it as long as you hear your partner's YES.

It is contact-improvisation not contact-planing.

Nothing has to happen – everything can happen

don't push it – allow it

Find rules ... and brake them. You can feel the right moment.

Have you seen your partners eyes yet?

Improvisation is playing.

Children are our masters. Just watch them play.

Improvisation is finding your second naivity. (Don't try to become a child again. That's childish and impossible.)

Feelings and Sexuality

If you are looking for intimacy or a flirt: dance salsa, go to a disco but don't do contact.

The touch in contact is based on physical sensation not on feelings.

The base of CI is to discover the movement possibilities of two bodies in physical contact. To get there we need to suggest and listen through touch. This is fundamental communication. And of course: all kinds of feelings can arise and they are welcome. But the aim of contact is not to express feelings. They might come up. Then share them and let them support the dance.

If sexual energy comes up make very sure that your partner enters the same road. If you can hear your partners YES go for it. Direct the energy into the movement, not the feeling. It is not about having sex!