



Touch Trust Members Event **18th March 2013**

At the event we looked at the following 3 questions as a way of improving how we lead sessions. Here are the results from the day of those that attended:

1. Why do we as Session Leaders need to feel the Energy Changes?

- We are like the conductor leading the guests through each section.
- We need to lead by example: if we are happy, the session will be!
- We can feel and establish clear and distinct changes of energy.
- It is important to experience it for ourselves in order to relate to our guests.
- We are being in-tune with the session's energy. The group will mirror you and follow you throughout the session and know the changes of energy throughout.
- We are transferring our energy flow to our guests.
- We are preparing ourselves.
- We are becoming focused, engaged and ready to connect
- We are creating a harmonious atmosphere.
- We are creating a model mood.

Important to remember: It must be authentic. If we can feel it we can then describe it and pass it on to our guests

2. If a guest is sound and/or touch sensitive, or has limited hearing, vision and/or movement how can we ensure that (s)he experiences the change in energy as much as possible?

Make sure that it is personal to the guest, i.e. adapting the session to meet their needs.

Examples:

- 1:1/Group Session.
- Multi-sensory (Visual, vocal, tactile, olfactory, balls, feathers, materials, fibre optic lights, room fragrances, weighted blankets...)
- Being aware of guest's tolerance to sensory input.
- Talking guests and partners through the session.
- Changing the lights/music for each section of the session.
- Choosing music to suit guests – individuals/groups

- Session leader becoming a 'Performer' or 'Ringleader'.
- Providing a positive environment.
- Expressing clear facial expressions.

- Being aware of our body language and changing it to suit the energy and mood of the section. Showing clear change of mood.
- Being aware of position (ours and theirs) and spatial relationship with our guests.
- Being aware of Eye contact (increasing/decreasing if necessary).
- Building confidence and trust
- Having regular partners to support guest.

- Adapting the session to a lower intensity and volume for pupils with sound sensitivity.
- Increasing touch for visually impaired pupils and maybe guiding blind pupils with suggested movements.
- Tapping rhythmic patterns to convey different tempos such as fast and slow.
- Using equipment such as vibrating beds to feel the energy and rhythm.
- Using visualisation (or not).
- Enabling guest to take control through the use of 'Switches'.

- Using the holistic approach!

3. Why is the order of the Touch Trust Session format as it is?

It establishes a clear beginning, middle and end but with fluidity.

- ✓ It enables guests to anticipate what's going on around them.
- ✓ It sets up guests for each section of the session and focuses the leader and group.
- ✓ It encourages a routine and demonstrates a structure, which helps to eliminate anxieties.
- ✓ It establishes a sense of transition or a journey (of energy).
- ✓ It makes clear distinctions between sections.
- ✓ It encourages guests to become aware of their own bodies in a structured way.

- ✓ It enables guests to have 'strengths' in different sections, i.e. free/focused movement, music, relaxation.

- ✓ The gentle opening gives guests a calming focus. It establishes a safe environment to warm up starting very gently (sea in the shallows).

- ✓ The enlivened sections (rising of energy) give guests freedom of expression and choice through creativity in music and free movement. This encourages endorphin production and building up of confidence and self-esteem.

- ✓ The relaxation calms everyone down ready to return to class! It promotes a sense of being in a better place to cope with the rest of the day.

- ✓ The closing 'Beautiful Sound' completes the circle.

- ✓ This is their special time! The sharing and regular praising nurture a feeling of togetherness and value as well as promoting turn-taking and choice.

- ✓ **Because it works!**