‘The Question of Dance, Self and Little Humans’

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Abstract

This thesis examines the ways creative movement shapes a child's perception of self, self-discovery and self-rediscovery in early years children.

I have over ten years expertise in my field, as a creative movement and dance practitioner, choreographer, performer and scholar. Having trained in performing arts from a young age, I gained a B.A. Hons in Performing Arts. My postgraduate research looks closely at the benefits of dance on the self within early years settings. Bringing my passion for dance somatics as a self-reflecting agency to the forefront of my work.

Purpose

The purpose of my research was to understand the ways in which creative movement may assist a child in deepening their awareness and discovery of self. This research is important as a young child's relationship to self begins early on, framing how a child sees themselves and how they experience and interpret the world around them. As creative movement uses a natural holism and moving enquiry, a child may come to know themselves differently via this approach. There have been many studies developed on the ways in which dance and creative movement help those with health implications and the elderly. But not much research in the early year's spectrum, which I find surprising as this age is such a crucial and poignant time for discovery.

Methodology

I used qualitative data throughout my study, guided by the aesthetics of grounded and ethnographic methods. These methods complemented my research in understanding unique

and personal child-led experiences. I used conclusive tasks such as drawings, questionnaires, tactile games (emotive jars and beads) and audio/video recordings in session. Aswell as gathering much external data in the form of interview, from teachers, parents and practitioners. The gathering of all qualitative data helped to comprehend the personal and emotional experiences of the child. I analysed the data by focusing on individual cases which I deemed the most progressive.

Findings and implications

I fulfilled fieldwork in three different settings- A Montessori inspired nursery, mainstream school, and a hospital. In each setting, the results reflected a shift in the child's awareness of self, as they experienced a deeper knowing and understanding of themselves. What was interesting is as the fieldwork moved from a schooling dynamic to a hospital, the qualitative data reflected a deeper experience whereby the child completely rediscovered their sense of self. The implications of these results are far reaching as the study teaches us dance and creative movement is not simply an art or form of expression. Moving creatively is so much more than that. For the young child, to move emotively or creatively elicits an intent, imagination, and a more profound sense of who they are and what they can become in the world. Although these findings touch on the realms of DMT (dance movement therapy), the results highlight how creative movement as an art form, not an assisted therapy, can help a child discover or regain their autonomy and sense of self.

This thesis would be particularly useful to creative movement practitioners and teachers within the field, as well as researchers, academics and dance for health advocates interested in qualitative movement practice.

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Introduction

The question of self, creative movement, and little humans: how creative movement helps shape a child's sense of self and self-discovery.

This thesis explores how children experience dance and understand themselves differently because of dancing. The study examines how creative movement affects both the perception and creation of 'self' in early years children (3-7 years). It has three case studies based on my fieldwork which took place in 2019. The fieldwork was conducted using ethnographic methods and took place in one hospital and two different educational settings. Within these case studies, I focus on how movement as exploration, experience, and effect shapes the self. While the dancers' experiences are varied and complex, the findings I discuss in this research are principally concerned with the positive benefits of participating in creative movement. This decision to emphasize a strength-based or beneficial perspective is common in medicine and social sciences (Goldingay 2021, Dieppe et al. 2014a & b, 2016; Greville-Harris 2015). I took this approach because I am interested in identifying best, beneficial, and useful practices that can be shared through this research.

As a dance practitioner and teacher who specialises in early years settings, my life has led me to ask many questions about how children and young people experience dance and how it affects the way they come to think about who they are. During the last ten years, I have worked with three- to seven-year-olds in dance studios, nurseries, community centres and other community settings, teaching dance and movement. I continue to teach and use movement as an expressive, creative, and exploratory tool that enables early years children to enjoy and learn about themselves and their world in a nurturing and safe environment. Across

this work, I have repeatedly witnessed how creative movement supports a positive shift in a child's sense of identity and their relationship to self. This has happened in a variety of ways and on various levels.

For instance, I established Flutterby Dance five years ago, piecing together all I had learnt in my career thus far to offer my own creative movement sessions for early years children. I recall one child's pivotal experience. Whom, for the purpose of privacy, I shall refer to as Olivia. Olivia was a good natured, happy and intelligent child. She was five years old and began attending my sessions once a week with her 'gran gran' Jay and stuffed gorilla 'Cinderella'. During one session as she began moving around the space with her shiny red hoop to the sounds of rhythmic drums and Hawaiian melodies, her instinct and raw being started to become bigger than her small frame. Her movements became ambitious, free and unkept. As she mastered the hoop orbiting around her waist before it hit the floor, she beamed and was no longer concerned with her outer surroundings. But instead, a self I had never seen before was being magnetised by her moving from somewhere inside of herself as opposed to an outer reflection or an imitation of her surroundings. She creatively began rolling the hoop along the studio floor on its axis as she exuberantly skipped to catch up, before spinning it fast on its axis, as she interpreted the music in her own space with powerful spins, throwing her body into complex gestures. As she freely followed the music from somewhere inside of herself, her body, and her self were enlivened. She was more curious than she had been previously, less concerned with manifesting the 'correct' steps and instead flowing from a place of not knowing whilst showing sincerity in her movements. By the end of the session, I recall Jay telling me how much Olivia had 'come out of her shell' and 'listened and trusted herself' rather than being too concerned on aesthetically pleasing steps or doing the right thing at the right time. I could not have agreed more with Jay or when

Olivia exclaimed: “I had fun dancing with myself today” A shift in the self had occurred. A shift I wanted to investigate more profoundly.

Curiosity about these observations has led me to this formal research into the relationship between dance and identity for children or ‘*little humans’*. The term little humans is my touchstone term for early years children. Throughout this work, the term helps me to emphasise a child’s autonomy and reflects a personal belief that children need to be respected and heard as individuals. Often, in educational and more formal taught settings, like dance classes, a child’s unique sense of self and autonomy is diminished, and emphasis is placed on the child becoming of their community and culture and that their bodies should reproduce a given form, such as ballet. For reference, please refer to the following: Deleuze and Guittari (1987), Rosenlund Hansen, Weinreich Hansen, and Kristensen 2017; Johansson 2015; Youdell and Armstrong 2011. All authors discuss the varying dynamics between dance as a taught discipline concerned with technique, juxtaposed with a freer creative movement vocabulary. Of particular interest is the notion of smooth and striated spaces and experimentation.

Although my focus here is on self, I also use the term identity. For me, these are not necessarily interchangeable. There are many ways of thinking about identity and self. When thinking about educational settings, I find ‘identity’ a useful term to think about how children are trained and socialised to replicate the ways of others, while I find ‘self’ more useful to think about a child’s intrinsic, innate qualities. I will further problematise self, identity and the binaries the division sets up, on page 8 of this introductory chapter. While children do, of course, reflect and learn from their surrounding environment, families and community, and this is important, however because of my experience in the studio my interest is different. I am focused on how little humans can be encouraged on their unique path of expression and exploration to find an essence of self that is uniquely

theirs. I have observed that it is in these heightened moments of self-expression, that are enabled by the formal processes of dance, that a different quality of freedom and creativity emerges. In these moments little humans use dance to facilitate this beneficial self-exploration on their path towards their unique sense of self.

Many studies have shown the benefits of dancing for physical and mental health conditions in adults in recent years. For example, a 2017 Alzheimer's Society Project found that "[d]ancing increases cognitive acuity". In addition, the study noted that frequent dancing was "the only physical activity to offer protection against dementia". (NP: The Alzheimer's Project, 2017). Moreover, dancing has also been widely acknowledged to ease depression in adults. A study exploring the effectiveness of dance movement therapy (DMT) in the treatment of adults with depression found that "there was a decrease in depression scores in favor of DMT groups in all studies." (Karkou et al; 1, 2019) Furthermore, positive effects have been recorded in adults with Parkinson's disease (PD), the University of Zürich study concludes:

> weekly dance classes for PD patients in a ballet studio have immediate positive effects on motor deficits, especially on the rigidity of the limbs as well as on fine motor skills and facial expression. Furthermore, the quality of life of the patients and their caregivers improved in parallel over eight months of regular participation. (Heiberger et al; np)

However, despite this increase in research with adults, the experience of how dance and movement benefit young children's development is less well understood. This lack of research into movement for children is even more acute with early years children.

Beyond the limited research into the biological and psychological benefits of movement for children, there is a more complex issue to consider. Most research, whether it is based in traditional medicine or not, tends to take a clinical-led approach and focuses on the restoration of health after illness. Most of the little humans I teach are not ill and those who are ill need to be recognised and valued for who they are and who they are coming to be,

someone who is more than a diagnosis. Much work has been done in recent years around the dehumanisation of patients in hospital settings, and particularly the challenges experienced by children with chronic conditions. For instance, in one study it was found the main contributing factors to the inhumane service offered to children with medical complexity (CMC) were a “lack of clinician knowledge about the child and family, clinician apathy, and biased clinician assumptions about the child and family”. The repercussions of such poor-quality healthcare for chronically ill children led families to perceive “that the paediatric health care providers shunned and rejected their children.” ("Discriminating against Children with Medical Complexity.")

I argue that a better understanding of how dance benefits crucial early years experiences is worthy of examination and has particular relevance to clinical settings, although there is also similarity in the ways that children are categorised in educational settings. Experiences within the early years’ phase are critical in how a child develops and can positively benefit the rest of their lives. As Veronica Schiariti, a physician-scientist whose work bridges clinical research and international child health, explains in *Early Child Development: From Measurement to Optimal Functioning and Evidence-based Policy* (2021):

> Early child development and overall children’s developmental trajectories have long term implications for health, functioning, and earning potential as these children become adults. Significantly, failing to reach developmental potential contributes to the global cycles of poverty, inequality, and social exclusion. (1)

A child’s development shapes their outcomes, akin to creating a foundation, which can then be built upon. A child’s experiences during their early years affects the entirety of their lifespan. However, if a child’s foundation is not nourished, the opportunity to build is limited. Ultimately, how a child develops and is able to explore the world at this early stage is likely to imprint and affect their journey as they grow. In my work, I have seen

how this critical time for play and discovery is aided by creative stimuli such as dance and creative movement sessions.

Through classes, workshops, or clubs, creative movement sessions are most often experienced in groups. During my research, I spent time observing and working with three different sorts of early years groups. This field work all took place in 2019. These were all located in the East Sussex region, and the participants were between three and seven years old. The first case study focuses on a Montessori/Reggio Emilia inspired nursery, Hove Village. To set up the research and methodological approach for Hove Village, later in this section, I will speak more about the differences between mainstream and alternative education systems. While on the face of it, as a Montessori Nursery, Hove Village would seem to be part of the alternative education approach, because it is still part of the governments OfSTED system which measures educational quality, some aspects of its approach to teaching and learning are more mainstream.

I also observed and participated in dance classes for nineteen children within a mainstream school at North Shore Infant School, 2019. North Shore is the focus of my second case study. My final case study moves away from formal education to consider dance for children in hospital. This third case study focuses on how four children at the Queen Pearl Hospital experienced dance and movement as part of their long-term stay. The ethnographic research in all three fieldwork studies included observation, participation, evaluation and exploration exercises. At Hove Village Nursery, I also taught, using practice as a research method alongside the approaches used in the other settings. Across all three settings there were one or two sessions per week over a six-week term. Most sessions were approximately forty-five minutes long. The research was conducted during and after each session. When the case studies were completed, I

conducted a thematic analysis to identify the main topics I wanted to explore in more depth.

The fieldwork produced much rich and varied material. Too much for the scope of this thesis. I chose to identify three main themes, each of which frame its main sections: self, self-discovery, and self-rediscovery. The conclusion uses more recent personal experience working with the elderly to frame and develop these findings, highlighting the broader lifespan and an awareness of how we might see ourselves as coming full circle through the life course. It considers the beneficial potential of a more vital, conscious awakening through the entirety of one's lifespan. Threaded through these case studies are considerations of different aspects of dance, and its teaching, including the dynamics of the leader, pedagogical approach, and setting.

In my work, I have observed moments when children have found a freedom through dance that has enabled them to connect to a deeper sense of self and a stronger sense of autonomy. This quality of sovereignty is beneficial and something I try and create in all my teaching. There is no one thing. The setting where the dance happens, the person leading the session, and their facilitation approach, the materials they use, the exercises they use, and the way they respond to what the dances give and require during a session. Also, importantly, the state of the dancer themselves, are all central to a child's ability to positively access their autonomy, engage in self-discovery and enable inner growth. For me, empathetic and playful teaching, aided by creative movement's expressive and musical interplay, creates an environment where little humans can begin a change in themselves, an increased conscious understanding of I and the world around them. These elements in practice help the little human identify their unique 'self', who they are from an inner perspective as distinct from emphasising their capacities to mirror their family or

community. In the following case studies, I will identify some of the key elements that enable these moments where little humans can express their unique self.

The following thematic literature review is primarily focused on the complex and slippery term 'self', which is central to this thesis. Also, I set out some different aspects of dance movement practices that intend to benefit the dancer's well-being. I think of this practice as creative movement (from my personal experience as a teaching artist), this umbrella term also includes dance for health, which treats people with diagnosed health conditions as dancers rather than patients. There is also detail on dance therapy to help define dance for health, which, unlike dance for health, does think of people taking part in the beneficial movement as patients, not dancers. Dance Therapy is a systematized healthcare intervention regulated by healthcare authorities and necessarily thinks about its participants in terms familiar to more traditional healthcare provision. While the terms overlap and merge, these working definitions become helpful as we consider how movement shapes self in clinical and nonclinical settings in the second half of the thesis. This distinction is an important one and important to the third case study, which took place at the Queen Pearl Hospital. In this third case study, I also weave theoretical knowledge into the fieldwork account. In contrast, the chapter *Theoretical Frameworks* discusses the main theories of case studies one and two. The following thematic literature review sets out to build a theoretical framework I will use to analyse the fieldwork in the second part of the thesis. It begins with the work's central theme, the idea of self, and then explores how the self is modulated in the process of self-discovery and self-rediscovery.

Thematic Literature Review

Self

Self is a complex and contested term. Nevertheless, it is the framing concept for the following fieldwork. The first case study is concerned with the self. In the second, this concept of 'self' expands to consider the process of self-discovery through formal education. Then self-rediscovery, drawing on dance in hospital, during and after an illness in the third and final case study. In the conclusion, I use my experiences of dance with elders in residential care to consider the potential of movement to sustain the process of self-reflection and self-development across the life course.

The Oxford English Dictionary online offers an insightful beginning where self is described as:

> the union of elements (such as body, emotions, thoughts, and sensations) that constitute individuality and identity of a person. (np)

Throughout the thesis I will think of the individual dancer as "a union of elements". But these elements and the way they combine, are varied and complex. They change over time, with context and their interpretation by the reflexive dancer. I will explore how the dancer, as an individual self, might identify, and even claim, their unique essence, that which "make[s] that person different from other people." As we will see as the thesis continues, this capacity to identify and celebrate one's unique essence is a central skill, enabled by dance. To begin that process, I begin by setting the term self-discovery against the term identity, using literature from psychology, anthropology and dance ethnography. And, because I am thinking about little humans, I begin with literature concerned with early years.

From Identity to Self-discovery and Self-awareness

The term self-discovery suggests two key ideas: first, this is an action of reflection and change, not a fixed state of being. It is a matter of intention and agency, reaching an understanding or a recognition of oneself. Moreover, at the moment of recognition, that self, just identified, necessarily shifts again. This is the process of developing oneself further through introspection. *The Handbook of Self and Identity* (2015) edited by Mark R. Leary and June Price Tangney, (as mentioned in the thematic literature review) brings together key concepts in psychology and sociology. They note:

> This reflexive recognition of self as unique is central to early years movement and prominent in psychological and anthropological explanations of self (77).

Academics such as Brewer, 1991; Callero, 2003; Elliot, 2001; Markus and Wurf, 1987 and Oyserman, 2007 are prominent in these claims. Beyond the importance of self-recognition in the literature, this reflexive recognition is important to many influential early year educators including Montessori, Reggio, and Steiner. They all believed in the child as a 'unique creator' and visionary. Please refer to: https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13158-020-00277-1. Alternatively further information on these methods can be found in 'Theories and Approaches to learning in the early years' (2010) For these alternative methods, rather than a child being simply one who is of a homogeneous community, who must follow, each child is seen as an individual with the right to be heard. This recognition is different from the common position taken in sociology, as Ting Toomey explains, with the concept of "Identity negotiation theory (INT) concerns the importance of negotiating sociocultural membership identity and personal identity issues in intergroup communication situations." (Ting-Toomey 2017) This type of identity describes a more physical, socially constructed, bargaining tool to identity and 'roles' within interpersonal relationships rather than an individual awareness to a deeper presence of self. Moreover, identity negotiation theory's focus is on the social and material aspects of what makes a person. It does not, however, consider the unseen, an

awareness of a deeper presence within a person. When I watch little humans dance, I sometimes see identity expressed through role play and narrative. More often however, I see a growing awareness of, and connection to a deeper presence of self, an inner self. The term identity then, although like self, is inflected differently. Identity is about how one relates to one's community and culture. In investigating how dance and movement support this reflexive capacity in early years dancers, I find the idea of self to be more useful.

Perhaps due to much of her work examining cultural and ethnic identities through ritualistic dance forms, dance ethnographer, Ann David, describes identity as part of social unity, a type of "collective identity negotiation". This 'social identity' is concerned with the "collection of group memberships that define the individual which may arise from the learning of social roles through personal experience", where individual participants dance together toward a type of identity solidarity and a formidable sense of belonging. Here the body and its actions are "a means of expression and knowledge" (Dankworth and David 137, 2014) one that is born in and of the collective. This emphasis is also supported by Neo-Freudian psychologist, Erikson, who also considers self "a social/cultural identity" (Erikson 31,1972). Erikson argues that child development is influenced by societal expectations and traditional structures such as religion, ethnicity, gender, occupation, family hierarchy or financial status. Therefore, across the literature and between disciplines, sometimes both self and identity can be used to mean the same thing – the way that a person develops in relationship to the context they live in. This approach, where our relationship to external forces, while dominant, is problematic. It does not account for the internal cognitive and somatic processes experienced by the dancer. In many ways, creative dance in early years settings sets out to challenge these sociological constructs of identity. For instance, when young children move, they do so at face value; they are honest and at a stage in their lives where they discover themselves both inwardly and outwardly for the first time.

But this is not always valued, the emphasis remains on the external forces, I will come to argue, however, that nurturing the reflexive dialogue with self, while more difficult, is vitally important. The early years are when the self has the potential to be nourished and expressed alongside a socially constructed identity. By thinking about anthropological constructs of self, we can understand identity differently. I will be using the term identity to determine the ways we think about ourselves as physical beings, relating directly to the world around us, how we respond to external forces. I will be using the term self to describe processes of reflexivity and how dance can help little humans develop their inner awareness.

Acknowledging the problems of setting up a binary opposition, self as oppositional to identity has been successfully used in anthropology. For some anthropologists the idea of self focuses more strongly on the individual instead of a person as one of a social, collective construct. These anthropological definitions begin with the self as autonomous. Brian Morris, emeritus professor of anthropology, in his book *Anthropology of the Self: The Individual in Cultural perspective* (2010), concludes that the self, at least in the western world, places

> a stress on the autonomy of the person, on the perception of the person as 'a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe. (91)

For Morris, self is that ever-changing, rare inner aspect of oneself which runs against "the socio-centric…subordinates individual interest to the good of the collectivity." (Morris 193) This idea prioritizes a more profound, individualistic, and powerful sense of self as opposed to a socially constructed sense of self which is about creating an identity built on belonging and a 'better for all' approach. Dance is, most often, a collective activity. Education values community and reciprocity. It is perhaps strange therefore that I should

emphasise the power of self-reflection, yet it is this self-awareness that allows the little human the space to discover themselves in relationship to others supporting confidence and enabling creativity.

Creative movement can emphasise this relationship to self and the process by which a child's creation of self is a response to an internal transcendent encounter as opposed to an external material reality. Therefore, this thesis is primarily concerned with the transcendent self and how the dancer's interaction with themselves relates to an inner consciousness and the internal process of self-discovery in little humans. Similar then, to this idea of difference surrounding identity (outer self) and self (inner self). These following two concepts bring more clarity to the underlying psychological implications within the self-discovery process.

Self and Identity

The Handbook of self and Identity (2015), edited by Mark R. Leary and June Price Tangney, brings together key concepts in psychology and sociology. In my career as a performer, teacher and practitioner, I have encountered and used psychological terms when describing the behaviour of the early years children I was working with; but this usage was imprecise. This book has been essential in helping me. It is primarily concerned with theory and research-based psychology rather than clinical psychology. A critical chapter in the edited collection has been invaluable in helping me express key concepts, 'Emerging Self Processes during Childhood and Adolescence' (Harter 56, 2016) Which I discuss further in the Cole chapter, page… Here, Susan Harter explains the key influences of identity and self-discovery within children in-depth. Two stages were of interest, 'very early childhood (ages 2-4) and what she termed 'middle childhood' (5-7). She describes 'I-self processes', including the stages: 'self- awareness',

'self-agency' and 'self-continuity' within the young childhood framework. For example, during very early childhood, Harter describes self-awareness: "the young child understands the self only as separate, taxonomic attributes that may be physical…active…social…or psychological". Furthermore, we must remember a child's agency may be disjointly communicated as "young children's thinking is transductive, in that they reason from particular to particular, in no logical order". Moreover, it's important to note, a young child's self-continuity may be dominated by Fischer's (1980) formulation as "he labels these initial structures 'single representations'". (Harter 32, 2016) Meaning a young child will interpret his/her experience as random standalone pieces of emotion or observation as opposed to necessarily linking and merging their experience or action. These findings are important to my work as Harter provides insightful knowledge on key developmental psychological stages, potential triggers, and communication responses to a child's own perception of self-discovery and their awareness of it. Providing invaluable insight into a child's internal relationship with self.

A further prominent concept is 'True self vs false self' behaviour. For example, Harter states:

> Certain childrearing practices can implant a socially constructed false sense that builds upon unrealistic self-perception, compromising one's sense of authenticity. (46)

These influences help to identify for me, as a specialist within this age group, the potential barriers to a child's self and how movement can help them overcome limitations and embody their sense of self alongside a socially constructed identity. By encouraging a child to play and manipulate movements within a make-believe setting, an inner expression arises from using their bodies in the outer world. I have observed, through my teaching practice, as a child moves holistically, they tap into a different quality of being. For this age group, a child's first sense lies within their body. The mind and language

alone, may create falsities, fragmenting or suffocating a young child's full experience, yet the body may help navigate their enquiry wholly, helping them to express their emotion and raw being. Bringing the child closer to their inner self.

Nevertheless, it is certainly interesting to note how, even at this young age, dependent on certain outside factors, a child can already begin to adopt a more internally connected sense of self alongside a socially constructed type of identity. Harter explains that this may be coerced by many external influences, often beginning with "childrearing practices". That is the behaviour of the parent or guardian first and foremost. Harter then denotes a second key influence: "The emergence of language is the first precursor of the ability to display or suppress one's true self feelings". (47) Language may be used to either highlight their self and felt being or conceal that part of them. Harter discusses the onset and use of language as a 'double-edged sword' by giving the child a narrative. This type of storytelling can be beneficial to the child as they are able to play, create, and use their imaginations to help reveal an inner awareness and expression. However, sometimes this may be misconstrued as false storytelling. Either due to caregivers' own false recollections or a parent who only presents "a false outer self that does not represent their own inner experiences". (58) These ideas resonated with me, and I chose to experiment within my field of movement and with young children to better understand how their inner selves emerged through the power of movement. For instance, if the onset of language and the influence of a caregiver's behaviour may predict a socially constructed self, by giving children the opportunity to move freely without instructing them how they must move, a child's inner self may react or, at the very least be nudged to the forefront. Children know their bodies. They tend to be more comfortable with their bodies. Language is a relatively new method of communication by which feelings of anxiety or fear may occupy their expression. By valuing and supporting their relationship

with their bodies, a more genuine version of self-discovery and awareness could be possible, fore fronting the little human's own inner discoveries.

I have discussed self and identity, due to this key terminology's importance within the case studies in the second half of the thesis. I then clarified the differences between the ideas of an internal and an external self and the ways I have witnessed dance bring the inner self to the forefront of a child's being. Having explored this complex, and often contradictory idea, I felt it was important to consider the potential barriers to a child's self-discovery and how different aspects within both education and upbringing could influence a child's inner discovery of self.

Dance and movement set up the conditions where little humans can connect to a transcendent self and interaction with an inner consciousness. Central to that possibility are the approach of the facilitator and the spaces that movement takes place in. While I will focus on the details of how spaces and people worked differently in the different settings included in the case studies, here I want to think more generally about what processes were taking place to facilitate an interaction with an inner consciousness. This brings me onto another key idea within my work, liminality, and the creation of a liminal space within dance practice. This occurrence may be important in facilitating a shift in consciousness or state of being, happening amid self-discovery or even self-rediscovery.

Liminality: Self and Change

Liminality and the qualities of a liminal state may often be acquired during a creative movement session. This experience of movement may create a changed state, one of 'betwixt and between' for the child compared to before the session, sometimes even fuelling a shifted or changed self, even after the session has ended. This period of liminality during the dance encounter may often take the dancer into a new, holistic

awareness and a more profound sense of reality, where the child can explore and freely embody a type of moving self. One which the participant may not be fully aware of until this transitioning moment. This moment can be seen as a central focus of dance's beneficial power towards a new, shifted or realised sense of self within the study. Richard Schechner in *Performance Studies: An Introduction,* (2020) speaks of the cultural anthropologist, Victor Turner's own fascination with liminality as a chance to be "creative, to make new situations, identities, and social realities" (66). These are qualities I recognise from my work with children. But liminality is a complex idea, one that is difficult to define. Schechner, reflecting on the way that liminality research had its beginnings in rituals that changed the consciousness of the performer before widening the idea to include other performance practices, goes on to note:

> Liminal rituals are transformations, permanently changing who people are. Liminoid (participation in voluntary artistic pursuits such as dance) rituals affecting a temporary change… transportation, one enters into the experience is moved or touched (apt metaphors). (66-67)

As we will see, in the following case studies, by taking the participant on a voluntary journey into a new creative state, they are empowered and sufficiently in control to playfully explore movements, leading to a higher awakening of self. Schechner also notes the temporary nature of liminal shifts, however, in the process of self-discovery and self-rediscovery I believe the encounter with an inner consciousness, however fleeting, does change how dancers understand themselves and their world. Therefore, the change may still be permanent after a dance encounter has ended, as seen in ritual or religious encounters of liminality. In rituals that are rites of passage, people are changed in relationship to their outer community – they have come of age, they are now married. Identities are changed. In contrast, during a creative movement session, particularly during the phase of movement-making, a child has the opportunity to find a deep

awakening during this betwixt stage before reaching what Dewey (1916) refers to as the 'threshold'. That is, the other side of their experience. In fact

> Dewey (1916) highlights the importance of bodily activities being understood as part of (or embedded in) the meaning-making processes to help learners to reach deep and rich understandings. In essence, thinking and doing are bonded together in a mutual and simultaneous dialogical relation (Armour et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the liminality that can be enabled by creative movement, may begin with the self. Due to every inch of our senses being awakened as we move expressively and mindfully.

If we then look at liminality and self in dance ethnographer, Anne David's work, she argues how dance framed by collaborative practices creates liminal spaces. She notes that, as part of a complex set of context, practices and activities, movement has an apparent capacity to help participants shift into a liminal state. These are states where dance practices highlight "the boundary between the opposites of insider/outsider where new narratives of belonging are negotiated" (David and Samuel 30). Again, David is leaning more towards a socially constructed emergence from a shared experience and therefore part of a unified new group identity belonging. While the settings I worked in, the collective experience matters and a well held learning space facilitates a sense of positive community. This work is primarily concerned with how creative movement on a deeper level, as a singular self.

Like David, award-winning author, philosopher, dancer, and playwright, Kimerer L. LaMothe, too sees the creation of self as a collective process. Within her book *Why we Dance* (2015)**,** she speaks of a similar bonding and identity belonging. Here LaMothe suggests "physiological changes induced by the experience of communal bodily movement, resulting in an expanded emotional solidarity". (115) But LaMothe offers an important distinction from David. This solidarity, she explains, is an embedded emotional

self rather than one built from social frameworks. Perhaps then, it is valid to recognise how dance can place us in an alternative emotional state. This is important as emotion, how we feel, creates an intense awareness and chance of expression, helping us awaken these senses and bring us closer to our inner selves. In cycle, then, we can then shift from the movement generated liminal state that allows feeling into a deeper liminal state where we bring our inner sensitivities to the forefront once our body begins to move expressively.

As noted above, typical observations of liminality refer to a community established experience set apart in space and time. However, Lamothe sees self as a permanently transitional state where our inner identity is an "ongoing pulse" (LaMothe 24), an internal existence that is not constant but forever changing and our identity changing with it, transient and never constant. Our lives develop through circumstance and experience, and so do our internal devices. Like David, Lamothe argues that our outward experience determines our inward character. I agree with this statement in part. However, I also believe that certain inner aspects of ourselves stay constant as a fragment of our unique being. This unique being is our true self, and creative movement has the potential to help young children explore this through a liminal, holistic and multisensory experience.

Working with early years children, I increasingly agree with the author Brenda Shoshanna. She states: Unless we base our sense of identity upon the truth of who we are, it is impossible to attain true happiness. (np) Perhaps dance brings such joy because it taps into this truth of who we are. Self, then, is in part a construction of societal norms and cultural practices expressed through our bodies. It is also partly an individual expression of those shared embodied beliefs, which makes us different, but it is more than that. This thesis is concerned with understanding how movement shapes a child's ability to express the "truth

of who they are". Like other teachers, I have glimpsed that raw essence as Gertrud Falke Heller (1891-1984) explained,

> my (dance) pupils later said that I had brought out of them what was in them. I had not shown them, 'You must do this, and this as I do it.' But I had tried to get at the person. (Loukes 78, 2007)

To 'get at the person' is the purpose of my research journey. This process of getting at the person is also central to the next stage of my thesis, the process of self-rediscovery. Self-rediscovery goes one step further than self-discovery, by allowing a child to not only discover themselves but completely reconnect with a lost aspect of self.

Self-rediscovery

As a dance practitioner I principally worked in school and club settings. In my research, I was therefore very interested to see how dance for early years was happening in other settings. I wondered how, if dance enables the development of the inner self, this was shaped by the difference places and groups the classes took place. I had the opportunity to observe creative movement sessions at The Queen Pearl Hospital, [Brighton]. After observing these sessions and reflecting on how they related to the other classes I had seen, and my previous experiences, I realized a different engagement with self was happening- self (re) discovery. I explore my experiences at the hospital in more depth in case study three, but here, to set that up, I want to define what I mean by self-rediscovery.

Dance is not only a means to help children discover who they are but also to help them rediscover themselves after an experience of loss or trauma. However, dance in this case is not necessarily a therapeutic cure, where the child is restored to their former state

of health. It is however a means to support the rediscovery of a part of oneself thought lost, hidden or forgotten. We might think of it as healing rather than curing.

Bonnie Bernstein, the Director of "Life is Movement" Dance/Movement Therapy Institute wrote the article *Empowerment-focused dance/movement therapy for Trauma Recovery* (2019) which emphasises the potential of creative dance to support trauma patients in creating healing transformation. The chapter entitled *Creative Dance: The Power of Imagery and Symbolic Expression* explores the potential of creative dance to both physically and psychologically 'move' an emotionally or mentally vulnerable patient. Bernstein suggests that when dance is based on imagery, metaphor or theme, it can safely touch on challenging issues without manifesting the difficult raw emotions:

> Introducing creative dance explorations drawn from a vast reservoir of imagery and metaphors can shape experiences of unrecognised aspects of a person's strength such as dignity, courage, forcefulness or grace. (Bernstein 200)

Creative movement allows a person to enjoy movement as a participant and dancer instead of solely as a patient. Rather than reflecting on raw memories, themes and imagery create a safe space for a participant to naturally work through and embrace dance as an art form, themselves as a dancer, enacting a rediscovery of hidden or forgotten strengths and talents beyond the current trauma or illness they encounter. Then, once discovered safely and effectively, via symbiosis, the patient may explore and evolve, rising into a more positive self-image. This concept was particularly helpful to my third case study, whilst analysing the use of creative movement on child patients in a hospital setting. Bernstein's theories opened my awareness to a powerful self-imagery that creative movement may awaken in a patient leading to a heightened self-rediscovery.

However, it is essential to note that Bernstein's work is concerned with therapy. Dance movement therapy (DMT) uses:

> dance/movement as a psychotherapeutic tool and is rooted in the idea that the body and the mind are inseparable. Its basic premise is that body movement reflects inner emotional states and that changes in movement behaviour can lead to changes in the psyche, thus promoting health and growth. (Levy 121, 2005)

While there are overlaps in the literature and practice, dance therapy is different from dance for health. Dance for health provides holistic, evidence-based activities for the individual to manage and adapt to physical, mental and social health challenges.

> In dance for health sessions, trained teaching artists engage people as dancers, as opposed to patients, in joyful, interactive, artistic practice. ("Dance For Health | International Association for Dance Medicine & Science")

Dance for health then, could be held somewhere between the clinical proceedings of DMT and the widespread access of creative movement, usually taking place in clinical settings and the wider community. Similar to Bernstein, Suzi Tortora, who is a Dance/Movement Therapist, Author of *The Dancing Dialogue*, Certified Laban Movement Analyst and Infancy Mental Health Specialist, wrote an article: *Children are born to Dance* (2019) also discussing DMT. Her article focuses on pediatric oncology rather than trauma patients. Tortora defines and clarifies the difference between dance as a taught art form and medical DMT as a psychotherapeutic modality— aimed at addressing the patient's psychosocial needs where dance and therapeutic movement are used recreationally to engage patients during hospital visits. Tortora includes a literature review of DMT with medically ill children in the United States and worldwide. A particular case study that caught my attention concerned a Cancer patient named James, who was four years old. Within their DMT session, they use the popular child's story: "We're going on a bear hunt". This story built on adventure's struggle and heroic narratives become a metaphor for cancer itself:

> As we encounter each new hurdle, James' actions become more determined and stronger. The message is clear… We're [trying to] not [be] scared! …

> But… Uh! Oh! There is no choice.…We can't avoid it [the cancer experience]. We must go through it [and find a way to bravely approach it]. (Tortora 2019)

This study, as many others in the preschool section of this journal, highlight creative movements' ability to help a child rediscover themselves and their innate strengths, through the process of self-rediscovery they move into a wiser, more robust, happier version of themselves. Ultimately, this process takes them beyond the illness and allows the young child to see past what is immediate and move towards a future. This movement practice gives them a sense of power and regain of control which may have seemed lost before the introduction of creative movement occurred.

Tortora's article culminates with a focus on advancements in the field, discussing the future of pediatric medical DMT. Grounded in a biopsychosocial perspective, the intrinsically nonverbal and embodied nature of pediatric medical DMT is uniquely positioned to be a vital component of integrative oncology services. The analysis ends with a call for research posing the question:

> Can pediatric medical DMT support the patient to express a feeling while in cancer treatment within the context of a psychotherapeutic milieu, enabling the patient to create an embodied coherent narrative that fosters expressivity and empowerment? (Tortora 2019)

Children are born to Dance also helps to clarify the differences and overlaps between DMT and dance as a creative or recreational activity. The writing has helped to support the basis of which I will return to in case study three in the hospital, especially the topic of empowerment and self-agency. Nonetheless, this research is not here to set up an argument between DMT and movement for health but merely to show how movement can encourage a substantial healing benefit for children. Although there are overlaps between the two, creative movement is seen more as an artistic endeavour, whereas DMT is displayed as psychotherapeutic.

I have observed that an inner realisation often fuels this process of rediscovery. Either a child feels they have lost who they used to be and want to become that person again, or the child does not recognise who they now are, following their trauma, and ultimately wants to become someone entirely 'new' to serve and fulfil their inner being. Self-rediscovery begins a process of change, a process that fulfils their inner being to something new, a new self that integrates the trauma. This process changes one's inner being from what it used to be. In some ways, this is more powerful than even self-discovery. A child must change an already habitual mindset or idea of 'who they are'. Or, at least who the child is told they are. This idea can be particularly important after an illness or trauma. Dance can help little humans physically rewrite their future selves. Instead of identifying as an 'illness' or 'patient'; by expressing themselves physically through dancing to music, the dancer, in turn, shares an inner response with a fellow dancer, the music, the space that they are in. This inner response is akin to a compass, redirecting the child's present and future self, often giving a type of healing process. Dr Sarah Goldingay (a drama specialist exploring chronic pain, healing and the placebo response) defines a healing experience as:

> a positive change towards a state of greater Integration of mind, body and soul; as a journey, and as a process that leads to more harmony and well-being, as well as our, being able to function more fully, and flourish. (2021)

This type of dance experience can lead to a child physically reimaging their selves. By using spontaneous, creative movement, the participant rewires their brain and realises a capacity for independent, intuitive thought. The child as patient's life may be full of dehumanising routines, rules, and procedures, but the child as dancer, by breaking that cycle and moving passionately, they can reimagine a new way of life. They are creating a new position of hope, optimism, and action.

Throughout this thematic literature review, I have broken down key ideas and terminology which is reflected in the case studies. I began with this notion of self. Self is a complicated idea, and my work helps to define both the idea of identity and the inner transcendent self. My work is interested in this second idea-the inner aspect of self. This idea of the inner self is prominent and important in my case studies as it is a way of talking about how the inner self is nurtured through performance and dance participation in the early years' child. Self-discovery as a process of recognition and change. That is, once the child becomes aware of this sense of self they may move in new and spontaneous ways. The child gains autonomy, which dance helps to manifest by setting up a liminal environment for the child. A liminal environment creates a playful, imaginative, and creative juxtaposition helping to aid reflexive recognition leading to a positive change which is central to this idea of self-discovery. The liminal state is a way of accessing an internal authenticity that is more easily expressed through the body than with words. Words or language as portrayed in the inner vs outer self of the literary review can have adverse effects on a child's sense of self. Often, due to language's ease of miscommunication, particularly for the young child or the inability to express themselves accurately with the 'right' words. However, creative movement helps a child to navigate their inner qualities by holistically infusing all of themselves in an expressive way.

This then takes me onto the idea of self-rediscovery after a loss or trauma. Here, creative movement helps a child reconnect to self or find a new version of themselves. By moving imaginatively and creatively, a child may regain control and establish themselves away from their outer patient identity. Instead, creative movement helps the child to rediscover themselves internally and move forwards in an optimistic way. Sometimes this may even help cure the child if the illness is deemed recoverable or acute. Alternatively, it

can be a part of a child's healing process and a way for the child to work through the trauma by drawing on an inner strength and control that doesn't associate solely with a disease. This may be more profound when the disease is incurable or chronic, such as Karen's in the third case study. Karen was diagnosed with cancer and although she eventually went into remission, this could have not been the case. For Karen, self-rediscovery was an ongoing journey. A process of change and then rechange to adapt to a fluctuating condition and the need for a self away from an identity of a patient or disease.

Methodology and Ethics

In designing the project's research approach, I wanted to work in a range of early years educational settings to better understand how self was shaped by the way movement was taught and used. Through literature-informed theoretical analysis of fieldwork observations, interviews and innovative data collection methods I sought to synthesise best practice from a diverse range of dance groups to share with a wider research and teaching community. I recognised that there were two key ethical challenges in the process. First, I would be working in early-years settings and therefore with vulnerable groups. Second, because I was already a dance teacher who already had prior experience of a variety of educational approaches, that I would have both a bias based on that experience which would shape all aspects of the research and analysis process along with a valuable expertise to contextualise my findings. The following sections explain first my ethical approach, especially in working with vulnerable children and second my adoption of ethnography focused on grounded theory as my method of choice.

Ethical Approach

Following authorisation from the University of Exeter Ethics Committee, working with six or seven participants between the age range of three to seven years old, I made six visits (or a term's worth of classes) for roughly an hour each time to the three UK-based research locations. As part of the formal ethics process required by the University, I invited

parents/guardians/carers to give consent on behalf of a child taking part. I explained the results would form part of my thesis. I also explained, should a participant wish, I would send them a final copy of my thesis. I also explained that some of the results or findings within this study may also be used within future academic transcripts/publications and towards future academic work. Each participant was allowed to stop taking part at any time up until the end of the research visits without having to give a reason. However, after this time, the writing process would have begun, and data anonymised. Withdrawal, therefore, after this time, would not be possible. Participants were able to ask to withdraw in person, via email or phone correspondence. Data has been stored in line with the University processes for secure data usage and management (see Appendix 1).

In my fieldwork sessions, I observed some of the time, while other practitioners led the sessions. I also interviewed Lorelai (North Shore) and Tina (Queen Pearl Hospital), respectively. Using semi-structured interviews, I asked the children questions about their experience in groups and as individuals. The same questions were applied in all three settings (see appendix 2)

For everyone, adults and children, talking about what movement feels like and the way it effects how we understand the world is challenging. This is particularly acute for early years children who are still learning how to use language to describe both the material and immaterial world. It was important therefore to offer non-verbal ways of responding. To support this process of sharing, I also invited the children to draw pictures about their experiences and play a game with beads. The drawings gave a deeper insight into how they felt directly after the sessions. For instance, “drawings evoke sensory awareness in the participants”, which may help “participants to access different ways of understanding and feeling that are not easily accessible through words”. (Harris and

Guillemin 689, 2012)

It gave each child more tangible involvement rather than having to simply stumble upon the 'correct' words. The beads game was a particularly useful exercise with young children as it was both engaging and easier to comprehend for the child, rather than solely verbal or written evaluations. Moreover, I interviewed Elaine Faull, who completed a PhD in 2020 concerning children and performance. Her advice helped extend and enrich my own research practices. I will detail these processes from page 42 onwards within this chapter.

Sessions were recorded via video footage. I decided it would be most helpful to record the first and last session in each fieldwork study. This gave a clear indication of the changes which had occurred within the participants. Other recordings included questionnaires and, in some instances, audio. These were both gathered at the end of the fieldwork studies. I then consulted all data approximately two months later, in order to review all findings with fresh eyes. All data has been kept strictly confidential. Furthermore, the practical research activities, i.e., the placement of beads in jars and drawings, has been kept entirely anonymous, and these activities were not filmed or identifiably recorded in any manner. No sensitive or identifiable data has appeared within my final Thesis. All names and other identifiable sources have been changed unless permission has been given by the interviewee. This applies to all children, staff and placement names, with the exception of Hove Village and Kathryn Hyatt.

Ethnography and Grounded Theory

Dankworth and David (independent dance researcher and senior lecturer (dance) at

Roehampton University) argue for "the inherent meaningfulness of Dance and for the place of Dance as an essential human practice." Despite such a broad reaching claim, I find myself in agreement with them. I also agree with their decision to use ethnography as their principal research methodology. As they explain "an ethnographical methodology, despite its complexities, remains a direct and effective tool for engagement with people and their embodied praxis, as also for its inscription of both narrative and theory in a thick description." (Dankworth and David 29, 2014) While Hymes points out that a "definition of Ethnography is….an elusive and complicated question!" (Hammersley, M. 44, 2017) In this section I will describe first how I have used ethnography to engage with people and their embodied praxis and second how I have brought together narrative and theory in a thick description.

People and Their Embodied Praxis:

Dance is concerned with the body, its psychophysical use and purpose. The meaning of dance for the observer, whether in a social, cultural, or psychological context, comes first through the interpretation of an experiential body and, therefore, the moving body itself. If one merely sat idle and began to try and understand the meanings and complexities of dance, they may only vaguely scratch the surface. For no type of notetaking, recording, statistical analysis, nor evaluation can take the role of ethnographical placement, particularly if your outcome strives for a qualitative, phenomenological and rich tapestry of unique findings. Findings found intrinsically through both participant and researcher and their personal experience. That is, the embodied praxis and understanding of the dancer themselves, my own understanding as researcher and observer of the dancing participant and sometimes both at the same time.

Narrative and theory in a thick description:

Ethnographers use a 'thick description', a way of describing a complex collection of ideas and experiences that make up the research project's data. In many ways, ethnographical research, if used correctly, opens access to the 'best of both worlds,' where scholarship, literature and theories are combined to frame and shape the interpretive narrative of the ethnographer's experience.

Ultimately, it is this ethnographical placement that I strive to not only absorb but wholeheartedly practice within my research project. The said use of methodology is what I will be discussing in more detail in the remaining chapter. A type of "enactive knowledge", "to know with your body" and get "under the skin" (Hammersley 14, 2014) by using the powerful notion of the emplaced body as a tool for ethnographic research. I do not simply want to read an account or recount of said happenings, but I want to be there in the flesh, to witness, to absorb and comprehend the findings I encounter before me fully. I want to be one of them; recount a dance session with them, not solely as a researcher but as an attendee, an absorber. To physically and emotively move with them. To be fully present as one with the moving child and to witness everything. Hence the reasons why Ethnography is not only a research method I shall 'use' but 'be'. For

> The self is one of the key resources in Ethnography…and nowhere more so than in the anthropology of dance where it is vital that the writer dances and shares the dance experience, join in with the dances and embodies the Dance. (Dankworth and David 21, 2014)

Therefore, this notion of a researcher as part of the practice and experiential embodiment of dance itself is crucial. How can one begin to understand the phenomenological, social or cultural aspects of dance in practice without practising the ritual themselves? This practical involvement will give a far more complex and meaningful analysis with the imperative absorption of the more incredible dynamics at work.

For instance, the relationship with other attendees and dancers. The power dynamic between the lead practitioner and the student dancer. The displacement of the choreography. The phenomenological aspects of the dancer in their body, cultural acquisition and placement. Not to mention the meaning and logistics behind the positioning of each dancer and ultimately, the greater meaning of the piece of movement as a whole. It is this 'whole' experience which I will strive to recreate through a thick description with the use of participation, observation, reflection and interview. This method is also vastly suited to who I am as a researcher as I constantly strive for individualised cases, qualitative, detailed, and in-depth findings. This is often driven by my inner belief: that there is never truly a 'one fits all' result. Indeed, there are always other unique and unusual happenings and values to consider—occasions which should never be overlooked as a minor case or cause. However, most notably and significantly, Ethnography and Grounded Theory, I believe, is suited to the context of my chosen area of research. Particularly with regards to the need for a one-on-one individualised account rather than simply a quantitative theoretical standpoint.

Allow me to explain further. For instance, if I was researching a sedentary or unsocial case within the Mathematics or Sciences. These subjects may not directly affect people or at least are not of a physical discourse nor disposition, and so may not benefit from an ethnographical approach as profoundly. Either because it would be impossible or simply unnecessary.

However, as dance is such a physical, mental, and to varying degrees, emotional encounter, if you're not there as a person to holistically embrace the experience, then how can one be responsible for researching the topic at all? Let alone thoroughly. You

are simply recounting another's idea or academia without physical justification nor proof, with no lived-in story.

The dilemma then falls with the sourcing of the research and the authenticity of the approach. For example, the lack of originality and physical practice may culminate in a shallow, pre-managed result. Diluted. No new discourse. You are failing then to push the research forwards. Instead, my mission is not focused on the 'how's but instead, 'the 'why's. The journey. Rather than merely the result. Therefore, when your focus shifts towards want to understand from a social and experiential perspective, ethnography, I believe, is a far more 'real' and focused way of doing so.

Now don't get me wrong, as with any methodology, there may be pitfalls. For instance, the apparent expense and need for funding when one takes on such extensive fieldwork, whereby time may be tight and money tighter. This method is in no way helped by the rapidly growing and recent decrease in support of Ethnographical research, in favour of Quantitative based findings and results-driven data as outlined below:

> Renewed stress in Government circles on randomised controlled trials as the Gold Standard. Another is the Q-step programme in which large amounts of money are being devoted to quantitative methods training. This shift towards Quantitative methods activity is happening and will have consequences for those wishing to do Ethnography. ("Emergence" Vs. "Forcing" Of Empirical Data? A Crucial Problem Of "Grounded Theory" Reconsidered On JSTOR". Jstor.Org, 2022; np)

Then there is the dilemma of Ethical Regulation. As this has spread through Social Science means of gaining informed consent are complex. "Because by its very nature Ethnographic fieldwork changes over its course, rather than simply involving the implementation of an agreed research design." (Hammersley 15, 2017) Things change, circumstances change. And this, unfortunately, can be a somewhat problematic area as it becomes harder and harder to gain the correct consent when grey areas emerge within this

rather needy, ever-changing research dynamic. Such is the nature of ethnographic methodology, particularly when mixed with Grounded theory. Another method I wish to use within my research.

Grounded theory, adopted in some of my prior research journeys, will help facilitate an 'open mind' rather than suffocating data only to fit specific criteria or questions. Instead, grounded theory holds the freedom for the experimental. This process allows an array of findings to surface through the researcher's enquiry, providing a raw and honest quality to each experience. Grounded combined with the rich in-person experiences of ethnography means the possibilities are far-reaching. Moreover, these methodologies combined provide a far more realist ethnographical encounter rather than a solely critical one. Although these methodologies may not always be the correct choice, as contemplated above, combined, they powerfully allow an authentic aptitude. There are no hypothetical agendas, no fundamental limits (apart from time and money, as previously mentioned) and no prior expectations. These two methodologies easily entwine to create a freed exploration and a sponge-like exterior ready to absorb every experience. Unrestricted. They reflect the goal of my research, naturalistic enquiry.

However, it is still imperative to note the unfortunate cynicism that may reflect and manifest within Grounded Theory. For instance, we must heed 'emergence' vs 'forcing' with the empirical data we unearth. As well as not push too heavily towards a stimulus we wish to follow, but instead, be patient and allow a natural emergence of data to surface. As Glacer and Strauss stress the need to both generate "theoretical sensitivity" and "see the relative data" (103, 1999). Meaning both pieces of knowledge of theoretical acquisitions is needed alongside a deeply empirical analysis. However, where experts deem grounded theory unsatisfactory or 'too ambiguous' tends to be through the 'weak methodology'. Due to its failure to follow a concise set of rules and theory, the decoding

of the information and data may get lost in a generalisation of cause and effect, with a lack of interrogative gusto or indeed the most accurate of findings. While I appreciate, this may not be an excellent method for some purpose-built scientific research in need of a specific question and a definitive answer, for this broader topic of discovery through the manipulation of the arts. It is near perfect.

Grounded theory follows the straightforward rules of not having a question set in stone beforehand. Instead, it allows the researcher to follow the data and the main subtext into codes to be broken down and analysed systematically. Not only this, but grounded theory encourages a lack of pre-conceived judgement or belief so as not to 'blind' or 'mould' the study before we have begun. Then, we need a happy medium of prior theoretical knowledge and a profoundly open mind, not to mention the favourable use of the empirical in this context. Which may not be more accurate but deeply more insightful for the type of qualitative research I wish to establish. That is through "gaining knowledge by means of direct and indirect observation or experience." (Bryant and Charmaz 22, 2011) Combining practice and theory methods adds a powerful dynamic to the research as a 'whole experience' rather than a data specific entry. Particularly insightful when GT is known as a guide or a helpful accomplice instead of a strict theory or method you must adhere to completely. When used in this way, GT has the potential to be a robust and open investigator. For this study particularly, I find GT not only a viable choice but the most prominent and intrinsically stimulating. Mainly well guided by this research field being underpinned by my practice and working knowledge as a dance specialist and combined with vast experience in Montessori and Standard teaching institutions for this age range. All these angles and edges will support my research, for educative theory is complex. There is no doubt. As Hirst knowingly points out, through his analysis of Educational Theory-

> It is not only about the number of problems (questions) that the discipline attempts to find an answer to, but mainly about the type of problems adequately taken up within its scope. It is difficult to find another discipline that takes up a specific research problem so extensively, in both a descriptive– explanatory as well as a normative manner. This demonstrates the high potential for research, namely the possibility of adequately rooting within it many research problems of diverse types, as well as the consequent possibility, using various research methods, ways of justifying the formulated theses, explanatory contexts or higher susceptibility to criticism.

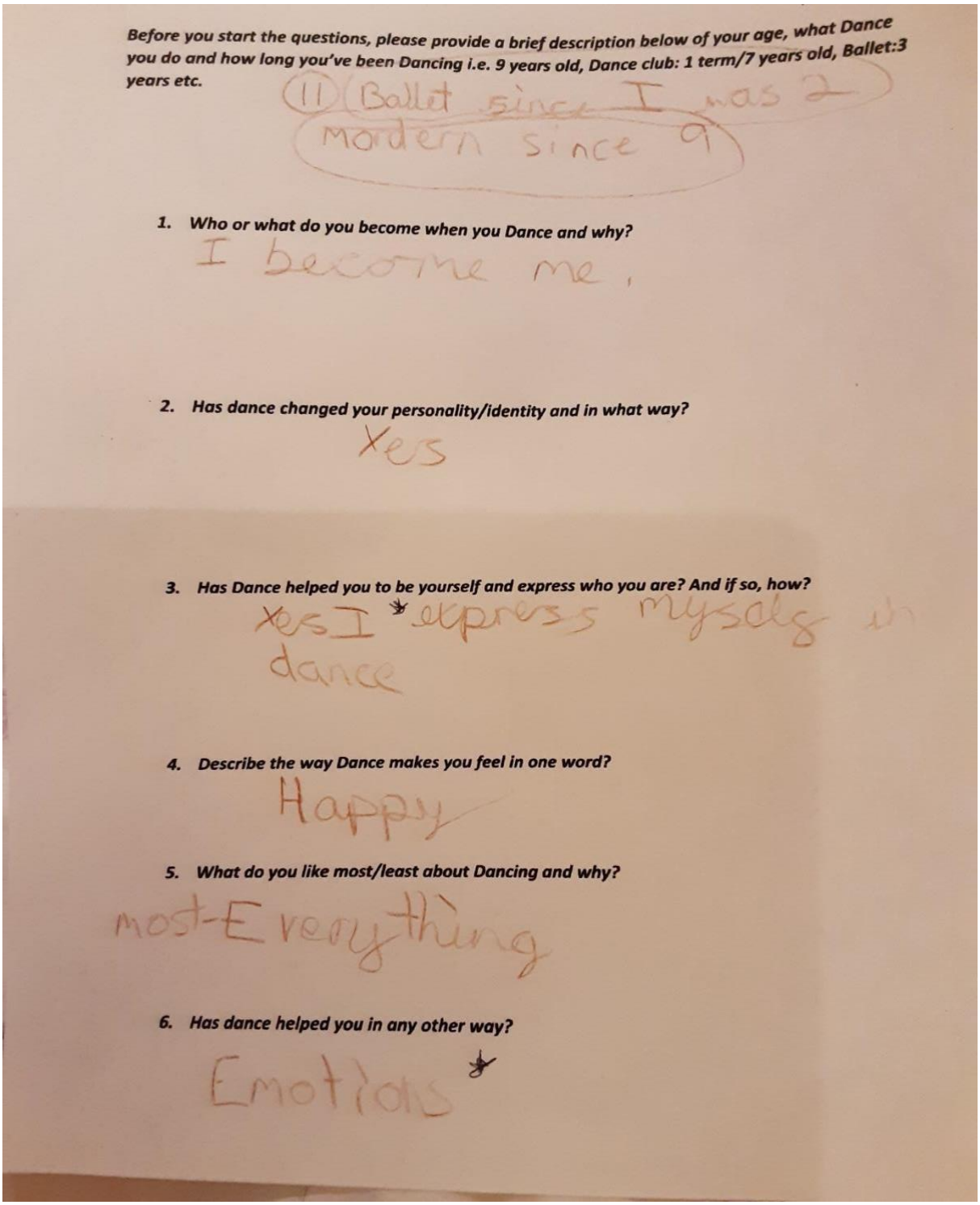
Furthermore, he adds:

> […] To my mind, the explanation of human activities in an area like education involves not only the sciences, including the social sciences, but also matters of beliefs and values […] the development of rational practice demands that debate, and because ends and means are not ultimately separable, I must accept that the theory must incorporate all the confusions of a contemporary debate about values. (Hirst 4,2012)

We can see then when one dares to research into education, particularly whilst investigating into the different education methodologies. Including the effect this can have on each child, much research and responsibility must be in precedence and thoroughly mastered. A light, whimsical approach should never induce this. A deep backbone must be sought and understood first and foremost. However, I wish to pursue and investigate further, within the educative theory and research, is its ethical-normative dimension, and therefore a far more philosophical address of education. As the aim is "inter alia, to analyse the problem of purpose in education (i.e. a strictly ethical sphere)." Instead of solely concentrating on "descriptions and explanations of education (as in the case of psychology and sociology),". Or indeed focusing too heavily on "scientific practice and definitions, as well as the history of this field of study." (Hirst 5, 2012)

Fieldwork and collective data

Semi-structured interviews and questionnaires



Before you start the questions, please provide a brief description below of your age, what Dance you do and how long you've been Dancing i.e. 9 years old, Dance club: 1 term/7 years old, Ballet:3 years etc.

11 Ballet since I was 2
Mordern since 9

1. Who or what do you become when you Dance and why?

I become me,

2. Has dance changed your personality/identity and in what way?

Yes

3. Has Dance helped you to be yourself and express who you are? And if so, how?

Yes I express mysdlg in dance

4. Describe the way Dance makes you feel in one word?

Happy

5. What do you like most/least about Dancing and why?

most-Everything

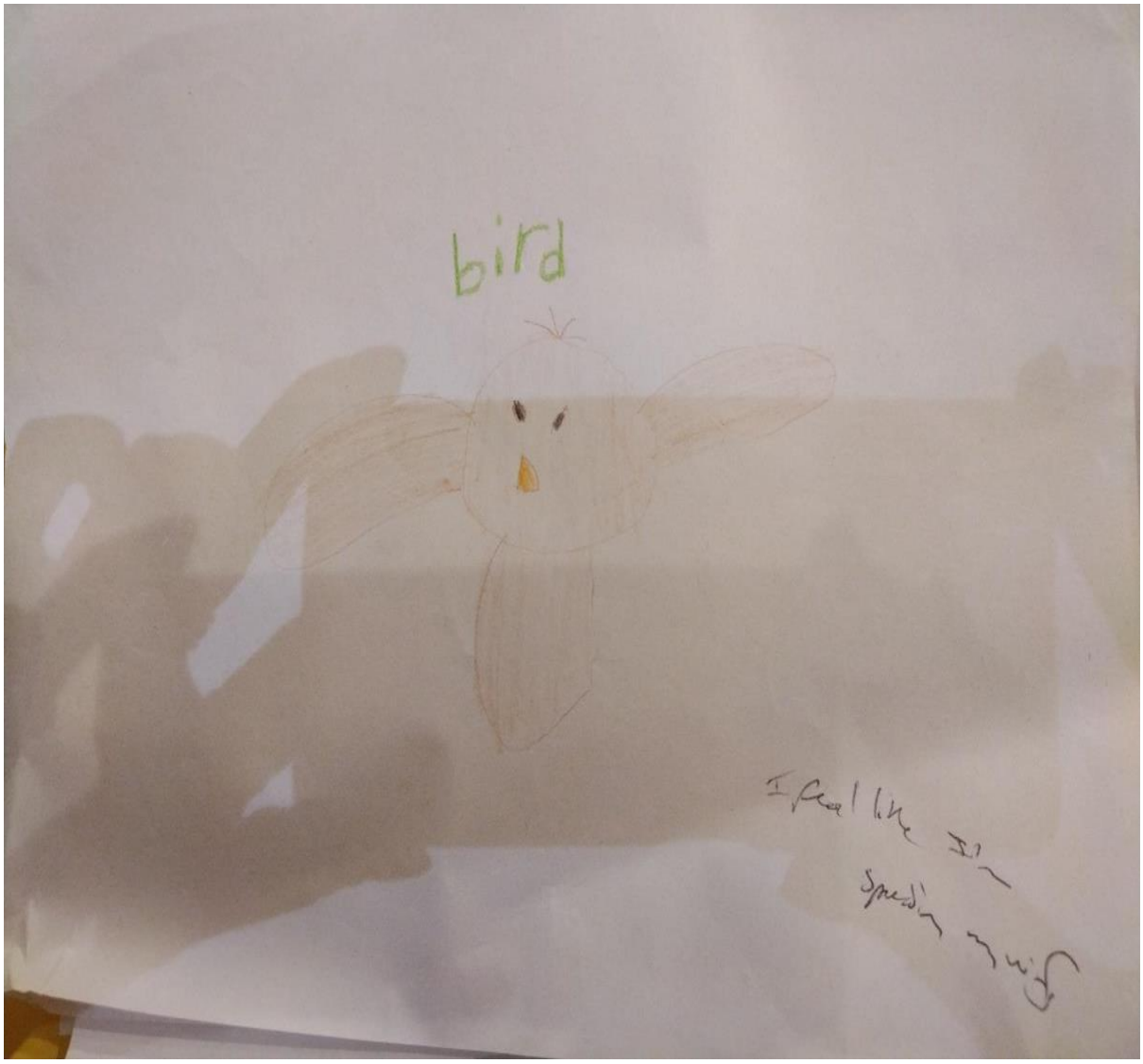
6. Has dance helped you in any other way?

Emotions

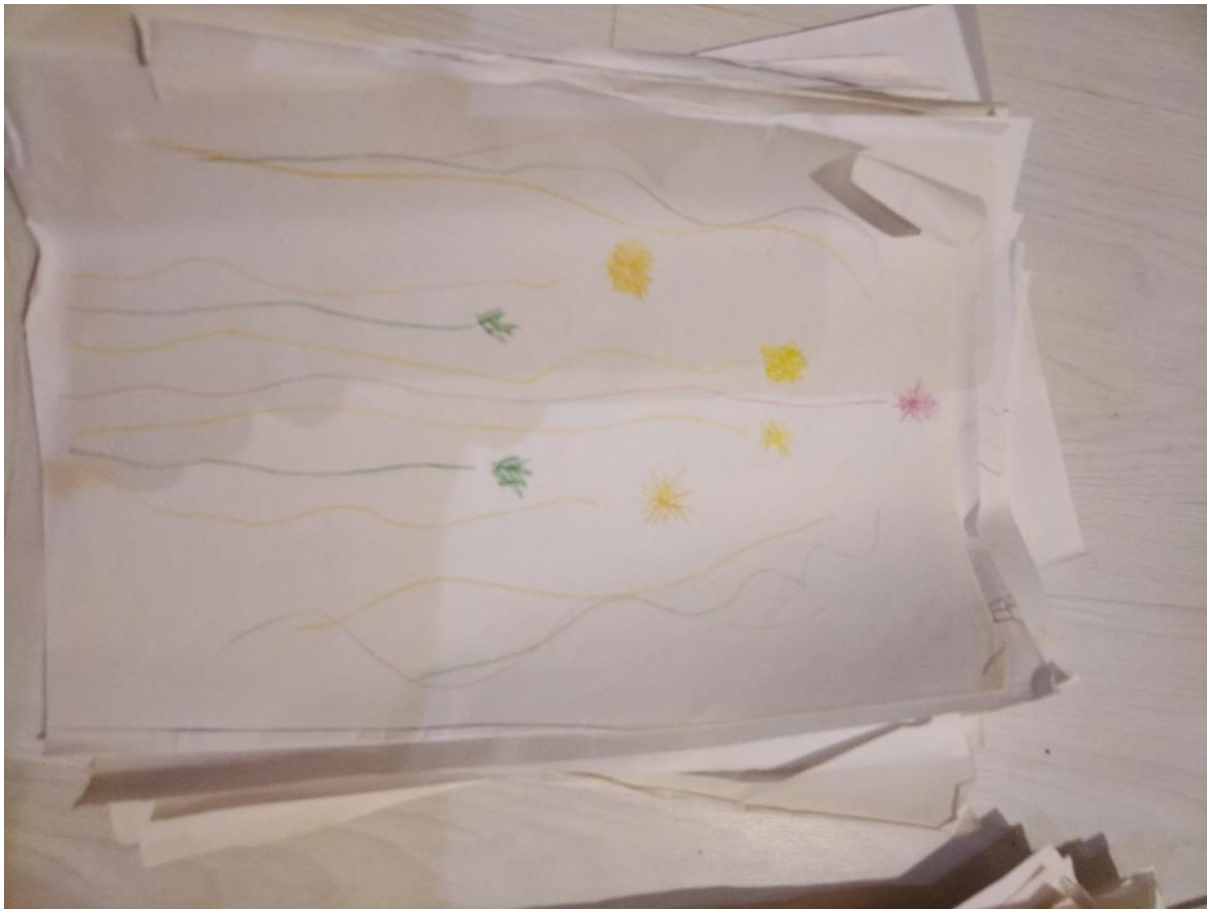
C1 (example questionnaire with feedback)

Other ways I have gained authentic stories and experiential views were through the use of semi-structured interviews and prepared questionnaires. They facilitated feedback from both children and parents. More so on their own as opposed to together, so as not to influence each other. Allowing unbiased, honest data to emerge.

Drawing as a data collection method



Example B1 (‘I feel like I’m spreading my wings’)



Example B2 (‘I am free like fireworks’)

Example B4 (‘Colourful like the rainbow’)

In her writing, *homework through the eyes of children*, Kirsten Hutchinson explains the importance of positioning "children as active participants in the Research Process. It acknowledges their authority and competence to meaningfully communicate their lived experience". (Hutchison, K, 2011 https://doi.org/10.2304/eerj.2011.10.4.545)

Furthermore, having spoken to Faull (an Independent Audience Evaluator and researcher in impact of performance on Young Children) whom in 2020 completed her PhD in: 'The Impact of theatre performance on primary-aged children's learning', inspired me to introduce research data in the way of drawings. Faull herself, used this research method to help aid her research findings, acquiring a new dimension to how the child processed performance internally, in a more deeply felt, personal way. Here children are encouraged to express their feelings through drawings and paintings, adding depth and a fundamental visual dynamic to my enquiry. Illustrations work particularly well as data from children. As, where some children may fail with finding the right chosen words to describe their experience, others may feel more confident picking up a pen to draw. This openness and flexibility can help us, as researchers, to understand what is going on inside their minds on a personal and individual level. Particularly purpose-led and meaningful, if this is to be performed straight after the child's dance encounter. Giving a genuine visual aid of what has just happened emotively and mentally for each child.

To aid this vision, for the drawing activity, I provided plenty of colourful crayons, pencils and pens. I wanted each child to feel like the tools provided were overflowing, and there were enough for each child to express themselves fully. I did not want any child to feel remotely held back or stunted but instead able to pick and choose from an array of colours and tools. Starting with a blank canvas, in this case every child was given the

same plain white A4 sheet of paper to create their own evaluative narrative on the page. As I gave out the paper, I asked questions to help each child think about how they were feeling such as 'How did the dance encounter make you feel?', and 'What do you become when you dance' or 'who are you when you dance'. The purpose of these questions was to prompt and aid their awareness of their feelings without telling them what they should feel. I then simply let them draw, I would help those who needed more assistance, but I needed it to be their work, not mine. I gave them space and time to draw. I encouraged them to sit and draw alone so as not to be swayed or imitate another's drawing. I wanted each drawing to represent an extension of their own self at that time. Once each had finished in their own time, the child would hand me their drawing. Many chose to elaborate on what they had drawn or emphasize a certain element in their picture and what it meant to them. Others were simply happy to 'allow the picture to speak', particularly those with a shyer disposition. Both approaches were perfectly acceptable. As I would always reiterate, within the evaluative process there is no right or wrong. Only what feels most natural and comfortable for the child. In many instances, I would negotiate further discussions with the child, particularly if they had drawn something particularly compelling or which I did not quite understand. I might ask, what it was they drew or why they decided to draw it. This would simply give me as a researcher, further clarity as to their feelings and thoughts behind the picture. This point is of utmost importance, so that as a researcher, I never got too comfortable, I never jumped to conclusions about drawings. After all, each were the child's work, not mine. My interpretation of the said drawing was not warranted within this research. It had to be the child's interpretation and their interpretation only. As Guillemin states:

> It is not only the drawing but also the description that comprises the data. It is ideal that the ethnographer can draw on the participants' interpretation of their drawing in the analysis. (Guilleman 273, 2004)

Allowing unbiased, honest data to emerge.

Tactile Interaction: jars and beads

Picture A1 (A handful of gems)

Picture A2 (the five faced jars)

Another excellent qualitative method used with children is incorporating a tactile element: jars and beads. The simplicity of this exercise makes it easy to utilise and understand, therefore successful with early years. You give each child a bead, and they must place their bead in the jar, representing how they are feeling immediately after the dance session. Each jar has a face; visually, this adds an element of fun and, again, ease of understanding. For instance, a smiley face, sad face, straight face, worried, angry or laughing etc. Another great way of confiding, emotionally, how each youth is locating a movement experience. Also, an excellent method to use under the umbrella of grounded and ethnographic research.

For this exercise I created five jam jar faces ranging from very sad to very happy. I drew the faces using a red marker pen onto sticky labels (please refer to photo), before

assigning each to a jam jar. I drew the faces as opposed to using clipart, as I wanted to create a more authentic, accessible visual for the children. I wanted to make the exercise feel fun and relaxed as opposed to formal or intense. Furthermore, I wished to create a relatable demeanour, by being playful and creative in my approach rather than too serious or rigid. I also bought with me unique crystal gems (one for each child to place in their jar of choice) carried in a bejewelled treasure chest. I used crystal gems as they were visually intricate and unusual. I wanted each child to feel special, as they each beheld a piece of treasure and it was their choice where this piece of treasure, like a part of them, belonged. I used these instead of marbles or bouncy balls, for example, as I wanted them to view themselves and this exercise as special and unique. Not just a game but something which holds more meaning- playful yet expressive and special.

I set the jars up in one end of the studio and each child would come in individually (so they weren't tempted to copy or imitate another child's bead placement) to place their bead in the jar which best corresponded to how they were feeling. I would ask 'which face shows how you feel right now, how dancing makes you feel?' Again, like the drawing exercise, I asked in a way so as not to sway a child's decision or imitate one another. I would chat to them and make them feel at ease, reiterating how they may choose any jar- there is no wrong decision, only right. I allowed them time to think about which jar was right for how they felt and would offer words of encouragement. I wished to emulate an environment to make them feel at ease and unrushed in the process. Once the child had chosen a jar, I would ask why they chose that face. Again, this helped me gain more understanding to why the child felt this way, immediately after the dance encounter. This exercise became a great tool to gain a deeper insight into how the inner self relates to a dance session, in a non-pressured, playful, and unbiased way.

Practice As Research

Moreover, I intend to utilise PAR (Practice as Research) alongside Grounded Theory. Through both observation and participation. A balance between the two would most benefit my work as you are using all access points. For instance, whilst in an observational position, it allows one to see participants' expression, overall involvement and how the teacher oversees the workshop or class. Akin to using a wide-angle lens to process the whole experience. On the flip side, as an active participant, one may hope you can begin to 'feel.' In relation to what the other participant may be encountering and become immersed in the class as an experience. Unique to your own body, mind and relationship to those around you. You are merging experiences as researcher, participant and spectator. Ultimately, when carrying out Ethnographic research, simply because you are there, you want to take advantage of that. Witness the experiential from all intersections and participatory stances. Of course, in addition, striving to generate my conclusions as accurately as possible.

Therefore, I hope to carry out this extensive fieldwork over as long a timeframe as my funding will allow, gaining the highest excellence in qualitative measuring. Ethnography has many approaches. By adopting grounded theory, I have set out to mitigate my bias, as much as that is possible, and allow the participants to be heard more clearly. A methodology combining grounded and ethnographical approaches enable my research to become fully flexible and 'follow the child'. As opposed to being caught up in the process of evaluation and research itself. There is almost no limit for qualitative data with these two tangible methods working side by side.

The celebration of the Unique child or rewarding heterogeneity: The Montessori Method vs The Standard Education System (Early Years); An Introduction to Theoretical Frameworks

The educational frameworks of Montessori, Steiner and Reggio Emilia offer rich methods to enable self-discovery and self-rediscovery within the early year's learning. This chapter will examine the creative use of dance and movement within these schooling systems. The study will compare these methods, underpinned by self-education, with the learning techniques which carry movement practices in crucial stages, syllabus-led standard early years education. The research wishes to understand how each enables a child's self-discovery through their dynamic use of movement and dance. Throughout, I will consider other core influences such as the role of the 'facilitator' as opposed to the 'teacher', the environmental aesthetic and, importantly, the social and emotional treatment of the child.

Furthermore, this chapter investigates traditional UK education, and alternative schooling approaches in dance and movement for early years students, which are examined in case studies one and two, before considering other alternative contexts such as hospitals. The umbrella term 'alternative schooling' applies to several approaches to contemporary education. The focus here is Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Steiner and Waldorf and investigates how these alternative methods help to shape a child's sense of self by using creative movement. The umbrella term 'standard schooling' is defined by the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework as:

> The standards that school and childcare providers must meet for the learning, development and care of children from birth to five. ("Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework — GOV.UK")

This chapter compares both standard and alternative approaches to understand each system's ethos and how this directly or indirectly impacts the child's sense of self. In addition, this study will analyse both systems' access to and relationship with the arts, particularly creative dance and movement and how that influences a child's sense of self and affects self-discovery.

Early childhood education (ECE) and nursery education relate to teaching (formally and informally) from birth up to the age of eight. It is a crucial period in a child's development, as this is a crucial phase when a child's personality develops. An important method within ECE teaching is The Developmental Interaction Approach which is based on the theories of Jean Piaget, Erik Erikson, John Dewey, and Lucy Sprague Mitchell. The approach focuses on learning through discovery. Jean Jacques Rousseau recommended that:

> Teachers exploit individual children's interests to ensure each child obtains the information most essential to his personal and individual development. (Shapiro and Biber 24, 2022)

This approach gives importance to following the child as an individual, a similar philosophy to my own teaching practice, within alternative education styles. This method is used in the first case study and helps to decipher how a child's self is nourished and celebrated within a Montessori inspired context. In addition, to set out ECE uses Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs: self-actualisation, esteem, love/belonging, safety, and physiology. Again, elements which are important to remember within the educational needs of the early years' spectrum. All these elements are interconnected yet important, particularly as we analyse the fieldwork in both schooling set ups and their relationship to self-discovery. These needs are vital to remember as my fieldwork always connects back to the child and their inner experience but also the need for a safe and developmentally appropriate environment for the child within the fieldwork study.

These statutory frameworks provide vital points of reference to the leading educational systems, offering a solid foundation as the study moves between standard and alternative schooling approaches regarding a child's discovery of self. Therefore, this information acts as a core theoretical backdrop to the fieldwork discoveries. As previously stated, the fieldwork centres around three case studies based in different settings: a school taking a standard education approach, a Montessori nursery and a hospital. Each site had a different relationship to how dance was perceived, used and understood. While a single school cannot speak for an entire education system, the three settings in comparison offer valuable insights into how each system reacts to movement practice and the institution's beliefs about the effects of movement on the young child. Moreover, it indicates what the institution's culture views as most important within a child's development and how they understand or enact this notion of self and identity.

In standard or mainstream schooling, children are in a system where they belong within a group of peers who are all generally in the same category, divided by age where all pupils are taught the same material simultaneously.

> A grading system is used with the result that students that struggle to follow t he pace of the quickest, can sometimes fail. (Spielgaben 2015; np)

In other words, learning at an individual pace is not the main priority within this schooling system.

> Learning is more of a passive activity through texts and lectures and not as interactive as many alternative schooling approaches. (Spielgaben 2015; np)

Standard schooling largely follows an approach of "rote memorisation" – memorising work with limited understanding of the subject matter, which is evident in an assignment study-recitation test. In simple language, this means at the end of a module, a test is written about the work or students are given an oral examination on the subject matter. "Languages, maths and sciences are treated as individual disciplines." Standard schools are also more likely to

have “a solid religious foundation” and be “targeted at a specific language group.” Until recent years, standard schooling concurred a “strong differentiation between genders in the subjects and activities assigned in the curriculum to boys and girls.” (Spielgaben 2015; np) Moreover,

> a strong emphasis is placed on academic performance and sports as extracurricular activities. Intelligence is often measured against grades and logical and mathematical abilities. They will usually have larger classes than alternative schooling. There is less individualised attention as students need to follow the pace of the academic year as we mentioned before, and they follow specific curriculums as laid out by education departments and government. (Differences Between Mainstream And Froebel, Reggio Schools; np).

The teacher is at the forefront of what should be done as an instructor and delegator. All students in this environment must listen to the teacher before completing their designated task. In this environment, a Divergent (standard) vs Convergent (alternative) argument comes into play. Standard schools are seen as a way for students to prepare for the real world beyond the classroom. Examination practice is a popular pastime. The encouragement of listening and taking instruction in this setting is far more results-driven than ‘the journey’ as we go on to note in an alternative setting. Stronger segue needed-relate to question.

Within Montessori and alternative education, the aesthetic tailors more to the individual child, as an autonomous learner, allowing them to ‘pick and choose’ their subject. Rooms are set as blank, minimalist environments, free from wall hangings and limit anything that might distract their learning. With “an uninterrupted access to what they need, what they enjoy”. (Montessori 38) The teacher is seen as more of a guide and assistant in this instance. Alternatively, to use the Montessori vernacular, the teacher is “a preparer of the environment for young learners”. (Montessori 41, 2013) Someone accustomed to accommodating the child’s learning in comparison to formal education. As noted above, the emphasis is very much on the child’s journey within alternative education. This system is catered to raising an independent child, with unique tailoring to each child’s age and ability.

In this non-standard education system, pedagogical methods provide the child with opportunities to get to know and find comfort with whom they are as individuals—allowing them to nurture their talents and creativity. Moreover, these creative activities are mor common in alternative schools. Uniqueness is encouraged, as is acceptance and celebration of differences. Here the self is seen as singular and celebrated for its personal qualities, whatever they may be. Not only this, but dance involvement in alternative education is high, as are other creative pursuits such as music, drama and art. Perhaps, due to the increasing proof that these activities help to nourish a child's sense of self, confidence and anti-bias misconceptions. Particularly pleasing for those who do not excel in more academic subjects. Reiterating this notion of allowing each child to find who they are and where their talents lie.

I am a highly experienced dance and movement practitioner within these alternative schooling environments. I understand how each method works in practice and how the system reacts to a child's education and nurturing their individuality. Hence why I intend to use this in-depth alternative education analysis as a backdrop to help make sense of the fieldwork findings in the second section. This brings me to look more closely at an alternative method. In the first instance, Waldorf.

The Waldorf Early Years Framework is adapted to the child. Children are encouraged to find their learning situations in child-initiated free and creative play, whereby they develop positive social skills and empathy towards each other. Children then become motivated and independent learners. Waldorf's pedagogical theory considers that children learn best by being immersed in an environment they can learn through un-self-conscious imitation of practical activities during the first years of life. Therefore, the early childhood curriculum centres on experiential education, allowing children to learn by example and

opportunities for imaginative play. The overall goal of the curriculum is to “imbue the child with a sense that the world is good”. Waldorf schooling aims to educate the whole child, “head, heart and hands”. (Steiner 54, 1995) The curriculum is as broad as time will allow and balances academics with artistic and practical activities.

Furthermore, Waldorf’s early childhood education is based on the concept that everything that surrounds young children, visible and invisible, impacts them. Therefore, practitioners allow children time to develop these capacities at their own pace within a well-structured and child-friendly environment. Moreover, as an “alternative education school, Waldorf teaches children how, not what, to think,” (Steiner 62, 1995) so those young people will develop a love of learning and a natural curiosity for the world around them.

Now, having discussed Waldorf’s approach, I will focus on how this methodology has a desire to get to the child ’at their core.’ So, what do I mean by getting to the child at ‘their core’, and why is it so important? I believe every child is akin to that first sizzle of a firework, the initial spark to a flame, or a ripple before a wave. These metaphors symbolise a child’s inner self and potential. If their natural talents and resources, expression, creativity and individuality are not nourished early on or, worse, suppressed, they are less likely to find their authentic self or purpose. The world needs adults with purpose- concocting that fire, wave, or firework to be as extraordinary as possible. To continue with the previous analogy, think of it in this means, before we let off a firework, we create the foundations; we do not smother or dampen, for then the firework would never reach its full potential, far from it. It would sizzle out. Instead, we give space and allow freedom of movement. We nourish the grounding and foster a welcoming, non-invasive environment. And voila! It is ignited and becoming, touching those who wish to witness its natural strength and unique aura. That is every child’s potential—that firework and the opportunity we should be giving every child; space, faith, opportunity and authority of self and being.

Within the tiny human, the self begins with imagination and access to experimentation. Self is further aided by being given the freedom to express without judgement and giving the child a voice through play, storytelling and the arts. So, they may have autonomy and access to choose their path, not have it prematurely decided for them by the education system or, albeit societal pressures and guardian fears. Not only is this early stage crucial to provide a healthy self-discovery, but in finality will aid an adult in becoming a self-assured, grounded human being with little fear or anxiety of the unknown and free from prejudices and ignorance. Allowing young children to discover themselves wholly in an unhurried manner is so incredibly important for their sense of individuality and purpose. Therefore, it may be more valuable to treat them as individual adults in the making instead of children who need moulding. Each child is a unique individual with talents, quirks, and soulful felt being. The core is the beginning. The glimmer. The hope. The seed. When the child is nourished and encouraged through their unique interests, their sense of self will grow. This self is an innate quality every child already possesses. It is the way this core is nourished or sadly malnourished, which can be of consequence. The centre is their value, their soul.

Their unique unwavering talent. Their gift. It is a quality that is all their own. The Waldorf Method nurtures and inspires this ‘core’. The Waldorf Approach is far more interested in getting to the child ’at their core’ instead of moulding them from an outer societal expectation. Waldorf acknowledges that:

> When children relate what they learn to their own experience, they are interested and alive, and what they learn becomes their own. (Steiner 65, 1995)

This self-advocacy is empowering. Young children are given the authority of choice by actively participating in activities they want or relate to as experiential interplay; instead of being taught an inflexible curriculum. A standard curriculum is often governed by a pre-

empted result or what they should think and how they should conduct themselves in a learning-thinking process.

Instead, within Waldorf, the child is independently learning for themselves through an unhurried approach, interpreting a new or different outcome within a mind and body integration. This method allows the child to get to know themselves through their unique lens and discover the world in a way they choose. Devoid of narrow-minded counterparts, societal, political, or socio-economic manipulations. Waldorf schooling reminds us:

> to respect that each child is not an empty box to be filled with information, but a human being with the individual potential to be actualised over many years. (Steiner 66, 1995)

It is this 'potential' and open-ended thinking to view a child as their own missionary or, albeit 'facilitator of change', within their own right, which is so opportunistic and becoming— moreover, the most helpful facilitator to a child's inner self-discovery and rediscovery. *Waldorf schooling* is an environment that will encourage growth, freedom of thought and discoveries all their own. At a time when one needs to be given this opportunistic habit, most. Early childhood. A learning method embedded at this crucial age could give them the most fulfilling life into adulthood. This is threefold. You see,

> Each child is viewed as a being-spirit, soul and body-who unfold in three developmental stages-early childhood, (where my focus lies) middle childhood, and adolescence-on the way to adulthood. Therefore, each part of the child is stimulated through this methodology rather than solely within a results-driven initiative. Instead, aesthetics, environment, relationships, sensory development and active, independent learning are all at the forefront of Waldorf's model. (Steiner 67, 1995)

Now, having discussed Waldorf's ability to get to the child at their core vs moulding, I will tell you about the Waldorf' magic'. This magic manifest itself through self-empowerment, creativity and fulfilment within the child and future adult. Let me begin with self-empowerment. By allowing each child to follow their interests from an early age within the Waldorf model, the child realises an important discovery early on. They matter as

individuals. Therefore, their interests' matter. They become influential in their being by giving free reign with projects and the allowance to follow many different creative outlets. Moreover, their independence of choice. Or, as Laban so prominently suggested, for the existence of 'movement imagination,' "children should not be limited to perceive in one way but should be encouraged to exercise their imagination to see differently." (Bradley 32) This independence supports their confidence and beliefs, assisting the child to be at peace with who they are and what they wish to become. The Waldorf method offers an encouraging and inspiring environment to follow the child's interests and talents, rather than the child following the teacher. They feel self-empowered and ready to take risks, if needed, to enable their own story independently.

The next area of Waldorf's magic lies in creativity, which is nurtured and nourished so lovingly by the Waldorf methodology. From their frequent use of creative and performance art within their multifaceted framework. To their encouraged storytelling and imagination induced techniques. Creativity is irreplaceable and highly valued as a great learning tool and a fantastic life apparatus. The Waldorf method realises creativity is a giver. If a child can possess it and keep it into adulthood, it will serve them as unique persons. Unique ideas. They are encouraging an open-minded, understanding outlook. Not only is this important in the child but the inner adult. Suppose their creativity has been ignited as a child. In that case, the adult, in turn, will be familiar with and comfortable accessing their inner flair and using it in daily capacities and work placed environments for the greater good of society. They are showing confidence as they have practised using the discipline. Without creativity, there are no new ideas, no originality and certainly nothing becoming of an individual beyond the monotony of logic.

The Montessori Method in comparison, truly appreciates each child's unique identity and 'life story, using the development of 'self-identity' as the core of this method. That is:

"the recognition of one's potential and qualities as an individual" (Montessori 45, 2013). Siraj Blatchford and Clarke have stated that a child's identity and self-worth "are not hereditary but learned over time." Montessori recognises that:

> Harmful and stigmatising messages initiated in childhood are ingrained perceptions about one's self and others often accrue over one's lifetime, sealing in misinformation, generationally. (Siraj Blatchford 21, 2001)

Nevertheless, congregations, such as school settings, can make progress in ending the perpetuation of stereotypes by openly addressing the individual child's attributes and abilities as "equal and valid". The development of a positive self-identity is a cornerstone of the Montessori method. Dr Maria Montessori described a child's self-formation as the "overriding goal of this period of development" (Lillard 19, 2011). Louise Derman-Sparks, a leader in this field of work, describes anti-bias Montessori education as a critical approach to teaching and learning that recognises that change is needed.

> Anti-bias teaching helps children strengthen their identities as capable and empowered human beings. Through Montessori anti-bias education, young children identify issues and inequities in their lives, ask questions, consider multiple perspectives, and think about their lives critically. (Derman-Sparks 14, 2020)

This grows a resistance to prejudice, discrimination and social/cultural limitations. The Montessori method recognises 'damaging conditioning' and holds each child's individual identity as the highest priority. Stating their unique aims as follows:

> appreciate the features that make a person special and unique (name, size, hair, hand and footprint, gender, birthday) understand that as individuals, they are separate from others with their own needs, interests and abilities. Have a sense of 'who they are' and be able to describe their backgrounds, strengths and abilities.

They go on to state:

> In essence, the child is constructing oneself. Children will have strong self-identities and feel respected and affirmed as unique individuals with their own life stories. (Montessori 19, 2013)

Furthermore, within the Reggio Emilia dynamic, like Waldorf and Montessori, there is a significant emphasis on “doing, being, reflecting, and knowing” (North American Reggio Emilia Alliance 2, 2007). A sense that to learn about themselves and the world around them, they must participate in moving their bodies and engage all feelings and senses simultaneously to discover themselves and where they stand in this world indeed. Again, drawing similarities with the other two methodologies, they envision children as “rich, strong and powerful, rather than weak, ignorant and incompetent” (Drummond 2004). It shares similarities with constructivist ideas of learning, which suggest that children create and construct their learning based upon their experiences and what they learn from those around them about those experiences. There are no set curricula, manuals, or policies, in Reggio Emilia schools. Instead, the curriculum emerges from the desires and interests of the children and the staff. They are drawing another similarity to the two previous frameworks, creating a fortitude of space for a child’s interpretations and discoveries.

Through Waldorf’s philosophy, as opposed to standard academia, the arts, inclusive of dance and movement, are seen as just as necessary as the more academic subjects such as science, maths and english. If not more so. Particularly during the early stages. As Chauncey describes: “engagement with the arts is another crucial component of the Waldorf model.” Steiner saw “artistic activity as the gateway through which a person becomes deeply engaged in sensing, feeling, and movement.” (Chauncey 55, 2006). He also discusses a bodily kinaesthetic and ‘knowing’ through a child’s recognition and expert knowledge as their’ first language’ and ‘most authentic’ type of expression. During these tender early years, a child’s body is their most incredible tool. When language is still a barrier, they can turn to what they know best. Their lived-in, phenomenological bodily repertoire. Across dance, movement and the arts, within this self-taught advocacy; a child can show their

> .... beliefs, and convey meanings and messages that evoke responses. Like all other areas of learning, therefore, the arts entail cognition (i.e.,'knowing' that involves the processing of information). Vygotsky (1962) linked the term 'cognition' with inner speech. It is possible, of course, to process information and become aware of oneself and the environment in ways that do not always involve words. (Wright 19, 1997)

Thus, the child using their bodies as a source to tell their own stories allows a new conscious wave to filter through their learning process. This new conscious awareness has the power to induce an interrogative force. Likely to stir their curious discoveries from the inside out. Amid the movement's cognitive, holistic, symbolic, and somatic opening, meaning and dance are critical to a powerful inner realm. Therefore, body and mind are no longer viewed or used as separate entities but are far more impactful when in symbiosis.

In addition, Dancer-philosopher Maxine Sheets-Johnstone has long critiqued cognitive science's predilection to view the brain as a computational information-processing system by arguing for the centrality of our animate form in human thought, stating,

> Perception is interlaced with movement to the point where it is impossible to separate out where perception begins, and movement ends or where movement begins, and perception ends; the one informs the other. (Bond 402, 2019)

Moreover, as Batson and Wilson encapsulate,

> Movement deposes the brain from a privileged position of being the chief executive officer toward foregrounding movement as vital in co-creating thought and action (44, 2014)

Therefore, bodily experience is not merely a product of or an input to cognition; instead, it is the foundation of meaning-making and consciousness. Consequently, through these self-educatory frameworks, allowing a child within dance to use their bodies freely and imaginatively, they give consciousness to the unconscious. Furthermore, they highlight a permissive discovery of the human spirit and soul within, whereby the child has embodied a type of movement mastery. This movement mastery is ground-breaking. Nevertheless, there is more. If we are to delve even further into somatic movement within dance education

(which all three frameworks encourage), especially with the significant role of environment linked with movement agency, we notice:

> Philosophy and pedagogy are intertwined (Eddy, Williamson). Cognitive processes such as planning, problem-solving, and decision making are 'enacted' through the body, often through non- and/or pre-verbal stimuli (Adler, Stromstead); embodied cognition theories lend weight to the idea that the coupling of sensate moving body with environmental context gives rise to thinking and meaning (Robbins, Aydede) (Developing Attention and Perception in SMDE; np)

Therefore, an even more remarkable, multi-dimensional embodiment is evoked by incorporating all sources together. This approach creates an encouraging and inspiring environment for the child, coupled with evenly led and respected relationships and a somatically induced, holistic learning approach, the possibilities for the inner child flourish. As Gardner denotes-

> The arts allow perception, awareness, judgment and the expression of ideas to occur in ways that are not purely linguistic or mathematical, as in reading, writing, science and technology study. These alternative ways of knowing may be most visible in young children, who are not always able to express themselves clearly verbally. (Gardner 13, 1983)

Interestingly, dance allows children to unpack what they know by turning their bodies into curricula themselves. They connect what they have, thoughts and feelings-through use of what they already own: their bodies.

> Dance operates with what exists rather than exposing what students may lack in the way that our education system has and tends to still do. (Dee and Jacob 31, 2010).

Montessori and Steiner believed that childhood was a profoundly spiritual stage that emphasised connections and needed an unhurried approach to learning. Montessori said Christianity is the form of the human spirit and should enter the spirit as a help to life. "This 'help to life' must come through actions that could guide humanity" (Moretti 25, 2022).

According to Moretti, Montessori believed children possess a ‘luminous spirit’, placing enormous importance upon the early organic development of the ‘luminosity’ of each child, with emphasis on the circulation of blood and digestion and holistic development of the child in a biological manner. Interestingly, Waldorf also believed that children grew ‘with all of the kingdoms of the earth’ (Steiner 77, 1995). The connection with nature and humanity would develop ‘human values’ rather than ‘British Fundamental Values’ (Early Years Foundation Stage, DfES 2017), which could foster negative views that exclude rather than positive values to include. Steiner considered that key elements in his pedagogy of ‘respect and reverence’ (Oldfield 145, 2001) are embedded deeply into nature. Allowing early childhood to embrace these will support the development of children who care, empathise, and are genuinely connected to themselves and each other.

Interestingly too, the emotive subjects are widely celebrated in Reggio Emilia. “Creative expression and representation of learning are developed through the hundred languages,” meaning children can use language, drama, dance, painting, drawing and other modes of symbolic expression to illustrate their learning. Like the other two methodologies, the arts are encouraged as they are seen as a valuable means of inner expression. A type of language that may feel more comfortable with the young student. Again, this is an integral device to a child’s inner sanctum and creating themselves as pioneering advocacies in the making. Furthermore, Reggio Emilia encourages: “Involvement in creative, spontaneous responses, and the ability to release the inner self, see connections, interpret and use metaphors.” (Tijnagel-Schoenmaker 73, 2018) Their second advocacy is the Involvement in the skill components of artistry-mastery:

> ...through polishing the art form. This often is embedded in an integration of the bodily- kinaesthetic, aural, imaginative and expressive dimensions of symbolising. (Tijnagel- Schoenmaker 74, 2018)

It again gives credence to the need for expressive movement and dance as a strong language for the young child to add depth of character to their thought-provoking learning experience. They are teaching the child the process of learning and knowing oneself. A type of experiential learning as opposed to an academic result. Perhaps the spirit within the child is more important than the grade they stand for. As Reggio Emilia beheld the child as "beautiful, powerful, competent, creative, curious, and full of potential and ambitious desires". If we move on to discuss the Early Years as an age group and why it is such a significant time, we must remember:

> At this tender preschool age, children are still discovering themselves inwardly (the learning cycles most evident in ages 0-6 and 6-12: the 0-6 period is a time of intense internal growth and the 6-12 period is a time of reaching out and learning about the outside world). (Lamothe 12, 2015)

The early years are a pivotal time; children are coming to terms with who they are and how they fit into the external aesthetic. Hyatt concludes, "We need to give them as many creative stimuli and opportunities at this age as practically possible, obviously without it becoming overwhelming." (Hyatt 2019) This statement reflects Maria's own belief that education begins at birth and that the first years of life are the most important, both physically and mentally, as she denotes:

> The kind of adult the child will become is primarily determined between the ages of 0 and 6, and behaviour patterns can be established by employing proper learning methods. (Montessori 19, 2013)

Montessori felt that in these early years, a child has what she referred to as "sensitive periods", during which they are particularly receptive to certain stimuli. She spoke of the child's mind as the "absorbent mind" (Montessori 2013) because of its remarkable ability to learn and assimilate effortlessly and unconsciously from the world around them. Because of this belief, Montessori created a prepared, developmentally appropriate environment for the child to facilitate their natural growth and advancement. Still, she stressed that the environment should 'reveal' the child, not mould them.

Creative movement could impact an early year's child far more than any other age category. Why? Because at this age, they are more in tune with their bodies. They have not yet formed habitual movement patterns as seen in older children, teens, and adults. Furthermore, as stated earlier, the spoken language is not yet their most effortless communication option. 'Their bodies know best' and are their most proper form of expression. Particularly welcoming is a movement stimulated aesthetic or expressive dance experience. By permitting the integration of environment, relationships, movement, mind and sensory stimuli and propelling all to the forefront of a child's outer discovery, an inward discovery in some form must be executed. One cannot move the body with empathy and feeling without experiencing a shift inwardly. Particularly for a curious, experimental little human. That would be near impossible.

Of course, this ties back to an all-encompassing holistic approach—the opposite of reductionism and a fight against viewing the body and mind as separate entities. Instead, allowing them to work together to create far more robust and superior inner and outer learning simultaneously. Feldenkrais wisely stated: "Act while he thinks and thinks while he acts" (1990:60). Moreover, a child must be encouraged to not only think but feel as

> embodied thinking, organically linked to sensing, feeling and action. Thought that is not connected to feeling at all is not connected to reality". (1990:44)

Feldenkrais also believed strongly in a 'Sensitive knowing', stating "choreography conditions" (also known as choreographic thinking) where they (children) can learn to think. "They have to think without words, with images, patterns and connections. That sort of thinking always leads to a new way of action". (1990:41) Movement is almost akin to thinking with the elements of thinking. As Feldenkrais describes, both parts go hand in hand, or body in mind creating a perfectly harmonious relationship. Rather than an un-united foray. Feldenkrais was deeply influenced by Neuro-Bychiatrist: Paul Schilder. His premise

was that self-image (which governs our every act) is conditioned by heritage, education, and self-education. “Feldenkrais saw Self-Education as key for intervention for personal and social change.” (1990:3) To be clear, FM is not concerned with ‘bodies’ but with accessing a self-image understood as a unity divided into four components: movement, sensing, thinking and feeling. It aims to foster a capacity for ‘self-imaging in the learner through movement. Inclusive of autonomy, criticality and empathy, and the need for liberation and un-conditioning.

Interestingly, culturally destructive behaviour is rooted in unconscious, repressed and displaced anxiety. In opposition, self-education must allow for: Uncertainty, ambiguity and anxiety. Not to mention, of course, holism. Both Waldorf and Montessori employed this holistic, self-educatory advocacy throughout their work. Very similar to the working FM model. As pioneering educational giants of the child ‘as an author to their individuality, discovering and soul’. They are building a robust and capable child and pedagogy with rights- not a needs-based approach – a child who is an agent of their learning ability to transform themselves, their family and community as ‘stewards of the world’. Montessori said,

> the child must not be considered as he [sic] is today, in his apparent weakness in relation to us. He must be considered in his power of potential man” (Moretti 74, 2022).

I have thoroughly researched and analysed different educational approaches, including standard (EYFS and mainstream approach), Montessori, Reggio and Steiner (Waldorf). These will all help frame the fieldwork discoveries within the final half of this Thesis. Education is undoubtedly a broad-ranging topic. In consequence, many relational aspects can be challenging to tackle justifiably. It can feel overwhelming with a multitude of theories and angles that can easily manifest. Education may be underpinned by philosophical, ethical, socialist, Marxist, and gender theories. However, this research begins

and ends with the child and their emotive experience at the forefront. The influence on the child is provokingly significant to this study, whereby experiences follow the child in a qualitative manner, as an individual, rather than quantitatively or in general (please refer to the next section: Methodology and Ethics).

Perhaps most significantly though, is the discovery inducing qualities dance upholds in and of itself. The arts, particularly creative movement, provide a powerful means to promote future-oriented learning. Especially for early years children, as dance involves nonverbal, symbolic ways of knowing, thinking, and communicating. Across open-ended curriculum planning, children, teachers and families can take active roles in guiding discovery processes, helping to reimagine self-awareness, personal communication, social interaction, perception, skill use and the importance of self. These, in turn, can create space for children to look intuitively at themselves. Discover their personalities and values and give them the independence and confidence to feel free to discover and continue to rediscover who they are, devoid of external influence—both inwardly and concerning their external environment. Through body agency, self-imaging and a holistic, phenomenological counterforce. These educational frameworks that accept and firmly encourage dance and movement as one of the highest forms of expressionism and self-advocacy will no doubt continue to grow. By focusing and cherishing the inner self in place of the outer 'achievement'.

Some learning environments may deem creative movement 'unimportant' or 'too young for an early year's child to grasp'. However, whether these creative activities are grasped or not, crucially is not the point. The significance is the exploration. Children are free to explore and develop independent minds. To discover who they are in their growing bodies and what they love. Indeed, there is no better age to do this. Free from the insecurities of adulthood and the troubling adolescent years ahead. When children are very young, fear

has the potential to be less prevalent. Young children absorb everything around them with a tendency for unbiased and inquisitive learning. They show up.

In addition, I firmly believe these forms of learning, which are vital to the processes of expression and meaning, should be central to the education experience. Conversely, by making the arts the core of the curriculum, societies can begin to reaffirm their cultural role in giving our lives a sense of identity, belonging and purpose-both socially and spiritually. The early childhood sector needs to listen, tune in to children, and observe what they need and desire, as slow, unhurried observation will reveal the inner aspects of the child. Mac Naughton pushes early childhood educators to take a journey towards activism. She argues that they need to be able to question the 'domination of one truth over another'. She suggests that practitioners should not blindly follow official legal and statutory frameworks, which effectively tell them how to 'think, act, and feel' (MacNaughton 28, 2005). Further, she refers to Foucault: (1977) (163) to the marginalisation of alternative thinking and ways of doing as 'violence' against diversity and difference. Even Montessori herself argued that 'humanity must acquire a new consciousness' (2013 71).

A young child just needs a supporting system to allow them to do so. Perhaps at this age, the emphasis should not be on the child gaining the most outstanding academic start but the greatest opportunity to discover oneself and their abilities thoroughly and unbiasedly. By giving them this beginning in life of acceptance and choice, a child has already acquired the inner tools to achieve greater conscious understanding and awareness into adulthood. Education certainly has a big responsibility on their hands.

These theoretical frameworks of alternative and mainstream education have helped to depict the differences between environment, teaching style and how the child is 'seen' by the institutioning body. This information helps to create clarity and structure in the first two case studies and untangle the ways dance is both used and portrayed in these different school

settings. The analysis within this chapter is important as it provides a point of reference and understanding whilst I seamlessly move from one environment to the next. It means I am able to unpick my findings in fieldwork studies one and two without having to divulge into the intricate workings of each methodology as much of the theory has been processed in this chapter.

However, when it comes to the hospital study, I have woven the theory into the fieldwork itself. The hospital environment is very different to an educational one. The dynamics and context change considerably, creating a more complex case. Therefore, I wanted to analyse my findings as I wrote them, to help engage and allow the reader to easily manage my thoughts and research findings.

Now I have discussed the methods of alternative and mainstream schooling techniques, I will approach the first case study, which was carried out in a Montessori inspired environment. This first environment is Hove Village (H.V.)

Rosie's 'bright'

Montessori Fieldwork study A

Hove Village. A Reggio and Montessori-inspired creative nursery.

Rosie glanced up at me. Her enormous grin matched that of herself drawn on the sheet of paper in front of me. This was perhaps the only real-life reflection of Rosie during the dance encounter I had just led. In her drawing, Rosie was somewhere else completely. The girl drawn on the page was barefoot, donning a special dancing dress with the word ME emblazoned big and bold. Her feet lay on lush, green strands of grass. She was embraced by flowers in bloom and vivid erupting fireworks. A waxy glare of shapes and colours infused the page proudly. On paper, nothing foretold the physical reality of the dance session. However, what was laid bare on the page was how Rosie felt during the creative movement practice. A word she termed as 'Bright'. A self she had come to know.

This chapter looks in depth at Rosie's discovery of self during creative movement sessions at Hove Village Nursery (Montessori-Reggio inspired):

> *Creativity is at the heart of everything we do as our founder spent 18 years delivering a programme of music and art-based education classes to over 150,000 children across the U.K. and Europe.* (www.hovevillage.co.uk)

A learning centre I was assigned as choreographer, creative movement practitioner and creative trainer since its founding eight years ago. Therefore, I can share my practice and experience personally and richly with you, the reader. Moreover, within this chapter, key

findings will be broken down via my own teaching practice and ethnographic research. Important qualitative moments will be uncovered, and key terms will be introduced and woven through accordingly such as self, creativity, play and liminality. I use these key terms to help describe and digest to you, the reader, Rosie's experience with creative movement. Keeping in mind this Montessori-Reggio inspired schooling context and how Rosie's sense of self has been shaped by the experience.

It was a bright summer's day on the 19th of June 2019. The studio was steeped in sunlight. My theme that day was 'the weather.' This was a new visual and one unexplored thus far. The nine children and I had just finished a self-choreographed stretching warm-up familiar to all in session. By implementing both the familiar and unfamiliar in a movement scenario, a child's confidence may be built in the first instance. Yet their self and artistic flair may be developed in the second. In this case characterised by an entirely new movement repertoire, that inspired by 'the weather'. Furthermore, by incorporating a tale, story, or in this case, thematic interest, a child may become further invested within an alter state or liminal stage. By using an imaginative context, the child may venture towards further possibilities. In turn, realising higher capabilities by mastering movement in the expanse surrounding them.

During the exercise, I emptied a silk bag of coloured scarves onto the sprung wooden flooring of the studio. Here each child had several choices; how many scarves would they use, which colour would they choose, and lastly, how would the child move with this prop. Choice in a Montessori inspired environment is important. As Kathryn Hyatt (Hove Village and award-winning Caterpillar Music franchise founder) reminds me: "Choice and giving the children freedom to explore many sensory elements helps a child's expression and artistic

flair". Inspired by Montessori's approach, I would always supply an abundance of props for each child. So that each dancer felt an overflow of inspired stimulation as opposed to their extension of creativity feeling scarce or numbered. Moreover, I use a diverse range of props and sensory elements in each session for early years. These tactile elements aid each child's natural inquisitiveness and encourages them to harness imagination and self-direction. The colours and textures, the way the props move can create a vivid inspiration in the child. Helping them dance with freedom as if the prop is an extension of themselves. For instance, bubbles, lights, feather boas, sparkly hoops, animal masks, tissues, ribbons, scarves, pom poms, canes, hats, capes, costumes, placemats, snow machine, rainbow parachutes, cones, instruments, puppets, toys, beanbags. You name it, my sessions have incorporated it! The list is truly endless, as are movement possibilities.

Before sessions begin, I plan. My sessions usually centre around a theme, story, or creative stimuli. Firstly, I come up with a theme/story that will create momentum and inspiration within the child. Sometimes I use a story inspired by a topic the nursery is using that week like space for instance. This way, my session can act as an extension and tool to their investigative learning. Other times I use an inspiration to do with the seasons for example. Such as Autumn/ Halloween or Spring/Easter. I try to always use a thematic interest which the child can relate to and become immersed in. For example, children are great at moving like their pet bunny snuffles or crawling like their younger brother Oscar. Children relate to what they've seen or at least what they've heard/are curious about. This creates further intrigue.

My next step is to plan the session from this story/theme. As mentioned earlier I try to incorporate both the familiar and unfamiliar in session. It is important for a child to have balance, momentum, inspiration and confidence in class.

Find below an example class:

‘Flutterby Farmyard’

Old McDonald instrumental plays on arrival. Meet some farmyard animal puppets on arrival. Engage with all the children, help out those who are shy.

‘Incy wincy spider’ warm up (actions get bigger and more progressive each round) *very familiar.

‘Wind the bobbin up’ action dance with instruments *familiar

Dingle dangle scarecrow with dingle dangle Derek the scarecrow and pom poms *unfamiliar

Learn Timber routine *completely new with costume (cowboy hats) Introduction to line dance motifs e.g., linking arms with partner, lasso, hoedown, heel digs and behind, step, claps. Brak down each step first and then add in music and costume.

Wiggly woo worm dance (optional extra) with ribbons.

Farmyard animal freeze dance GAME *unfamiliar. Use animal masks- different tempos, different animal actions. Freeze when music stops. Prizes. Fun element. Attention may be waning by this point.

Cool down stretch Lion King ‘Can you feel the love tonight’. *Very familiar with lights down and disco lights.

Sensory element: Finish with bubbles

Routine is important but so is the introduction of new elements. Always have a warm-up, cool down. Always be flexible. And always have more than enough props and sensory elements. Children have short attention spans.

I carry a big bag of props with me for the session each day. As well as portable speaker and session music. The space is usually set up as a blank environment. I tend to hide all props away and bring them out/tidy them away when needed (tidy up song) so as not to distract and keep away from small prying fingers! Providing there is plenty of room, I provide flower placemats for the child/parent to sit on. In my flutterby dance sessions I also incorporate the chance for the children to put on their wings and antennas for the duration of the class as they become dancing bees and butterflies-ready to spread their wings. I usually do not take any more than fifteen children per session. So that each child gets the attention they deserve. Through my own flutterby dance sessions the parents remain present, and I always encourage them to join in with their child to help enthuse participation. At nurseries and other teaching establishments such as Hove Village there tends to be one nursery staff to very six children, so a couple in each of my classes. This helps so that my concentration may be solely on the class at hand, as opposed to looking after the children.

I find music which fits with the theme and style of the dancing. I try to include at least one or two songs that the child would recognise to help fuel joy in their little bodies.

(Please find further Flutterby Dance Class Plans in Appendix 3 and 4)

A Flutterby Dance Class in session. Children enjoy dancing under the rainbow.

As the music commenced (Colours of the Wind (Kuhn)), I enthused each dancer to "take over the space". I encourage originality and experimentation as I facilitate a safe and playful space for the child within my practice. When a child enters the studio, I want them to understand it is theirs as much as mine. I will learn as much from them as they do from me. I promote this by providing a blank environment and then both physically and verbally enticing them to explore and create. I value momentum and energy as key components. I give 150 per cent energy and enthusiasm to my own movements in the hope that each attendee gives me 100 per cent in return. Nothing is dictated nor deemed wrong, so that all elements of a session may remain playful and unconfined. Remembering Falke Heller's words, my teaching style strives to "bring out what is in them". As opposed to insisting imitation of my own movements, I too, try to "get at the person." (Loukes 2007) I encourage their selves to come to the fore by fuelling their inspiration and energy via suggestions: Perhaps their wind was "angry" akin to a hurricane or tornado, "twisting violently around the trees". Alternatively, maybe their wind was a calm drifting breeze, "soft and slow". Or would their wind change "like the seasons?". Whilst moving with excitement and momentum, I observed the motion in the room. Each child's gesture was disparate. Not one child moved the same. Not one. This individual spirit and unique enquiry I celebrated. Their tiny bodies became vast and impactful as they interpreted the music and their concept of the wind from their inner being. Each frame engulfing the surround space.

One girl hid underneath a maroon-coloured scarf, curled up in solitude. She then exploded wilfully into the air; her scarf now frantic as her legs splayed, displaying graceful leaps diagonally toward the opposite corner. A boy hugged tightly a plethora of vivid scarves, weaving ferociously in and out between the other children, making wiggly shapes and joyfully greeting each child with his exaggerated motifs. Another, used his jade green scarf inquisitively, changing pace from a slow tiptoe, with the scarf floating softly from his

fingertips to an energetic wave, dashing from one side of the studio to the other. Each was explorative with their scarves and gestures in different ways. By each child acquiring unique actions, each, in turn, reacted in the space, allowing the child a deeper reside to go inside of themselves and evoke different feelings and reactions through their moving bodies.

Like many children in session, Rosie was doing just this. Rosie moved in tune with herself. By manifesting a new emotion or being, in this case, that of 'the wind', she was able to summon a renewed awareness. Ergo, by entering a new persona and liminal state, Rosie understood more of herself. By being given space in this movement practice to be playful and creative, she could feel free and safe to manifest her changing transitional state. Or as Turner describes it: "space for liberation from 'structural obligations' (Turner,58 1974) and where 'anything may happen' (Turner, 59 1974). Furthermore, linked to a "moment in time where an individual moves through a ritualistic passage". (Thomassen 39, 2018)

As reflected in her picture, Rosie's reality had now transcended through this ritualistic passage of time and space. Rosie's emotive response became aware of the outer actions distinct to her inner thoughts and intuition. The way she decided to move. The coloured scarf she took. The space she absorbed, and of course, the actions she used. By adopting and choosing a new way to move, she seemed to understand herself more profoundly. Others' movements may have inspired her, but she never entirely imitated another's gesture or poise, instead using creativity, imagination, and holism to decide what her weather movement would be and how it would react in the space.

Rosie's greatest resource in the first instance, was her creativity. That is, "The use of imagination or original ideas to create something; inventiveness." (online dictionary) Creativity is important in almost every aspect of life, from feeding almost every part of a child's diet, creativity plays a very important role. Although a tricky and broad-ranging term

to define, within my work, when creativity is mentioned, it reflects a type of flow which happens as the child moves expressively and with awareness. This often means they have tapped into their imagination, helping them to move with more intent and meaning. The term 'flow' is derived from such psychological theorists as John MacAloon and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. "During "flow"…with creative and religious experience, reflexivity is swallowed up in a merging of action and awareness, a focus upon the pleasure of the present moment, and a loss of a sense of ego or movement toward some goal."(Carlson 18, 2013) Instead, creativity may be born, when a child is enraptured in simply being able to move freely, at face value, new interpretations and bold enquiries may be born.

Creativity, therefore, as I witness in Rosie, sparks the spontaneous, playful imaginative side to dance and movement. The ability for a child's autonomy to pick and choose how they move, devising something new or developed in movement thinking, movement practice. Creativity certainly seeps through the core of Hove Village, as Hyatt notes:

> I strongly believe in having a creative environment for children, where they learn through music, dance and art. Children can express themselves in many ways and learn at their own pace without a 'one size fits all approach'. (Hyatt 2019)

As Rosie became more entangled in this creative process, she became more in tune with an inner holistic emergence, exploring from the inside out instead of outside in. Rosie was enraptured by her own playful exploration. Playfulness seemed to naturally progress within Rosie once she began moving creatively. Rosie began to explore the scarf, throwing it high in the air and catching it with jumps and leaps; she hid beneath its translucent purple haze before twisting and turning passionately. Allowing the scarf to wave profusely from her gripped fingertips, she embraced her spontaneous movements, finding greater momentum, and allowing herself to be experimental, and curious. She delighted in her movements as she

playfully embraced different tempos, first in slow motion as if her whole body was trying desperately to climb out of a quality which was holding her back, such as quicksand. Her arms were resistant and heavy, scarf droopy, as her feet slowly slid and her wind became solemn, still. Then, suddenly her scarf became enlivened again, invested in a motion quick, quick, and quicker! Her tiny feet adopted a fast-footed gallop across the width of the area, as her scarf speedily drew patterns through the expanse she embraced. Rosie also began experimenting with different levels as her wind melted down to the ground, she carefully bent her knees adopting a delicate foetal position on the studio floor, her now ungripped purple scarf falling just behind her. This time, she narrowly missed catching it with her outstretched hand. She let out a sigh of 'ooops' before further losing her balance out of the crouched position, now hugging the studio floor with a laugh. I smiled at her, knowing that Rosie was fully enlisted, and a slight tumble was a positive experience, as it meant Rosie was not fearful of moving curiously and playfully. A prerequisite to entering a type of playful liminality. As Turner describes:

> By being more playful, more open to chance, they are also much more likely to be subversive, consciously or by accident introducing or exploring different structures that may develop into real alternatives to the status quo. (Carlson 29, 2013)

Hence playfulness gives the child different options, different ways to manipulate outcomes, and as Turner notes, a sense of "enchantment" or "captivation" that is felt in play. Leading to a heightened experience and to view their selves as unique and whole. By Rosie moving curiously and occasionally failing she was enabling a wider sense of exploration and courage. Helping to enlist and engage the child's whole being.

As Rosie's playfulness flourished, it became apparent a liminal stage was taking over. I glimpsed this happening during the session. As Rosie took over the space, she seemed completely immersed in the exercise as if her being had transferred somewhere else

completely. However, Rosie's acquired liminality became most apparent to me during the drawing exercise. Immediately after the session I gave each child a blank piece of paper and an abundance of colourful crayons and pens. I asked them to draw. To encourage and help this process, I asked them questions such as: "Who or what do you become when you dance?" and "How do you feel when you are dancing?" Many stood out to me. Nevertheless, there was something about Rosie. Rosie's was more than just a drawing. It forged an essence like a feeling being lifted off the page. I had to sit with it for a while to take it all in. Dance, it seemed, had resonated with Rosie on a rich level. This drawing was a work of art; it had depth. By this, I do not mean it had been created with great technique or visual talent. This drawing was a work of art as it was drawn from the hand of an internally moved being. The picture was led by her ingenious qualities, imagination, and creativity. Rosie had forged a piece of artwork which showed what the creative movement session had bought out of her. A transitioned state and a higher awareness of self. The picture embraced me, a far cry from the previous quiet, blank page it once resembled. Akin to a metaphor of Rosie and the journey she has taken with creative movement and within herself. Once a blank canvas, she was igniting her potential and enlisting her independent sense of self. A self which, as mentioned in the thematic literature review, may be defined as "the union of elements (such as body, emotions, thoughts, and sensations) that constitute the individuality and identity of a person." (Oxford English dictionary)

Dance and movement practices help little humans to reflexively recognise themselves as an individual "as the object of introspection or reflexive action." (np) Honouring the individual as a union of elements, dance is a process which enables the dancer to reflexively recognise themselves as unique and give value to their unique qualities. At its best, dance helps us continually identify and work with a unique part of our being that does not exist in anyone else, as it changes over time as we grow and age. This reflexive process of dancing

with our everchanging self is complex, in the section that follows I explore it as self-discovery.

Please refer to Rosie's drawing (B4) below:

B4 (Rosie's drawing)

Rosie's picture represented growth, acceptance, and the acknowledgement of self. She had proudly drawn herself in the middle of the blank page- using a plethora of shapes and colour, wearing what she described as her "dancing dress". Inscribed in the centre of the dress was the word 'M.E.', staring out, bold and brave. Surrounding her moving body were colourful fireworks spurting high to the tops of the page and lush flowers growing tall and vast. Everything she drew was free and 'in growth', unapologetically loud and bright. The latter is a word Rosie used to describe her encounter with creative movement. She told me "Dancing makes me bright". I asked her to elaborate on the word 'bright'. "What does bright mean Rosie" …she concluded…" erm like I am free and everywhere and M.E.". Perhaps she was describing a deeper awareness of herself. To be free and everywhere could suggest a higher conscious awareness, and repeatedly using the word 'me' could emphasise that Rosie was tuning in more deeply to her sense of self. Alternatively, at least her awareness of self, compared to before her relationship with creative movement began. Perhaps a holistic sense of unity was beginning to occur, creating this shift in awareness which had now taken precedence.

Particularly compelling from this drawing, was how creative movement had taken Rosie into a liminal state. Accentuating a changed state, one of 'betwixt and between' for the child compared to before the session, sometimes even fuelling a shifted or changed self, even after the session has ended. This period of liminality during the dance encounter may often take the dancer into a new, holistic awareness and a more profound sense of reality, where the child can explore and freely embody a type of moving self. One which the participant may not be fully aware of until this transitioning moment. This moment can be seen as a central focus of dance's beneficial power towards a new, shifted or realised sense of self within the study. Richard Schechner in Performance Studies: An Introduction, (2020) speaks of the cultural anthropologist, Victor Turner's fascination with liminality as a chance to be

"creative, to make new situations, identities, and social realities" (66). These are qualities I recognise from my work with children such as Rosie. But liminality is a complex idea, one that is difficult to define. Schechner, reflecting on the way that liminality research had its beginnings in rituals that changed the consciousness of the performer before widening the idea to include other performance practices, goes on to note:

> Liminal rituals are transformations, permanently changing who people are. Liminoid (participation in voluntary artistic pursuits such as dance) rituals affecting a temporary change… transportation, one enters into the experience is moved or touched (apt metaphors). (66-67)

It is perhaps, difficult to measure whether Rosie was completely transformed by the creative movement encounter or temporarily 'touched'. But perhaps that is irrelevant: liminal or liminoid, Rosie's state had certainly shifted. Now her feet were bare on the grass, and her eyes were wide above a beaming red inky grin. This was interesting, as it did not reflect our physical studio environment or the shiny pink pumps that adorned her. Instead, her picture portrayed a more natural environment. Further highlighting this transitioning moment or liminal stage. Rosie's picture illustrated the way dance had taken her elsewhere- into a new awakening within herself. A higher, more explorable sense of self. Blurring "the boundary between the opposites of insider/outsider where new narratives of belonging are negotiated" (David and Samuel 30, 2016). She was no longer in the physical space of the studio, Rosie had transitioned into an alternative state, and in this case, a new imaginary outside world had swapped places from the physical reality of the studio. The outdoor, natural environment portrays how Rosie felt- instead of reflecting her outer reality, it shows us emotionally where she transitioned during this movement encounter. Rosie's picture reveals herself in an outdoor, open environment rather than a closed space. Here, Rosie is highly expressive in her 'dancing dress' and bare feet, away from her peers who held the space in the physical

reality—highlighting Rosie's deeper awareness and presence of self. She was now more in tune with herself and her body holistically within this liminal encounter. Rosie had awoken all her senses to bring her further into herself. Resulting in a higher level of conscious awareness within an imaginary ritualistic experience. Accentuating Rosie's free and fun disposition, again connected to how dance made her feel as opposed to the reality of the physical environment. She was no longer just Rosie, a child at Nursery. She was Rosie wearing her dancing dress, explorative and aware of her feelings, expressions, and abilities.

She continued to pen 'bouncing brackets' resounding from her drawn self to the edges of the page, which she told me represented the 'boogie music.' I beamed. However, her whole picture made me smile. This movement encounter nourished her sense of self. She seemed confident and happy; this only appeared to grow weekly as her dance encounters continued. Rosie transcended reality in this exercise; by being guided by the feelings dance had brought out of her, she was able to portray the experience in her drawing. As opposed to solely her ability of or simply a physical account of the session. This combination of both the in-class experience and the conclusive exercise was awe-inspiring to witness.

Rosie's emotions remained happy and robust during the bead and jar evaluative exercise. As previously described in the Methodology and Ethics chapter; with five jars ranging from sad to happy, Rosie immediately connected with the most smiley face and deposited her bead without hesitation. This was a higher transition in comparison to where she placed her bead before the dance session began- the second happiest jar- 'the mid smile'. As a result, a higher sense of well-being manifested, giving resonance to a happy feeling that persists even after the initial encounter occurred. This is an exciting factor: how creative movement can help a child remain happy and focused after a session.

Rosie certainly had a richer and more profound sense of self than before her encounters with dance began. This case study was an enlightening journey. Creative movement within this Montessori-inspired environment allowed Rosie freedom in body and mind, expression, and exploration of self. Creative movement encourages the child to become open, absorbing a holistic state and enlisting a deeper sense of self. This was intensely captured throughout the research journey at Hove Village.

Interestingly, within my experience as a dance practitioner, although I was aware of the profound effects dancing can give a small human, documenting these outcomes gave me a sharp and far richer focus. The use of ethnographic research allowed individual stories to emerge and transcend. In this environment, narratives like Rosie's have manifested into more than the child simply moving emotionally. Rather, the participation in creative movement has deepened the child internally, influencing their journey and ultimately shaping who they are and how they see themselves. As my practice highlights "what goes on inside the body rather than a sole focus on what the body looks like or how it 'should' behave." (Kirk 709, 2006) As I seek to disengage a "mind/body split that privileges the mind over the body and disconnects the individual from the felt, embodied experience" (Kirk 2006) In this somatic process, the child becomes more self-aware, awakening a transitioned emotional, individual sense of who they are. As many children expressed during interview, these embodied practices bought out profound inner awakenings, such as feeling "strong" and "free" with "no fear".

By shifting my view from practitioner to researcher, I could take a step back and explore the experience from the child's impression, absorbing their beautiful discoveries. I used P.A.R. in this context, which meant I could fulfil the tasks of practitioner, evaluator and researcher. Therefore, I navigated many roles that created a vast perspective of the child's

experience from different modes of analysis. These different modes inflected a wide-angle lens and a more profound understanding.

In essence, without the creative opportunities at Hove Village, this form of holistic, playful and liminal expression would be difficult for the child to access. Moreover, their relationship to self would not be given this holistic quality. An opportunity to harness their unearthed selves as whole. An important notion Hyatt points to during interview:

> *Due to the recent publicity brought by Prince George's starting nursery, even more parents are discovering Montessori and choosing this educational environment for their child due to the appeal of this holistic approach.* (Hyatt 2019)

These creative classes and holistic approaches facilitate worth and are a chance for the child to express themselves in a way they can control and negotiate. Instead of learning solely an academic, taught curriculum, the child is encouraged to discover alternative modes of expression. Whether by drawing something fascinating in an art class, finding empathetic awareness whilst adopting a character in drama or getting lost in the rhythm of the music. There is a powerful subtext to all art forms. Arguably, however, dance or movement has the potential of being the most expressive in a holistic sense. As the body, mind and senses are enlisted as one powerful enterprise. An enterprise that the child can come to know well. Dance as a creative, somatic and holistic medium has the potential to create "new ways of thinking about self and enhances inner sensory perception so that one is more attuned to the details of life and experience and more acutely aware 'self' in relation to others and to the world." (Eddy 24, 2009) Rosie was one of these children who came to know themselves more richly by moving creatively. Rosie gained a deeper holistic presence, a self which had been nurtured by her involvement in dance at Hove Village.

Having discussed dance class outcomes with Rosie at H.V (Montessori-Reggio inspired Nursery), the next chapter progresses to a mainstream school. How will this change

in context affect the interplay between a child's self-discovery and their encounter with creative movement? Furthermore, how will the schooling dynamic influence the child's personal experience? These questions will help navigate what will be explored within the following chapter. Key areas of interest include the notion of embodiment, storytelling and self-discovery for a boy named Cole.

‘The boy with the hidden dance’

Cole’s concentrated movements made time stand still. He was no longer hidden. Afraid of how is unbalanced, heavy-footed movements may be perceived. He began to stand out, using his physical difference to his advantage. Cole was no longer fragile and tentative. The movement-based story helped to ignite Cole’s confidence. As he climbed up the imaginary beanstalk, he did so with vigour, speed, strength, and exuberance. Each movement became accepted and appreciated by Cole. He no longer starved himself of his own expression. Cole gripped his fingertips tightly around the imaginary beanstalk, all his limbs immensely stretched as he looked up, determined. Cole could now see the top of the beanstalk rather than the expanse of the vast hall above him. He used his heavy footedness to stamp into the ground, leveraging himself higher and higher until the music changed, and he finally met the clouds…

This second fieldwork chapter follows a boy named Cole in a standard school setting. Here, he partakes in two lunch time creative movement sessions per week for one term. Below I document where the fieldwork took me as an ethnographer. I have some experience of teaching in standard school settings such as this one (after school workshops/lunch time sessions and theatre in education (T.I.E). However, H.V., a learning centre I have worked for many years, was prominently more familiar to me and my teaching style, in comparison to North Shore. My findings look at how Cole’s journey with dance led him to a slightly longer process than Rosie’s, that of self-discovery. Cole, it seemed, grappled, and struggled more with his sense of self which is documented further in this chapter. Instead of finding a sense of self in the first instance, as we see more naturally and openly with Rosie; Cole had

conflicting inner battles to understand and come to terms with. As with Rosie's chapter, key terminology has been weaved throughout the text to help you, the reader, understand the process of Cole's journey and my own, as both researcher and dance practitioner, inclusive of key moments within the fieldwork.

As I drove through North Shore's tall, open gates of the infant and junior division, I passed a green truck pulling up just short of reception. Out hopped a floppy-haired teacher pursued by a handful of excited children jumping on and off the open back. The children carried various outdoor equipment such as rakes, assortments of wood, and buckets filled to the brim with compost and plants. They were enthralled with the task at hand. On the drive to the school, just before the gates, I recalled witnessing various farm animals; what I was now encountering must have been the aftermath of the farming and forestry session- a part of the school curriculum, where the pupils care for farm animals and discover nature. I pondered, as mentioned in the theoretical frameworks section, that just because a school is under a mainstream criterion does not mean they are not distinct. North Shore was my first schooling encounter with a farm and forestry area on-site—a recreation that sets the school apart from others, whether in a mainstream or alternative capacity.

As I arrived inside the realms of North Shore Junior School, I was immediately struck by a lively buzz combined with a friendly, community-centred feel. At twelve-thirty pm sharp, key stage 1 pupils (ages five to seven) can partake in an extra-curricular lunchtime dance class, a new offering that began in the summer term (2018). Considering this school already has a host of extra-curricular activities such as their forestry school and various sports clubs, why the decision for this extra-curriculum? According to Sue, the deputy of the Junior division:

> We wanted to become broader with the range of extra-curricular activities we offer. We are known for our sports and forestry school, which I'm sure you've heard about. However, mainly due to funding and academic pressure, we've never been able to offer much in the arts or creative spectrum. However, Anytime Activities approached us (AA offers school programmes at lunchtime/after school to help children access more creative and performance-based activities), so having gained some extra funding, we thought we'd try it out for a term and see how it goes! Well, here we are...a year later! The children love it; they do look forward to the sessions and don't mind cutting their lunch break short for it! (Longford)

Sue's statement was interesting to me. Here was a school that followed a mainstream agenda yet had many alternative activities for the children to pursue. I was certainly excited to begin my research at these lunchtime sessions. Although I have worked in similar placements from my work as a dance practitioner, I usually followed alternative methods in my teaching. So, I was curious to see how these sessions would run.

Furthermore, I was interested to see how the children would react, particularly as any creative or performative pursuit was a relatively new acquisition to them. Not to mention the fact they were giving up their lunch break for just a half an hour session. Would this be enough time? Would it feel rushed? As it was not part of the curriculum, would the child sign up voluntarily? Or prefer to spend their lunchtime period playing with their friends. After a thoughtful pause, Sue continues...

> These dance sessions are great for expression and erm, are an excellent form of exercise. By using their bodies and letting go to the music, something quite magical happens—something which isn't the same as sport. Sport doesn't have the same creative and imaginative outlet. Sport is inherently competitive. On the other hand, creative movement and dance is an excellent stimulation for the body and mind without the children necessarily realising it. (Longford)

I could not help but agree with Sue here. From my practice, I knew creative movement gave children a way to move their bodies that was not competitive, as we see in sports, but quite the opposite. Instead, creative movement encourages the child's "4 C's: "Curiosity, compassion, connection and courage." (Gibson, R., and R. Ewing 2019) The child may

express and create whilst benefiting from physical exercise without competing against each other but instead creating with one another. The arts rely on trust and cooperation to create something special. Sport, on the other hand, uses competition to fuel rivalry and celebrate winners, as opposed to explorers and creators.

Having digested Sue's thoughts, it was time to follow the commotion of nineteen excitable children (escorted from the meeting area (library) to the large, open sports hall just beyond the central school building. Their enthusiasm was contagious! Dance practitioner, Lorelai, had a wealth of knowledge and experience. She explained:

> I often have different students each term; it's crazy how popular this programme has become. Apart from these sessions, the children don't have access to the arts at school, so I do look forward to seeing them and giving them that opportunity each week.

When I inquire regarding her teaching style and background, Lorelai tells me:

> I have over seven years of experience as a dance and movement artist (Atelier), specifically for the early years. I really believe in the importance of movement, play and dance for the young child, and I truly love what I do! I am also quite knowledgeable about dance and folk stories, particularly from America and Europe. I often incorporate storytelling within my sessions, as they help a child emotively connect and fulfil their imagination. I am experienced in developing successful classes to meet the early years' standard. (Flemming)

I was impressed with Lorelai's dedication to the arts and early years. The use of Lorelai's expertise was interesting to me, as here we were in a mainstream school, but the children had an opportunity to coerce with a movement specialist, rather than, for instance, one of the school's own P.E. cohorts. I was impressed at the school's care and aptitude for encouraging a child's creative repertoire, even if this was, for now at least, solely a lunchtime extra curriculum. Furthermore, Lorelai appeared to have a wealth of knowledge in the field, and I appreciate how she incorporates folk and fairytales in her sessions, as I sometimes do. In my practice, physically moving through a story helps a child utilise their imagination and

expression by building and moving like different characters or elements. It gives a child a journey whereby they can develop, overcome obstacles and understand different characters and ways to move.

Upon entering the sports hall, I began documenting the six-week term of sessions (two per week), as I noticed one boy more and more. He almost went unnoticed during the first couple of classes. I do not mean to sound derogatory, but he tried hard to 'fit in' and go unseen. His name was Cole. Cole would enter the space timidly, stand in the back corner and conscientiously interpret each movement or exercise led by Lorelai. He would join in just enough but not entirely. Cole would ensure his actions were small, concise and unassuming as he did not want to be noticed by his peers or Lorelai.

However, this little boy in the back corner suddenly began to draw my attention as I conducted research weekly. Who was he? What was his story, and why was he so shy and fearsome? Cole was six and had dyspraxia and low-level autism. He was bullied at a former school. The experience had caused Cole to have low self-worth and become somewhat withdrawn in aspects of his life, particularly socially, around other children. He first drew my attention as his movements began to change, manifest and manipulate. As the sessions progressed, Cole's confidence grew louder. It was as if each movement was helping him work through his psyche, manifesting through the body first, then seeping into his inner consciousness. Eventually, Cole began embodying a bigger self through dance's natural rhythms and creation. Lorelai's use of improvisation and creative response practices within the class aided Cole's journey, which I will detail below before analysing the evaluative exercises.

In addition, as mentioned earlier, Lorelai's sessions would often employ an element of storytelling which helped a child devise their agency and development of movement

repertoire and prowess. This part of the session helped unleash the child's confidence, imagination and exploration of the world, giving relevance to the use of their body as a tool for self-discovery and emotive enlightenment. Akin to a section taken from the *Dance and Child Journal* by Judith Lynn Hanna, who also understands first-hand the wondrous effects creative free dance has on young children:

> Concerned with the imagination of children from 3 to 8 years of age, Joyce Boorman (Canada) explained the limitations of "top-down" dance education the passing down of techniques from adults to children. Linking her observations with the views of modern aestheticians and other philosophers, she argued that creative dance has the greatest potential for providing children the opportunity for cognitive and psychological development through symbolic representation. (Hanna, 50-51 1983)

This symbolic representation manifests from a deeper reside, allowing a child to understand themselves and express their individuality within the world through a moving mantra. Like Sue's view on creative movement (at the beginning of this chapter), stimulating both the body and mind instead of separately or competitively as we often see in sport. Instead, the creative movement encourages a child to work through and embody their own symbolic, moving language. This in turn helps a child's expression and their own journey towards self-discovery. Self-discovery, as mentioned in the thematic literature review (please see pages 16-19) refers to self-discovery as:

> two key ideas: first, this is an action of reflection and change, not a fixed state of being. It is a matter of intention and agency, reaching an understanding or a recognition of oneself. Moreover, at the moment of recognition, that self, just identified, necessarily shifts again. This is the process of developing oneself further through introspection. (Thematic Literature review 16)

A particular exercise where Cole's inward self-discovery and introspection developed was during a movement exercise based on the old folk tale 'Jack and the bean stalk'. As Lorelai

narrated the group through the story, with the accompaniment of powerful, symbolic music, Cole's imagination began to manifest. He became 'Jack' vigorously climbing up the beanstalk. His little hands reached up as high as his stretched body would allow, as his fingertips gripped tightly around the imaginary beanstalk. His legs adopted a marching rhythm, with each knee driving high into his chest, resembling a fast and powerful climb. These movements symbolised Jack's bravery- the physical and mental struggle metaphorically aligning with Cole's situation. Cole grew faster and more resilient with his climbing action until his hard work had paid off and they had reached 'the clouds'. Suddenly, the music began to change. The piano was no longer harsh and resilient but soft, and the wind percussion charming and feathery. Inspired by Lorelai's lead, the children began to adopt tranquil, soft movements, manifesting a stark contrast in the diversity of their dancing. Their movements transitioned magnificently, now fluid and graceful in each step. Cole suddenly floated around the sports hall, balancing from one tiptoe to the other as best he could. Although Cole struggled more with these movements, he was focused and immersed in each step. Highly perceptive and immersed within the movement making, whereby "perception is interlaced with movement to the point where it is impossible to separate out where perception begins, and movement ends or where movement begins, and perception ends; the one informs the other." (Bond 402, 2019)

All the children created exciting shapes and stillness in the clouds. Interpreting different levels such as curling up into balls, low on the floor, or balancing on one foot with arms curved circular like an overhead sphere. It was beautiful, an entanglement of different shapes. Some even leant on each other to create 'larger clouds. Lorelai encouraged them to balance and hold each shape before moving into a different 'still motif.' This section of the story was wondrous to watch as each child created different ways of holding their bodies. Cole was more in tune with himself and his body, adapting to

each shape and occasionally working with another child to create something even more significant. This stillness seemed to give Cole time to reflect and think about himself and his body more deeply. He was holistically portraying and exploring movement with meaning and imagination. Interestingly then, dance allows children to unpack what they know by turning their bodies into curricula themselves. They make connections between what they have-thoughts and feelings-through use of what they already own: their bodies. "Dance operates with what exists rather than exposing what students may lack in the way that our education system has and tends to still do." (Dee and Jacob 2010).

Suddenly the music became heavy with the accompaniment of percussion and drums, the story turned, and the children were encouraged to interpret the giant's movements. Cole became bolder and more fearless. Suddenly his unique and naturally heavy-footed movements became great and powerful. Cole's giant gave him excitement and happiness. He was in his element, no longer small, scared Cole; instead, his actions akin to his confidence grew. He had become entirely consumed by the story and his progressive motifs. His actions were beginning to manifest the giant within Cole. As his mind connected to his movements, Cole was strong, embodied and he could take on anything.

This type of embodiment is a key term for Cole within the movement exercises, particularly the storytelling sequence of 'Jack and the Beanstalk', and one which I deem important to Cole's development and flourishing sense of self. For instance, when Cole became the Giant, he began to embody this movement holistically, enraptured by what his body was capable of by moving as a fictional character. By moving like this character, he understood more about himself, mentally and physically and how moving differently to the other children was to be celebrated as opposed to being to his detriment.

This is a key term which is used frequently throughout the fieldwork discourse. Embodiment describes an experience which the participant enters once both their mind and body appear to be engaged in a parallel discourse of ownership. This may begin when the child starts to move somatically, reflectively or with purpose. An embodiment in this sense, is when both the child's inner and outer worlds move consciously. Therefore, begin to interpret the sequence steps differently as a fictional world takes over. Sadly, somatic theorist Johnson (1992) suggests that western cultures have traditionally promoted a mind/body split that privileges the mind over the body and disconnects the individual from the felt, embodied experience.

But this is exactly what I was looking for. A felt, sensed experience as opposed to an aesthetically pleasing movement vocabulary detached from the child's inner presence. As an ethnographer I sought to stay vulnerable and open to a participant's penetrated whole experiences. Remembering therefore," the clinical gaze must be abandoned in favor of an attempt to understand "embodied patterns of experience." (Eddy 60, 2009)

Not only as a researcher but through my own work as a creative movement and dance practitioner, I try to encourage a felt embodiment within my practice by the idea of sensing and closely observing oneself, for example, "sensing the body's weight by exploring the relationship with gravity, slowing movements down to observe bodily sensations and taking time to sense the breath (Batson 2009; Eddy 2009).

The 'Jack and the Beanstalk' exercise was enchanting for Cole. The exercise helped him realise that by physically creating these different movements of larger-than-life characters, he, too, could hold any characteristics he chose. Climbing up the beanstalk was akin to Cole climbing away from the pain and anxiety, from his 'identity' and into his 'self' – the real

him. No longer an ‘outward identity’ associated with dyspraxia. No. Cole began to look and act differently. He discovered that how he was seen or interpreted no longer mattered or took precedence in Cole’s life. Instead, he realised it was how he came to know and master himself and harness his innate potential which was truly important. This inner access and mastery were the ultimate discovery for Cole and the most significant. ‘The Giant’ gave Cole strength and perseverance; ‘Jack’ manifested Cole’s brave curiosity.

Cole gained confidence and acceptance, using his imagination to enthuse discovery, focus and empathy. This exercise awarded a way for Cole to understand his inner felt being more profoundly and break down happenings in his life. Allowing him to come to terms with outside issues and then ‘let them go’. Cole was harnessing a conscious changing inner being in the process, by dancing through his past and connected outer stigmatisation to resurface the other side in a new reawakening of inner self discovery. Cole’s ‘identity’ became accepted and therefore began to dissolve to untangle his ‘inner self’.

In order to further understand this concept of identity alongside an inner self, which Cole was processing in-session, I found a critical collection which has been invaluable in helping me express key concepts, ‘Emerging Self Processes during Childhood and Adolescence’. (Harter 56) Please refer to the section titled ‘Identity and Self’ in the Thematic Literature Review, pages 19-22)

During these storytelling exercises, Cole began to move differently. There was a new quality to Cole’s movements, which seemed more natural to him. His limbs were looser, less rigid, and he seemed to embrace the way he moved and was no longer fearful of how his movements were perceived. His body was expressive, and his movements increasingly receptive and expansive.

It was as if he had held onto this fear and anxiety throughout his entire body, not just his mind but his dyspraxia (inhibiting him physically) and the past bullying (emotionally). Hence why, at the beginning of his journey, Cole's movements were so tiny, inflexible and fragile. He was scared. Cole was terrified to feel any more pain or witness his body's inability and the grief of his mind. However, these classes gradually re-awoke Cole's old self. His confidence and acceptance of being unique. This little boy bravely began to unravel his own internal and external paralysis. He slowly became less inhibited by his body's inability to move like other children. He accepted and celebrated his unpredictable movements, such as falling off balance or interpreting a different rhythm. Cole accepted himself within his body and became proud of what he could achieve. This outer acceptance helped Cole deal with his inward dilemma and self-discovery of who Cole was before the bullying he experienced. These sessions helped to re-establish his confidence and even his mischievous demeanour!

For Cole, some aspects of his dyspraxia made him limit his movements. He seemed aware of his awkward and, at times, clumsy nature. One of his teachers informed me that Cole struggled with physical exercise more than most due to his difficulty with coordination. Due to this, he was incredibly self-conscious at the beginning of the term but steadily began to embrace how he moved. His balance and posture were poorer than his peers', but his movements were incredibly expressive and unique. Cole's emotional responses started to heal. More and more. Cole's outward acceptance cured his inward dilemma and hurt. Through the moving body, Cole discovered himself as brave and proud of who he was and what his body could achieve. As mentioned, rhythmically, he struggled, but the shapes he created with his body were beautiful. The movement motifs every child established as the weeks progressed were incredible. They became internal creators by enlisting their imaginations with one another or independently. No longer judged by an 'external identity

or, in Cole's case, his dyspraxia, but instead, a calm, accepting wave of expression enraptured their whole beings.

Another pinnacle of self-discovery that Cole seemed to capture was that as his confidence grew through his movement journey, so did his faith in himself and the world around him. It opened him up to a 'safe' place where he could work through his troubles holistically. Cole became more trusting of his peers whilst devising movements together. Nevertheless, most importantly, he became closer and more comfortable with himself.

The term's final class further highlighted Cole emerging as a self-discovered happy, fearless 'little human'. This class began with a lively group warm-up. I duly noted that thirteen girls were present in the class and six boys. A ratio I had hoped would have been a little more evenly split throughout the term. Most were joining in, just a handful sitting around the edge, finishing their well-deserved lunch. But not Cole. Cole was joining in with the entirety of this final class. He was different from the child who took his first tentative steps into the sports hall seven weeks prior. The students had the whole class to come up with a routine in small groups to Justin Timberlake's upbeat song "I got this feeling" From the movie: Trolls. Lorelai had chosen this song as it held many requests and was also a favourite of Cole's. It was inspiring when Cole's group came to perform at the end of the class. Now, most of the children I feel excelled here. Perhaps due to unwavering imaginations at this age and the freeing quality of not yet forming an impulse for embarrassment. Or, as Snowber puts it, "As we age, we fall back on 'pre-beliefs' and thoughts we already know-a child will move at face value." (Snowber 21, 1995)

Cole moved incredibly during this final session and certainly as Snowber states at 'face value'. I do not mean his technique was 'incredible' or his moves perfect, but his inner light and energy radiated across the sports hall. His group, named 'the Sharkie's',

volunteered to go first. They decided to use a plethora of pom poms in their performance. These I had bought along for the children to have fun with during this final class. At the start of their performance, Cole shook his giant red pom poms just above his eyebrows, balancing them precariously at the crown of his head like a thick array of shiny, stringy hair. The others in his group, amused, joined him. Then, in time with his group, Cole energetically punched his poms high above his head before sharply leaning left, then right in canon (one after the other) before each zealously clapped their poms under one leg. Finally, he threw them confidently to the ground before leaping on them and sliding to his finishing position, arms and legs sprawled out, head tilted back, showcasing a brimming grin from ear to ear. All six from his group held a unique final position, implementing different levels and poses to the sound of his peer's raucous claps and cheers.

Akin to Rosie's 'bright', Cole gradually manifested himself, leading to this pivotal point in the term. Even as the children performed in their small groups, it was as if.
Cole's previous worry and shy exterior vanished. Cole had pushed through his mind creating falsities. The old, scared Cole had thawed. Instead, he was intrinsically led by his intuitive confidence, which was reflected in his instinctive and embodied movements. Cole was inspiring to witness. At that moment, I glimpsed the honest Cole. A 'self' he had been concealing behind a veil of low confidence, fear and anxiety.

During interviews I conducted at the end of term, Cole proudly stated how dance made him feel "free", akin to a "tiger, I feel like I am wild, free and everywhere". Here, Cole reminds us of the underlying potential psychological effects of creative movement participation. In Cole's case, moving in this way had made him feel 'powerful' and 'fierce', with creative movement providing Cole with the essential tools to becoming a confident and fearless individual. The traits manifested in Cole were imagination, emotional awareness, holism, empathy, acceptance and confidence.

These elements encouraged via creative movement were aiding Cole in discovering himself tenderly. A gradual switch had undoubtedly manifested. Through bullying, Cole lost his innate quality but found his inner self again within Lorelai's sessions. I witnessed this little boy's very own self-discovery. A reflection of this chapter's title, Cole's 'hidden dance' was reignited through the emotive body as a mode for self-discovery. Cole had become so entangled within his own stigmatised educational needs, fearful and anxious by his and others' perception of his identity; unhinged by the mean words and agonising bullying he had previously suffered. By dancing creatively, Cole came into contact with himself, his aura and essential being and thoroughly excelled and expressed himself again. Cole was now aware and free as:

> Dance involves different senses and connects movement to music with self - expression; therefore, it is seen as an activity that addresses various facets of the personality (Kirsch, Kaufmann, Studer-Lüthi and Züger). In accord with this presumption, especially representatives of the dance education value dance as a specific opportunity to raise self- and body- awareness (Fritsch 1988, Kirsch 2005). (Volume 9 – 2018 https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01130)

These sessions certainly raised Cole's self and body awareness. I still hold the mesmerising picture Cole created on my file. It says so much. It is drawn colourfully; a tiger is smiling in the centre of the page, big, bold and vibrant. The drawing was a reflective exercise I conducted at the end of the class. Comparable to the methodology outlined and conducted in the 'self' section, I asked, "Can you draw me who or what you become when you dance". I added, to inspire this sentiment, "How does dance make you feel?". Like so many, Cole's illustration was optimistic, inspiring and inquisitive. Each one held an abundance of hope and magic in its clasp. Every picture excelled imaginatively, emotively and creatively in exuberance. These movement sessions impacted every child considerably. A shift had undoubtedly ensued. It was amazing to feel and see this energy so closely and intensely. I also carried out interviews and video footage of these sessions.

Moreover, I asked each participant questions regarding the session and recorded their responses. For instance, I asked - “Has dance changed your personality/identity and in what way?” There were many profound responses: “I feel like a tiger rock star when I dance!” "I feel like a shark when I dance because I am free and wild, and I get snappy, hungry and happy." "(When I'm dancing) I feel like waffle surprise!' By using their bodies creatively, they manifested a character whilst simultaneously coming closer to who they are and what they can achieve. For Cole, his response was simple: “Yes! I feel full.” This sentiment seemed similar to Rosie’s ‘Bright’ but felt like a more significant breakthrough and a longer process to get to this point. Cole had re-awoken himself, away from his perceived identity. Rosie had strengthened her being and discovered her first self. Whereas Cole temporarily lost some essence of his inner self through the emotional trauma of bullying and feeling ‘different’. However, creative movement re-awoke Cole’s sense of self and rekindled his essence.

I continued, asking what Cole meant by “full?” He replied calmly, “It makes me feel alive, like me”. Could there be a true sense of connection with oneself through dance? As Laban once pondered, “It’s in the nature of dance that there is a necessity to the relationship of being alive, to humanity.” (Laban 1924, Chamberlain 2020) Not only this but the ability to express oneself completely with no limit and consider the ontology behind dance as a vehicle to aid this discovery.

Moreover, the importance of self-discovery and a child’s autonomy without needing words but instead allowing bodily movement to be given intellectual reign. Unfortunately, this notion is not always accepted, let alone celebrated within our society, particularly within this type of mainstream school setting.

> Most people do not allow their bodies to think, we are trained from childhood to repress embodied knowing. We are taught that it is not culturally acceptable to release embodied memories or allow the whole body to decide. We value intellect and conventionality above all else and train ourselves to repress the experiences that our bodies wish to experience. (Block and Kissell 45)

However, this prejudice must be realigned if we allow children to think and sense with their bodies akin to a 'knowing dancer'. As Laban enquires,

> dance flows as embodied thought from the ability of human beings to reflect on their lives and their striving for value.... [movements] of man are charged with human qualities, and he expresses himself and communicates through his gestures something of his inner being. He has the faculty of becoming aware of the pattern which his effort impulses create and of learning to develop, to re-shape and to use them. (11)

Indeed, for a human, movement becomes "movement-thinking" (Laban 12), an idea familiar to those who live fully in their bodies. A process then, we must not inhibit or shame within the child. A bodily knowing. An intellectual and mindful journey. A method of discovery. Perhaps that is what Cole himself was mastering within the dance arena. Giving him the unique tools to process his life and beliefs, feel the pain and passion through his body and physically move into a new awareness—the consciousness of being. Therefore, giving children the abundant confidence to discover, evolve and 'work through' who they are internally without any restraint or stigma in their bodily selves and movement.

However, as previously mentioned, creative movement was a relatively new acquisition at North Shore, introduced as an extra-curricular activity over the lunchtime period only (just half an hour). Instead of being included in daily school hours, as we see within alternative approaches. The mainstream schooling dynamic tends to be more rigid in lesson time and structure in opposition to 'following the child', within a Montessori/Reggio set-up. Moreover, I discovered during my time at North Shore that dance (as a taught discipline) was not a feature in PE. Like other performance arts such as drama and music, they were not

a priority but classed as ‘extra curricula’. If offered at all, it would be in an out-of-school capacity. Perhaps this also reflects Cole’s awkward and shy exterior toward the subject. Apart from those who attended private dance schools and classes, many children were unfamiliar with creative movement. The notion of moving creatively and emotively was entirely new to them, as opposed to academia or sport, which tend not to use the body and mind holistically. These elements contribute to dance’s potential to harness the whole child’s internal and external power.

Thankfully, the children were in a highly encouraging and welcoming environment with Lorelai. No pressure with exams or the disciplines of a stricter dance style such as Ballet. Similar to the first fieldwork study, the pupils were led rather than taught and given choices creating a flexible and welcoming environment. Due to many children at North Shore having not had the opportunity to explore creative movement before, it took many of the students, including Cole, longer to ‘open up’ and be vulnerable to the creative direction compared to their Montessori counterparts. Perhaps these children were not as comfortable being explorative and allowed to use their intuitiveness and autonomy. Compared to the first fieldwork study, we must remember that these students come from a taught ethos. Whereby “learning is more of a passive activity through texts and lectures and not as interactive as many alternative schooling approaches. (Spielgaben 2022; np)

The students are told primarily what to think and how to act. As a result, self-expression is usually seen as an antagonist to learning rather than being encouraged or nourished.

These results were manifested termly as opposed to fortnightly at Hove Village. The children took longer to adapt; however, in the end, they had a similar outcome as we saw in the self-chapter. These children were less comfortable using the mind and body together expressively as a holistic force. However, I believe this new environment (particularly with a

specialist teacher from outside) helped Cole move and engage knowingly and, as he describes, “feel like me”. Furthermore, the self-discovery Cole was experiencing was constantly shifting; as his awareness and recognition grew in each exercise, so did his agency and felt being of his inner self instead of solely his outward movement or identity. Compared to Rosie, who seemed to realise her inner self as it was in the moment, Cole took longer and was working through past identity struggles formulating a renewed set of inner qualities and acceptance throughout his movement discoveries. Nevertheless, Cole did, just as Rosie, find and acknowledge a self-discovery all his own.

The research will now move on to the final fieldwork section, which took place in a hospital setting. This study illustrates creative movement’s ability to help a child rediscover their sense of self following an illness, in Karen’s case, Cancer. Here, I will be moving away from an educational backdrop to see how a child’s sense of self may be affected when they are no longer seen as a student and child but primarily a patient. This final chapter acts as an extension of the self and self-discovery process. Self-rediscovery creates a further shift, whereby the child must find a new or replenished sense of self to help them through disease or illness with the help of creative movement’s healing and enlightening qualities. This is self-rediscovery.

Self-rediscovery

The Road to Recovery; shaping a child's rediscovery

Hospital Fieldwork Study C

Idle no more

From: A healing time, by SkyBlue Mary Marin.

We Dance

To soften the hard lumps

That have formed in the heart,

The hurt inside.

Thursday 30th May 2019, 10:24 am; Queen Pearl Children's Hospital (Oncology ward)

I vividly remember the distinct bleach aroma combined with the harsh squeak of each footstep as I entered through the bold double doors to the Oncology Ward with Tina.

Having both signed in, we were on a mission to our first child or, as this setting depicted, ‘patient’. As a dance practitioner used to working in dance studios, schools or community centres, this was a far cry from the norm. I associated hospitals with unstable postures, tired nurses, weary faces and matter-of-fact doctors. Dance or any art form never really entered the mix. This pre-empted thought was soon to be dispelled, however. Even so, I remember thinking the dynamic of how things worked here was clearly very different.

Even going as far as to question, in my own mind, practically, how would dance work in a hospital setting? Was there enough space to fulfil the task at hand? What if the child was too ill to get up or move in the space? What is considered too small an action to be dance? Does watching another’s movement or dance have the same effect? And then my mind wandered further as I smiled politely at a medic walking past hurriedly. What do they think? Would the doctor or medical professional feel this was an intrude on their profession? Invalid or just a waste of time? Or worse still, a laughable feat. Especially by bringing the arts and dance to a medical institution which strives to be taken seriously, driven by logic, factual and quantitative results. Do they believe in the healing power of dance or, further still, that a child can reignite their sense of self through dance for health?

Honestly, this was the fieldwork study most out of my comfort zone. But in such a fantastic way. I am a naturally empathetic and caring person. Moreover, I have always believed in dance’s healing effects, but I could not help thinking, was this asking too much? The sterile, cold, dehumanised conditions were a far cry from the vivid, inspiring studios at home. What struck me almost immediately as we visited Karen, a seven-year-old cancer patient, similar to her surroundings, was her dehumanised disposition. When we first arrived, a doctor with a handful of trainees surrounded her like a swarm, hijacked by clipboards, questions and military procedures.

Then, they began to disperse as we approached the ward's arch. However, as soon as Karen spotted Tina, her eyes automatically lit up. It was as if Tina saw her as a person, not merely a condition.

I visited four children with Tina that day. However, for this fieldwork study I will concentrate on one. Karen. Karen was a polite, yet spritely and inquisitive child. She had been in and out of Queen Pearl hospital for the last year and a half, receiving treatment, having been diagnosed with acute lymphocytic leukemia. Tina is a local dance artist who had gained funding through a children's charity and had been leading dance sessions at the hospital one day a week for the last two years. Having graduated with a first-class BA Honours in dance eleven years prior, Tina specialises in a combination of inclusive dance, arts and health practice as well as performing, as she described "I have always dedicated my profession to the wellbeing, aid and benefit of others". Tina went on to explain having worked in a wide spectrum of both clinical and special schooling facilities, she likes to adopt "a new way of working whereby I take inspiration from the attendee as much as they do from me, helping the individual or group to gain a sense of empowerment and ownership." After a thought, she went on to add: "I think what has really helped me, is having gained so much invaluable experience with those with language or communication needs, this has helped me really listen and adapt my sessions to each dancer as an individual." Tina's belief and passion in dance really struck a chord and similar correspondence to my own teaching practice. Immediately I could resonate with her flexible, compassionate, and intuitive nature. This was more than just a job for Tina, it was "getting to witness the wonder of a greater self, building within". (Loretti, 2019)

I gained access as a researcher having contacted Tina personally, letting her know about my research and then gaining access from the hospital management.

The session began at Karen's bedside. There were two other children in the small ward, one receiving treatment at their bedside and the other asleep. To aid privacy, Karen drew the curtains, introduced me to Karen, turned on her music and began. Tina started with a fun and lively warm up, accompanied by equally vibrant music. Karen joined in with some moves from her bed and was well enough to get up and move in a way almost freeing her of her condition. This moved me, not just as a researcher but as a human. It was as if she was dancing out of her cancer. Suddenly unaware of the disease, for the first time, it was as if the movements were giving her hope, as if she was rewriting her destiny through her physical bodily inquiry. A required agency.

What really touched me was a 'mirroring' exercise. This was awe-inspiring. Tina began the exercise, firstly moving only her fingertips, soft and gently, then gradually allowing the movements to flow into her arms and legs. Karen followed. After a few minutes of movement, Tina encouraged Karen to lead the exercise. Tina then mirrored and traced every aspect of Karen's whimsical movements. She started timid, soft and downplayed in each flicker and wave of notion. Nevertheless, in time Karen started to feel the dynamic, inspiring flow of the music, and she became experimental, happier, daring, and flamboyant in her decorum! She started to master her movements powerfully, with conviction and at speed. Karen clapped up high and then star jumped, sprawling her arms and legs as long as they could stretch. She wriggled and shook the entirety of her body fast and ferociously. It got to the point whereby Tina was struggling to keep up! I could not help thinking what an incredible metaphor this was for her; she saw herself for the first time with no limitations, rewriting her life through her energised and unstoppable actions. Karen became highly animated. She laughed and smiled. Right there, at that moment, she forgot about her condition and her surroundings. She was engrossed there and then; it was as if it was just her and Tina. All other existence seemed to melt away. There was no one else in the building at

this point! They could have been anywhere. It was a beautiful display of energy transmission and communication to-ing and throwing. She stopped, froze and suddenly declared, “I can’t wait to do this with my friends in the playground.” Not I wish I could, or I want to, but in this excitable sense- I will, and I cannot wait! She had forgotten about her illness as if it was no longer all-consuming, but just a temporary setback and in turn, Karen was readily looking to the future. She was seeing beyond her illness. This was incredible. Her physical movements took her inner self beyond her hospitalised identity and cancer treatment. She was no longer a patient. She was Karen again. Through this exercise, she had stepped into her future self. Here, Karen was experiencing a shifted, liminal state. Similar to Rosie within the first fieldwork study shifting to a different environment when she danced, with a higher sense of self; however, Karen was envisioning and changing into a self she could be in the future. Even more powerful and profound. Dance had helped her explore and rediscover herself as more than a disease or patient. She had brought to the hospital what she envisioned doing when she was out of the hospital. Instead of these movements reminding her of her pain, they demolished her suffering, reminding her of what was still possible. Still achievable.

Although clearly a different set up from the dance sessions witnessed in the first two fieldwork school settings. The effects of creative movement, in this context are similar, if not more profound for the child. Although the space is limited, the child’s ability from their condition may prove more challenging and the time given to the activity more compressed; ultimately dance in this scenario may prove the most beneficial to the child.

The creative movement gave Karen not only hope and strength but recognition. Recognition of self, capabilities and who she was devoid of this disease which had riddled her body for so long, like a type of inoculated resilience. She was a child with dreams, full of fun and spontaneity. The hospital may have stripped her of elements beyond her control, but

there was a place within her she could still access through her partaking in the creative movement sessions, allowing herself to come to the forefront. Particularly poignant, as these sessions were one on one. Therefore, in this intimate setting Karen was able to make decisions, create scenarios and lead the session as much as Tina. Letting her feelings and vulnerabilities show up, and more so her sense of choice and authority. A child's presence and choice is not given much significance within a hospital, particularly when they are 'managed' daily via hospital measures and complex restricting procedures. This practice has the potential to become unbearably suffocating, straining the child's physical and mental dimensions and affecting their overall wellbeing. These creative movement sessions granted Karen a powerful focus and inner strength, helping to administer a new moving energy, separating her inner self from the disease whilst ultimately rediscovering Karen first.

Thus, as Karen's movements continued, they became more empowered, more assertive and more extensive as if they were eating up and enveloping the hospital ward. Of course, the movements were more prominent than her. However, perhaps that is key; they were more than her physically or mentally at this point. Her movements were a 'break out' and freedom of self and what is achievable when the body, mind and spirit dance as one holistic enterprise. Dance offers individuals a path to developing greater sensory awareness while simultaneously releasing restricting or non-aligned patterns as they appear in posture, everyday movement patterns and expressive gestures. Developing this sensory awareness enables people to begin to create their own unique dances: ones that can help to clarify, extend and define an emerging sense of self. This choreographic interpretation may, in turn, help to promote independence of thought, bodily functioning, concentration, focus, and more spontaneous, less routine behaviour.

Further still, as in the mirroring exercise, for Karen to be allowed to master her choreographic process is akin to a child having some control over their lives again, what they do and do not want to do and the time to process how they feel about that. When focusing on movement and creative interplay, they can relax, as the attention is no longer on themselves, 'the patient'. Instead, they can process and manifest how they feel about themselves and their surroundings through intricate layers of physical expression and 'doing' rather than having things done to them. They are imaginatively reviving a sense of self and belonging, taking the place of alienation and prerequisite acceptance. They have a choice. They are heard.

Aided by some of Karen's favourite songs and Tina's flexible choreography, she did come into her own. The sad part was when I spoke to Karen shortly after the session, and she claimed that dance reminded her: "I'm a little girl, not little cancer." She could experiment. It was as if she had a choice again. She felt stuck in a hospital bed from a day-in-out routine. She was not truly allowed to play or be a kid while she was there. For,

> Children freely expressing themselves through spontaneous dance is an intrinsic part of childhood. As a child explores the world by actively engaging physically in it, a sense of self and empowerment in the world develops. When children become ill with cancer, their ability to participate in playful childhood activities is frequently compromised. This loss is akin to the sense of disempowerment and loss of control of one's body and stress physiology when facing a threatening, traumatic life event. (Tortora 41, 2019)

These experiences create various emotions that are difficult to understand and express through words. While she was seen as a patient in the hospital, Tina and the use of dance saw her as life. She was equipping Karen with the ability to grow. There were still chances to be brave and decide how she would react to the cancer. This was never clearer than in a movement piece they did together to the song: 'We're going on a bear hunt'. Although a rather short exercise, it was certainly a very powerful and robust movement piece. Here,

Karen was given choices again. Was she going to go under her treatment or over it? No! She would go through it like a brave girl on a journey through life. She began moving confidently and powerfully not just within the space around the hospital bed but into the ward and corridor! Karen mimed going through grass, as she weaved between the hospital beds and swimming hurriedly through water down the vast blue corridor. She liked the idea of going on a bear hunt so much, she became the bear! As she stamped around the hospital ward, protruding her belly with a wide stance like a giant grizzly bear, she was physically 'showing' the hospital staff and cancer itself; she was not scared. She even had me up on my feet, joining in, stampeding down the ward like two unstoppable powerful, growling grizzly bears! At this point, I think she truly believed, just as the bear did, during obstacles in the song, she, too, would get through cancer as a mere obstacle to the rest of her life's journey. For Karen, it seemed, by giving cancer an un-powerful and inattentive demeanour. She was finally in charge. Not the illness. Her confidence and authority were bought to the forefront during this dance.

Not only this, but she was capturing new ways to move, which helped her realise there are always other mental and physical alternatives. One should never feel stuck. In these moments, she was a little girl where the cancer was no longer taking over her identity but merely an illness which she happened to have. Dance and movement allowed her to accept but, simultaneously, disconnect from the disease and rekindle her identity. Start from scratch with a rediscovery of herself, her passions, and a rewrite of whom she could become and where she could go next with the spontaneity of movement. By using her physical self, her inward self-believed it. Moreover, with these special moments or as I like to call them, aha moments, it is all too clear that the expression through dance of our unique self is a

> momentary fleeting embodied thing, one that cannot be fixed or easily captured in all its complexity. It can only really be sensed as a living entity

> and certainly not captured in print. It is a coming together of shapes, movements, thoughts and feelings, rhythms and sensations, all of which make up an emotional response, a response that brings together many seemingly disparate elements without the use of words. There is no doubt, however, that working with dance creatively, as a way to explore space, shape, rhythm and our own bodies in movement, is a very fulfilling, enjoyable and challenging task…. Watching for those special moments of aliveness when the individual is in tune with themselves requires a creative alertness." (Warren 12, 2008)

This is the role I took as an observer of Tina and Karen's movements and dance interactions. I was able to look for those special moments I call 'movement magic' and delve into the child's unique kinaesthetic awareness. As a practitioner, you are not always able to fully see this during practice. However, from an observer's point of view, 'aha' moments and those of embodied self-discovery become clearer. Although researching with children can be tricky within a language and communication context. I think the use of movement and dance interplay becomes more accessible for the child and, in turn, more manageable for the observer. As denoted earlier within the thesis, this is because children do not hold onto inhibition or embarrassment of being 'seen' as adults do. Children are not so afraid to be seen as vulnerable. Thus, they are inherently more honest in their dance approach and their display of emotion. This truly helped me find far richer, qualitative results. Mainly for this fieldwork which, for obvious reasons, exhibited the most emotionally raw and vulnerably open discourse.

Furthermore, as briefly mentioned earlier, with regards to dance and art in health, they are finally given choices. Choices to do, feel or act. Moreover, most importantly, the child can regain a sense of control they may not have deemed possible for a long time. Even just having the dexterity or authority to say 'no' to a specific piece of movement, song or action. Or, albeit the whole activity itself. For instance, Tina recalled one of the first instances she met Karen: she asked permission: do you want to dance today? No thank you,

replied Karen. Tina granted her wish. For the first time, she had control over the situation. That in itself was an immense relief to Karen. With the doctors and nurses, there is no deliberation or choice. The medication is compulsory. The tubes are necessary. Furthermore, the strange environment is beyond a child's control. And sadly, sometimes even their grasp of understanding. However, introducing arts in a healthcare setting for severely ill children gives them that freedom of speech again. It helps them release pent-up integral expression that they cannot manipulate, let alone bring to the forefront or helm of their being during the daily sterile confines of a hospital setting. It is simply not set up for this. However, it is a place to carry out functionary pills, procedures and routine medication. There is no fun, no spontaneity and certainly no natural creativity. For, we should remember:

> Many stressors are inherent in hospitalisation. Upon admission, children are required to submit their small bodies to adult control and restriction. They are rarely permitted to refuse or even delay treatments, medications, and procedures. In the passive role of patient, they are poked and prodded, constant recipients of 'things' being done to them...

Not only this but, with regards to the hospital environment:

> Hospitals seethe with the unfamiliar. Children hear strange sounds, and also very loud ones, especially in intensive care settings. For the baby in an incubator, even the popping of an envelope when opening rubber gloves can be as loud as a pneumatic drill. High levels of noise can result in disengagement from the environment; extreme noise may further promote a sense of helplessness and powerlessness. However, sounds do not need to be loud to be troublesome. For example, hearing a child crying softly in another room can be frightening for other children. They may wonder why the child is crying, what the child did to cause this to happen, and 'Are they going to do the same thing to me? (Warren 26, 2008)

The hospital environment can be alarming to other senses, too. There are many new, unhomely sights, sterilised smells and unknown touches where all senses may feel alienated. Hospitals, although they can make an effort in child wards, as they did at Alexandra, can seem still dreary in contrast to home life. Not to mention cold and placid, washed with white

walls and stripped bright artificial lighting giving an unrelaxing and sometimes promoting anxiety stricken little humans in such strange new surroundings. This could have the trepidatious potential to stay ingrained in their memories for years to come, especially if they are in and out of hospital over lengthy periods or undergo gruelling surgical procedures. Some even develop PTSD in more severe circumstances if they do make it into adulthood. On top of this is the question of dignity in hospital outlay settings.

Children may have to show various body parts on demand in case of changes or symptomatic displays such as rashes or acute 'flare-ups'. This may be in front of not simply one doctor but a whole liege of medical experts or even student doctors. This could lead to further embarrassment, anxiety or helplessness as a child may be surrounded by half a dozen strangers engulfing their bed, looking at them as a potential surgical display rather than a child who wants to go out and play! So, if we combine all these affecting elements to a child's inner psyche and personal development, a call for them to reawaken their senses and discover themselves is undoubtedly a fundamental need. This type of creativity must be longed for in the child and, albeit, the child's immediate family, for they may need to reconnect to their child as much as the child does with oneself.

This is where Tina can weave her magic. Art can be a way to reconnect, and (art) "can be a way of asking questions, seeking information, provoking thought, communicating, and offering something about the world as perceived by humans." Not only this but, As stated by Madden et al.,

> By using creative expression, a child or adolescent with cancer can express feelings about the course of the disease and tumultuous treatment through dance/movement, music, and art. This outlet allows the patient to creatively and kinaesthetically process the assaults of cancer and its treatment, and thus establish a stronger sense of self and improved quality of life. (Tortora 41, 2019)

Now let me be clear, Tina is an artist. A dance and movement practitioner. Not a dance therapist. I feel it is necessary to make this clear within the ongoing research. As with every other piece, this fieldwork is community-based or arts as a practice. Not DMT. However, I realise lines can be blurry, yet it is still important to distinguish. Tina was in dance for health. However, it always takes some aspects of dance movement therapy, although it is more concerned with dance as a form of expression, relief, escapism and hope than treating the patient. Instead, they are the artist of their destiny.

The self-rediscovery I am scaling to unearth is just one of many possible functionary by-products of dancing itself, instead of solely trying to heal the client through dance, which is its perfunctory primary purpose. Rather, we dance and allow the healing, expression, fear or love to arrive as a by-product of the physical. Rather than steer, Tina responds. Instead of trying to unearth feelings, she accepts whatever exudes from the participant's experiential enquiry. Everything is inquisitive and experimental. Nothing is set in stone. All movement is worth exploring if the participant so chooses. They are mirroring their own journey and giving them the confidence to do as they wish without feeling as though every movement is being predetermined, analysed or judged, akin to sitting in a psychologist's chair.

Sometimes all a child needs are to express and feel heard within themselves rather than by a healthcare professional. Whether in a class setting or a private class, this is where my argument or own slither of ice arises. Whereby an artist is there to create with their participants. In contrast, DMT therapists' primary function is to read the participant through said movements and heal accordingly. Nevertheless, what if movement and dance do this solely through creative partaking rather than through DMT practice. What if DMT confines them? Are they seen as a patient once more rather than a creative artist accountable for their own destiny? It could be argued that community dance and dance for health may feel more

freeing and independent to one's inner desires and creative fruition. Instead of co-depending on a therapist to implement the 'correct' tactics to make the patient feel or become something they may not automatically want or need. By participating in dance for what it is rather than for a set healing outcome, there is no pressure or intrinsic need to fulfil a set of ticked boxes. They can dance for just that, and the by-products are a bonus. Now I am not condoning DMT in any way, shape or form. Although there are some apparent crossovers and blurred lines, for this particular research, I am notably unconcerned with dance being used only in this capacity. As the following quote argues:

> As the workplace has become increasingly dehumanising and sterile (with fewer and fewer outlets for creative expression), it is not surprising that the arts have come to be seen as therapy. However, therapy (which implies a prescribed course of treatment with predetermined expected results for a specific diagnosed condition) and the art (s) (which at least in part suggests an exploration, one that usually finds the notion of predetermined expectation anathema) are strange bedfellows. Art is not a medicine that must be taken three times a day after meals. However, it can feed the soul, motivate an individual to want to recover and, in certain circumstances, cause physiological changes in the body. (Thompson 28, 2009)

In agreeance, I strive to highlight what dance can exhibit and discover in the child by simply participating in different styles and scenarios. To the physical, emotional and soulful benefits, it encompasses. Self-rediscovery is rediscovering oneself, with the vehicle of creative movement used as the primary weapon to seeking this unearthed revelation. For "When we dance it is one of those rare times that our mind, body, emotions and also our spirits are working as one- consciously directed towards the same interaction. (Bond (Plummer) 293, 2019)

More and more people are becoming aware that being involved in artistic creation is equally important and, in many cases, more important than the end product. The recent move towards 'Arts for Health' (which suggests the benefits of participation in a creative activity) as distinct from art therapy (which implies treating a condition that produces 'ill-health') is a

healthy and honest extension of these developments, particularly when they feel like they are losing themselves and their child to disease. In this instance, cancer.

> Cancer is a series of conditions which start with the out of control growth of cells that over- crowd normal cells, causing hundreds of site-specific diseases, rather than one specific disease. A cancer diagnosis typically takes a profound emotional toll on the patient and the whole family. When that patient is a child, emotional reactions are often extreme. There is an overwhelming impact on all developmental stages of growth; the physical body; body image; and body-mind/biopsychosocial experience of the child patient. (Warren 34) In addition, the diagnosis and treatment demand on the family system due to the life-threatening nature and long-term high-intensity treatment protocols of a cancer diagnosis significantly affect the quality of life of the whole system. But it seems that the generally innate pleasure in childhood of creative dance, with the sense of body control it fosters, can be incredibly therapeutic for paediatric oncology patients, who have the sense that their body and their disease are out of their control. Nearly all treatments for traumatic stress include mastery and control over traumatic events. These treatments offer solutions for the feelings of helplessness by helping the patient reimagine their body's potential for health and comfort. (Warren 36, 2008)

This concept of offering nonverbal body and dance/movement-based solutions for the feelings of helplessness of children with medical illness opens the potential to create a nonverbal narrative that can prevent or heal the conceivably traumatic effects of the medical experience. Furthermore, Integrative oncology is defined as

> … a patient-centred, evidence-informed field of cancer care that utilises mind and body practices, natural products, and/or lifestyle modifications from different traditions alongside conventional cancer treatments. Integrative oncology aims to optimise health, quality of life, and clinical outcomes across the cancer care continuum, and to empower people to prevent cancer and become active participants before, during, and beyond cancer treatment. (Tortora 3, 2019)

A new and regained sense of self through one of the most potent forms of expression: dance is essential. The mind and body are powerful- those two instruments working together in a coalition could go as far as to beat the disease. Miracles have happened through the arts, an

equilibrium of force between mind, body and soul as opposed to factual-based prescriptive drug taking, which fails to touch the person behind the disease.

In conclusion, my time at the Queen Pearl Hospital with not only Tina and Karen, but three other child patients, hospital staff and family members were indeed an eye-opening experience. And a remarkable stepping stone toward my research. It was ever present and powerful, just how intricately the child's self can be shaped and reshaped. Moreover, how the joy and expression of creative movement can help them re-identify with themselves and allow them to move forward with this new identity. I have discussed in previous chapters the effects of dance and creative movement on mainstream and alternative schooling children in conjunction with their own identity. However, what I feel is essential and mesmerising in this research chapter is what happens when a child's identity changes. What then are the ramifications of this exploit? For most of these children, they were simply a child before a shift happened, and they were identified as an illness. Thankfully, in some cases, if the said illness is beaten, they can re-identify as a child, rid of the illness in the aftermath. Whether 'fully cured', 'in remission' or living with a treatable condition. So, then a shift reoccurs. However, I believe this is easier when a child has already conceived a change and a rediscovery of who they are whilst still being treated. Then, they can tap into that intuition or newfound wisdom following their illness to continue their path to a new self. However, what I have found most resonating, and observable is that by participating in these movement sessions during treatment, they were able to reimagine themselves well or get to know themselves not as an illness in the first instance but as a child. Creatively moving the body helps infuse a holistic whole systems approach. They can realign their bodies, minds and existence to what they are capable of, whether that is first and foremost being brave and battling the illness and physically 'seeing' themselves through their movements as the person they want to be in the future.

Therefore, this innate 'healing response' through creative dance and movement sessions does help a child to focus on their vision of identity and resurgence of self. From past findings, we already know a small but growing body of research supports that physiological processes may take place through contact with the arts. For example, studies indicate a relationship between art experiences and the release of endorphins– the body's pain reliever, relaxant, and mood enhancer. Researchers report:

> Significant increases in salivary immunoglobulin A (IgA), an antibody that provides defence against various infections, and oxygen saturation levels, an indicator of respiratory regularity directly affected by the individual's behavioural and degree of pain. (Tortora 18) Technology sometimes makes this visible to the artist. For example, children at our hospital are frequently attached to equipment to monitor oxygen saturation levels. How exciting to step into a room when a musician is strumming the guitar and singing softly, and watch this level slowly rise on the child's monitor. Even when the child is unconscious, the music seems to filter through, and the results are there for all to see just how powerful the arts can be. (Kuppers 29, 2019)

Thus, I believe that, although my research has perused from a non-medical scope, rich within a performative, creative, teaching and practitioner-orientated background, from both me and those professionals I have had the privilege of observing. It seems that the artistic expression of dance and creative movement can heal and help those with an identity crisis. Particularly on small humans who not only want but I feel it vital to be given dance and movement as a vehicle to tap into their imaginative, spontaneous states. Imperatively necessary when one is 'going through the motions of a hospitalised capacity. Moreover, in this instance, dance may be seen as viable and helpful to coexist not to replace necessary medication but to work alongside providing a creative outlet alongside routine-based procedures. Particularly important for children who have less understanding of the said condition, less authority and an increased build of pent-up energy and feelings derived from anxiety, frustration and possibly helplessness.

As dance for health or community dance within the hospital setting is still relatively new or at least not a regular occurrence for most hospitals, I believe more needs to be done to make it accessible. Particularly for people and children who can be deemed more vulnerable through their lack of life experience. I think it makes more sense, practically, financially, and from a humanitarian standpoint, to help children through their treatment using artistic art forms. Not necessarily though DMT where again, the child may feel they are being judged or looked at as still a patient. However, instead, via an arts practitioner who allows them to access the arts. There is more scope for the child to get better through feelings of happiness and fun, not only this but to help them identify themselves once treatment is over. This gives them hope for the future and may even help them manage or beat the illness itself. It is also likely to reduce the onset of PTSD in the aftermath of hospitalisation, which would be an added and unwanted treatment. Moreover, finally, it will help their transition from the hospital ward back into home, family and school life. They had already tapped into their intuitive, imaginative and physical self during dance sessions when they were still ill.

This fieldwork has undoubtedly been the most inspirational, and as with any community or health-based arts integration, the emphasis is on the journey as opposed to the final destination. If we are to look back at the prior two fieldwork studies, those too have had profound effects on a child's sense of self and their journey of exploration and discovery. Rosie, Cole and Karen, although in very different settings and circumstance, were all internally moved by dance's ability to get at the child and discover themselves independently. By moving creatively, expressively and imaginatively each of these children were gifted with a chance to dance themselves into a new awareness and mastery of who they are and what they are able to achieve. I feel the findings throughout all three fieldwork studies have been so profound and encapsulating, that I hope this thread of research

continues to progress and spread further insightful discoveries in the future. Furthermore, I will leave you with the following inspirational quotes:

> The arts can motivate In a way pos”Ibly’no other force can. It is only through making a mark that no one else could make, that we express the individual spark of our own humanity. (Tortora 28, 2019)

What we can acknowledge is that art is not about knowledge, conveying ‘meanings’ or providing information. Art is not just an ornament or style used to make data more palatable or consumable. Art may well have meanings or messages but what makes it art is not content but its affect, the sensible force or style through which it produces content. “Why, for example, would we spend two hours in the cinema watching a film if all we wanted were the story or the moral message?” (Colebrook 24–5, 2002, as cited in Thompson 117, 2009)

(Karen beat cancer in February 2020 this year, and she could not wait to tell Tina, with whom she formed a close bond, the amazing news. Tina said of her recovery: “Every week Karen bravely danced away her cancer, and now she’s free to be a child again! I couldn’t be happier for her. This is the best news any of us could have wished for.”)

Conclusion

As noted in the introduction's first chapter, my research's main motive was to investigate how creative movement shapes the self through exploration, experience and effect. Having worked for many years with young children in the medium of creative movement and dance, these findings were valuable, justifying what I had witnessed throughout my career as an arts practitioner. In all three fieldwork settings, I witnessed an early year's child interact with self through creative movement's natural holistic enquiry. Allowing the child an opportunity to get to know themselves through creative movement's expressionistic and playful nature.

Not only had a shift been created in the child's wellbeing, but in character and how they came to know themselves. A richer awareness of an inner self had emerged. A self which I felt necessary to explain in depth at the beginning of this study, informing the reader of my working definition of and how it would be used within the accompanying work. I investigated the child's perception of and unique creation of self on a rich, inquisitive level. The inner self acted as a touchstone term to lead the reader through the depths of this intricate research journey. In this research, I hoped to unearth something more profound, more layered, an inner self which was unique to the child. It is not solely built on imitation or a reflection of their surroundings, but rather something special, something uniquely theirs.

Self, of course, was not the only key term in the text. Therefore, I set out a thematic literature review to help digest these essential terms for the reader. Here, I combined key terminology and themes with a review of the literature and theories I found most poignant and compelling. These keywords and the accompanying literature helped me theorise and comprehend what would be discovered later in the fieldwork. Some key themes and words presented heavily across the fieldwork findings were self (as previously noted), self-

discovery and self-rediscovery. Through the realms of the fieldwork, as it shifted to different settings and scenarios, I found that the journey acquired a new consciousness. Firstly, moving from the discovery of self into a longer process of self-discovery and finally culminating in self-rediscovery. The thematic literature review helped to act as signposting, giving the reader my understanding and interpretation of this vital terminology, which would accompany them closely in the second half of the thesis.

I then moved on to detailing the 'how' within the work through the 'methods and ethics' section. Here, I detailed, in-depth, the qualities of the ethnographic research, referring to the ethical measures I ensured were in place before beginning the placements. Furthermore, relaying details into key research processes such as used methods and incorporated exercises. This section was accompanied by pictures, working as a visual aid to help the reader gain a vast insight into the ethnographic process. I was helping them to grasp for themselves the depth and richness of the evaluative findings, with, for instance, the 'five faced jars', 'the handful of gems', drawings, and example questionnaires. All these photos helped reflect the real-life enquiry produced in the research and enable the reader to understand this process through an ethnographer's eyes. These photos were a reminder of these evaluative exercises' raw, natural essence for me, and I hope you, the reader. Each qualitative resource was essential to the richness of this study, and I wanted to document as much as possible.

Having been influenced by the methods of Montessori and Reggio in my teaching practice spanning over ten years, I felt it extremely important to detail these methodologies in the next chapter entitled 'theoretical frameworks'. Explaining this alternative education enquiry was also crucial due to my first fieldwork study being partially Montessori/Reggio inspired. I also thought it necessary to inform the reader of the dynamics and guidelines for standard schooling before combining the two, as the second fieldwork study took place at a

mainstream school. I needed the reader to understand my background and teaching practice and convey my extension of knowledge- beyond alternative methods and into other approaches. In this case, with regards to mainstream schooling dynamics. This section helped lay down the foundation and guidelines of education in both schooling experiences and perceived overlaps. I deemed it essential to clarify and understand schooling techniques and qualities to complement an intense understanding, which would then be set in place, and ready for the fieldwork comparisons in the second section. The section section focused on three fieldwork sections.

During the first fieldwork study at Hove Village, Rosie's self came to the fore as she took part in weekly creative dance sessions, which I led using a thematic repertoire and the incorporation of sensory and child led (Montessori inspired) methods. For instance, by using a theme, in this case, the weather, and leading the experience with the use of scarves, Rosie's imagination became ignited. As I did not tell Rosie how she must move but instead gave her both the physical and mental tools to do so herself, she began to move with momentum and imagination. This holistic and expressionistic enquiry led to her own creativity taking precedence. And the further she took delight and confidence in her own creative flight the more playful Rosie became, eventually enrapturing her own sense of liminality. Which we are reminded of by her incredible drawing.

In contrast, Cole's journey at North Shore was a longer process than Rosies yet held similarities to Rosie in the way his self emerged. Cole only had a half an hour lunch break each week for his journey to emerge. Perhaps this combined with the fact Cole had to overcome internal struggles meant he had a more profound breakthrough. Hence this chapter delving further into the process of self-discovery. In contrast to the previous chapter entitled just *self.* Here, more had to happen for Cole internally for him to gain strength and belief in himself. However, what was prominent from the start was Lorelai's passion and enthusiasm

as a creative aid. By not telling the children how they must move helped Cole accept his unique movement and heavy-footed actions. Cole discovered a hidden version of himself by becoming enraptured in a nourishing, loving environment where any movement was encouraged, and creativity was applauded. A teaching practice Cole may not have been so used to as Rosie through a more mainstream schooling environment. Ultimately, through Cole physically becoming the various characters through the jack and the beanstalk exercise her was able to embody their characteristics such as brave like Jack, or powerful and strong like the giant. Or calm as the clouds. Cole's embodiment of these movements allowed him an acceptance of his heavy-footed awkward movements, which led him to accept and even celebrate his inner self.

The final fieldwork study followed Karen's incredible transformation to that of self-rediscovery. The ultimate culmination of a moving optimism to a completely new self and that of hope and resurrection. Realising something greater than her patient self but instead herself as a child again away from the mundane hospital, a complete re-narration of her life. Something justifiably glorious and profound all at the same time. This led Karen to a full led circle that of. Mirroring/bear hunt exercise. This in turn created a moving optimism for Karen, delving her into a further liminal state. One which seemed deeper than Rosie's whom we saw during the first fieldwork. It was as if Karen was reworking her entire being, stripping herself of her patient status and instead seeing herself in the future as a child again, able to play and find a new self moving forward.

I am so pleased I finished with this study, as it shows a lengthening of creative movement's potential for a child who has been through trauma or, in Karen's case, Cancer. I witnessed a raw personal journey encountering a sudden change to a child's body, mind and identity—a vulnerable, small being encroached by an unpredictable, extensive disease. One of the most prominent and vital differences was the reference to 'patient' instead of 'child'.

The onset of illness or disease and the exportable ways in which dance and movement enabled Karen a new meaning of self-rediscovery. One far removed from the claustrophobic onset of an outer identity—' Patient'. Instead, Karen was inhabiting a shift to an entirely new 'self', which would serve her in a more fulfilling and calming independent state rather than being solely tied to disease. Karen's experience gave a new context and a fresh outlook on the medium of dance and movement and how it can change a child's state of being. This case study represented how creative movement can help express an independent authority away from the struggle of persistent disease.

Movement, in this case, gave a strengthened hope and awareness of this inner dilemma. In parallel, it facilitated a type of respite into a crucial rediscovered version of self. Dance freed Karen in a way that may help dance participants:

> Express ourselves in a more natural emotion-intense feeling state. Relying far more on what we don't know than what we have been told is correct. (Snowber 46, 1995)

For instance, Karen's time in the hospital was a constant reminder of her illness. These creative movement sessions bought Karen away from her current surroundings and further into herself and her raw emotion. Giving her internal control to a self she could keep and take with her outside the hospital. Karen may have been constantly reminded of her outer patient identity; however, dance made her aware of other, new possibilities. The ways she could move expressively reminded her of what was still possible for her away from the disease. Our bodies help us depict and decipher how we feel at any moment. After all, they are our outer guide to help us understand what is happening internally. And vice versa. Our bodies allow us to express our minds, thoughts and feelings. As LaMothe emphasises:

> In our thoughts and acts, dancing must be reborn as a practice to which we turn when we are confused, stressed, or depressed as a means of cultivating peace and calm, flexibility and flow; as a strategy of discernment, an instrument of divination, and the movement that completes our nature in human enabling ways. (LaMothe 26, 2015)

These human-enabling ways are a reminder of what is possible for us. Creative movement acted as this space where Karen had flow and control to work through her pain and discernment and to dance herself into a free, empowered sense of being. Moreover, this can be done free from interrogation and judgement as the body moves expressively to the music. The participant may immerse themselves in movement, music and self. They create expressive interplay from an inner awareness. Akin to a compass showing the participant direction and clarity, processing our pent-up feeling and emotion through our movement decorum, acting as a resource to where these little humans were at a given time and how they felt about it.

Furthermore, all three children- Rosie, Cole and Karen were also discovering possibilities of where they could go. The give and take or the natural ebb and flow of movement composition helped these children come to terms with a difficult situation or a crucial crossroads in their environment. The creative movement allowed them a space to get to know themselves and their journey, encouraging these children to follow their inner compass—allowing them to manifest themselves in both an unconscious and conscious moving paradigm. Moreover, to manifest their self, self-discovery and self-rediscovery, all three fieldwork scenarios combined some poignant similar qualities. These elements culminated in a formidable holistic force to really ‘get at’ the child. Creating a shared and deeply innovative environment for the child. For instance, in all, I witnessed the use of props or sensory elements and the freeing dynamic of a facilitator as opposed to a teacher. In all three (although a little more tricky within the hospital setting) a vast blank space was utilised for the children to ‘take over’ and make their own. Finally, but perhaps most importantly, the encouragement and creation of creative movement through storytelling, thematic interplay and improvisation as opposed to a stricter teaching dynamic. In turn, these matching threads provided a nourishing safe space for a child to explore and allow their selves to come to the

fore. Leading to these pivotal moments as expressed in the fieldwork research, whereby we find Rosie, Cole and Karen experience profound shifts in their state of being, leading to a greater understanding of themselves.

Throughout this study, the research consistently represented the early years' spectrum and slightly above, spanning ages three to seven. My decision to represent this age category was built on my working knowledge as a dance and movement specialist for this age range. As denoted in the introductory chapter, the early years are an important time. In response, I felt an overriding responsibility to formally document these little human's rich qualitative experiences in creative movement, which helped aid and sustain inner and outer self-discoveries. Crucially, the most necessary change regarding habit patterns and behaviour forms at this age. As depicted early on in my thesis:

> The learning cycles most evident in ages 0-6 and 6-12: the 0-6 period is a time of intense internal growth and the 6-12 period is a time of reaching out and learning about the outside world. (Montessori, M 2013)

Therefore, ages five to six could be deemed the most influential at a time when an overlap occurs between these two worlds. It would be at this age if there were a 'best' time for active self-discovery and meaningful development, hence choosing the early years for my research. It is not only a critical time but a natural time for inner and outer discovery, absorption and growth, not merely in education or socially (where much of the current research lies) but within each child's discovery of 'self'. A 'pre-adult' holds colossal potential and meaning, integral to one's life force. Each child is an individual in his or her own right. However, from this research, I have realised that they must be given the tools to know themselves during this developmental period. Move. Within oneself. Holistically. Become. Finding out for themselves who they are and how they choose to evolve. In congruence, it helps us to ascertain and remember Waldorf's philosophy:

> That each child is not an empty box to be filled with information, but a human being with individual potential to be actualised over many years. (Chauncey 19, 2006)

Not merely objects who must be taught and moulded to think or act in specific ways. No. Instead, children should be celebrated as individuals and allowed to discover themselves independently. This notion was of utmost importance in the research, as the development of self-discovery, particularly in a small child, must be nourished early on. Like planting a tree, it must be cared for, watered, and encouraged but still given room to grow.
Otherwise, it may never reach its full potential.

The biggest challenge in this research endeavour was building an evidential proof of the incredible findings I had witnessed from each fieldwork section. My own ethnographer's eyes could easily be viewed as biased or inaccurate. I had to find ways to prove that what I was seeing and experiencing was accurate and valuable. How did I do this? By using my presence as an ethnographer, asking questions and gathering many types of data from interviews, recorded sessions, photographs and questionnaires. The research was conducted from various sources, including teachers, parents, practitioners, movement experts, and the child—tracking results in a heavily qualitative foray of documentation. I also incorporated and adapted child-friendly result analyses such as drawings, games and experimental interplay, not to mention thorough observation and further negotiations. I had to thoroughly document a child's point of view: how they viewed themselves, how they described their drawings, and what their teacher or parent witnessed about them. All these exercises and different people in the child's life contributed to the findings. I took it all in from every angle and view to reap the most honest and accurate data I could gather. A grounded, qualitative theory approach was essential to me, so the research remained open-minded and unbiased. I believe this is reflected in the wide-ranging analysis and results. This approach is essential to

me and could benefit others in the field and of course, little humans. All these components helped to create a grounding for explorative and tangible results in the field.

However, in some ways, these young children were more accessible than any other age. For instance, children say and, most importantly, express at face value. They show up and are inextricably honest. In that respect, the spoken word and language may have been the most apparent barrier. The child never was. I have not worked with a more honest yet spontaneous age group than in the early years. Hence why I found this age so fascinating and unique—particularly their relationship to expressive movement and holistic embodiment. The ways expressive movement has helped and changed these little beings is phenomenal. Moreover, the power movement has given these youngsters as individuals and how it creates freedom to emit themselves in this ever-changing world even more profoundly. Particularly in such an early chapter in one's life is simply wondrous.

This research was essential in many ways. First, through the multifarious layers of dance in practice within my career, I began to realise the lasting and changeable effects dance could relinquish in the early years' child. Not solely for pleasure, performance or educational purposes (as many before me have duly noted). But as a moving vehicle to a deeper understanding and discovery of oneself.

"Participants in dance, both dancers and viewers, may experience catharsis and develop a sense of mastery or self-discovery." (Hanna 46, 1983) These elements highlight dance's rewarding and holistic aspects and expressive movement as a higher telos of self. Creative movement may influence how a child feels and gift them with their exploration of inner mastery—leading to an awakened and engaged spiritual, emotive and physical wholeness. Furthermore, these creative movement sessions culminated in a deeper connection to the sensory world around them and a higher reliance on their inner self as

motive and trustee. Throughout the research process, I began to think more about this integral movement phenomenon. Particularly the tremendous impact these dance and movement practices had on the self-discovery and wellbeing of little humans. As previously stated, their language may have been underdeveloped. However, their bodies had the power to hold so much feeling and expression and were ultimately their most effective tool for self-discovery.

I believe this research has hit new ground, opening an honest discussion to just how beneficial the partaking of dance and movement are for early years children and their sense of self. This research area, I believe, has the potential to be pushed forwards to reveal further findings. As dance for the elderly (particularly those with Parkinson's and Alzheimer's) has become a credible source of intervention within the last decade, I understand more could be done for further ages and abilities. For example, through my Diva Dance business, my work has taken me into care homes as a movement practitioner in recent years. Here I witness a different yet similar effect of the creative movement's access to self and providing a holistic, liminal space. Elderly participants, near the end of their lifespan, may experience a changed sense of self akin to their much younger counterparts who are just beginning their life cycle. The difference in this scenario, is I often witness dance and movement transporting elderly participants back, perhaps reconnecting them to a fond memory triggered by the music or a significant time in their past that a particular physicality captures in their moving bodies. Movement and music create a space where they can reminisce and reconnect with themselves on a deeper level. This then manifests as a different type of self-discovery to their much younger counterparts, who tend to be transported further into the present moment, or perhaps even their future selves, as we saw in the final fieldwork study with Karen. However, like the early years, creative movement accesses an inner spark and a space for discovery. In this sense, dance is unbiased and can positively affect a whole lifespan,

regardless of age or ability. The creative movement ultimately instils the opportunity to take an individual on an internal journey of discovery, natural expression, and holism.

The majority of these sessions are chair-based with just a handful on their feet, but in no way does this slow them down. Their movements may be softer and less exuberant, but make no mistake, their inner beings are stirred. Their state is moved. Suddenly they are a twenty-year-old flouncing around the dancefloor with their handsome lover. Or at the cinema watching 'South Pacific' for the first time at just nineteen. The lady in the corner remembers holding her baby, dancing around the kitchen as she shuffles her feet and pats her knees to Elvis' 'blue suede shoes'. I've had an attendee leave a session before in tears, as she enjoyed herself so much. She had told me the 'session had bought her out of herself and gave so much joy'. That moment right there is why I do what I do. Music combined with creative movement holds a space for autonomous discovery and playful authority, giving those at the other end of the life spectrum a new correspondence with themselves. In fact, not a huge amount changes between my flutterby dance sessions (for preschool children) and my diva dance classes in care homes. The main differences are the styles of dance and the type of music I use. Within care homes the emphasis is more on reflection and dance styles the participants may remember fondly such as music from the 50s and 60s and disco or ballroom dance styles. However, as with flutterby, I still use an array of props and sensory elements within these sessions as it forms a type of role play, bringing a further flamboyance and characterisation to my sessions. Of course, the movements I encourage are more subtle and often work on just one piece of anatomy at a time, for instance legs or arms. But through their own nuances and enthused movements they gain just as much as their younger counterparts. I have witnessed adults gain from creative movement not just within my work at care homes but also when Diva Dance have visited special needs centres as well as evening sessions for adults. The impact can be monumental.

Care home residents enjoying their Diva Dance session above.

Setting up a child with these movement experiences creates a unique holistic venture, which has proven to serve them in becoming more of themselves and who they wish to become in later years. Dance for health, not only' dance therapy' or 'dance medicine' but movement and dance experiences in many different forms and physical placements, is an underused non-medical intervention. Dance participation is fulfilling incredible healing beneficiaries and giving these little beings a form of hopeful optimism and a redefined sense of self. Rather than a pill swallowed three times daily, I prescribe a world of dancing feet and twirling tots from tiny years onwards into a whole lifespan. Including dance and movement for the 'non-dancer'. What if it became a frequent workplace endeavour? Would workers become happier, more productive and more fulfilled? How about the teenage years? Would older children be more self-aware, empathetic and accepting?

Dance and movement for the early years are becoming more accessible with the onset of preschool franchises such as 'Baby Ballet', 'Diddy Dance' or my sessions: 'Flutterby Dance'. However, the question arises as to whether franchises are creatively led, or due to their imitation status, are they too structured to hold creative movement's effects of a child being warranted the space to discover oneself truly. Is the very nature of these franchises to imitate, replicate and copy rather than create, investigate and discover. Dance's benefits, I believe, can be dependent on the method and use of the teaching practice, more so than the environment itself. If a child in session is told to copy the practitioner's movement or in some form discouraged from moving creatively, these effects, which have been laid out throughout this study, may be laid to rest. Creative movement has a different emphasis. It is not just dancing; it is moving from the core, the depths of the body. It is becoming so lost in the music your soul takes over. It is an inner spiritual intake as opposed to an outer body

replication. It looks less like 'move like this person and more like 'how would you move if you were…'. Akin to each fieldwork study in this thesis, each child was given freedom and creative encouragement and not stunted by having to imitate the practitioner continually. This freedom is where the creative movement's power begins and transcends.

However, what about those who do not have the option of Montessori or creative-led education? Perhaps more should be done for those suffering from mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, not to mention health issues such as obesity, particularly in children. These are all on the rise with scary statistics:

Mental health problems are one of the main causes of the overall disease burden worldwide.

> Mental health and behavioural problems (e.g. depression, anxiety and drug use) are the primary drivers of disability worldwide, causing over 40 million years of disability in 20 to 29-year-olds. (https://www.who.int/healthtopics/mental-health#tab=tab_1)
>
> The Health Survey for England 2019 estimates that 28.0% of adults in England are obese and a further 36.2% are overweight. https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/thehealthsurvey)

As these statistics highlight, something must be done sooner rather than later. Our responsibility is to seek other routes to rekindle youngsters' confidence, happiness, and self-worth. The source permanently resides in 'self', how well developed we are as individuals and our acceptance of this. The more we know ourselves from a young age, the better placed we will be in the world around us, facing challenges and growing in an ever-changing and, at times, challenging climate. The health impacts must be known so that all children are allowed to experience and benefit from the wonders of creative movement. In the coming years, I would like to witness creative movement used to its full potential. More widely experienced in mainstream education and more easily accessed within social and family experiences. Therefore, I hope this truly is—just the beginning. As:

To dance is to be out of yourself. Larger, more beautiful, more powerful. This is power, it is glory on earth and yours for the taking. (Agnes de Mille n.p)

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Appendix 1

Appendix 1: Ethics form

Title of Project: The Question of Identity, Dance and Little Humans Researcher name:

Helen Ayres

Invitation to take part and summary of the project:

Hello. I'm Helen. I am a post-graduate student at the University of Exeter and an experienced dance teacher. My life as a teacher has raised many questions for me about how children and young people experience dance and how it affects the way they come to think about who they are. This curiosity has led me to begin formal research into the topic of the relationship of dance and identity for children -- or Little Humans. My two years, master's degree in research (Mres) is exploring how children experience dance and how they understand themselves differently because of it. I wonder if you can help me in this process?

Thank you for taking the time to read this. Please consider the information carefully. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask. As part of the formal ethics process required by the University, we invite parent/guardian/carers to give consent on behalf of a child.

Purpose of the research:

In recent years, many studies have shown the benefits of dancing for all sorts of conditions. It has been shown that adults with Parkinsons, Alzheimers and Depression can be helped by dancing. The experience of how dance shapes young people's development is less well understood. This project sets out to understand how dance and movement can help Little Humans nurture their unique identity, aid wellbeing and explore who they are through self-expression.

Most often, children experience dance in groups through classes, workshops or clubs. To carry out this research, I am going to be spending time observing and working with three different sorts of groups. They are dance for disabled children, dance for children in hospital and dance for children in mainstream schools, clubs or dance institutions. In each group, I hope to recruit approximately six or seven participants between the age range of four to nine years old.

In my experience as a teacher, I have seen the benefits of dance for Little Humans from all sorts of backgrounds and experiences. Through this formal research, I will be able to discover the best practice from this diverse range of dance groups that I can share with a broader research and teaching community.

Why have I been approached?

The class your child regularly attends is one of the groups I would like to collaborate with.

What would taking part involve?

Taking part would involve approximately six visits from me to your child's class (or a term's worth of classes) for approximately an hour each time. I would be observing some of the time, asking the children questions about their experience in groups and as individuals. To support this process of sharing, I'll also be inviting the children to draw and play a game with beads, as well as talk. So that I can consult this information later, I will be recording it. These recordings will include questionnaires and, in some instances, audio/video recordings. All data will be kept strictly confidential. Furthermore, the practical research activities i.e. the placement of beads in jars and drawings, will be kept completely anonymous and these activities will not be filmed or identifiably recorded in any manner. Please note: no sensitive, or identifiable data will appear within my final Thesis. All names and other identifiable information will be changed at the time of writing.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Although unfortunately, I cannot promise any specific benefits, the findings of this research, I hope, will through its documentation of best practice inform the development of future dance for the health and wellbeing of young people.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

I do not believe that taking part in this research has any foreseeable risks to participants.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on with the study?

You can stop taking part at any time up until the end of the research visits without having to give a reason. However, after this time, the writing process will have begun and data anonymised.

Withdrawal therefore after this time would not be possible.

Participants can ask to withdraw in person, via email or phone correspondence (please see contact details) and if they wish their data can be destroyed.

How will my information be kept confidential?

The University of Exeter processes personal data for the purposes of carrying out research in the public interest. The University will endeavour to be transparent about its processing of your personal data and this information sheet should provide a clear explanation of this. If you do have any queries about the University's processing of your personal data that cannot be resolved by the research team, further information may be obtained from the University's Data Protection Officer by emailing dataprotection@exeter.ac.uk or at www.exeter.ac.uk/dataprotection

All non-anonymised data will be stored on my own private computer (locked at all times with a secure password/entry system) for a maximum of six months. All non-anonymised data will then be destroyed immediately after use and by the time of the completed thesis on January 7th 2020 (unless the need for a break arises from an unknown circumstance which would be no more than three months) by means of shredding/over taping/eliminating and destroying all data.

Will I receive any payment for taking part?

You will not receive any financial payment for taking part.

What will happen to the results of this study?

The results of my study will go toward my final thesis with the University of Exeter for a Master of Research. If any participant wishes, I can send them a final copy of my thesis, which should be available to read from January 7th 2020. (Please contact me for further details). Please note: Some of the results or findings within this study may also be used within future academic transcripts/publications and/or towards my future academic work i.e. PhD. However, all findings will be kept strictly anonymous.

Who is organising and funding this study?

I (Helen Ayres) am the sole Researcher and funding my own study.

Who has reviewed this study?

This project has been reviewed by the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Exeter.

Further information and contact details.

Please contact the research team for further information and/or to take part:

Researcher: Helen Ayres

Mob: 07916464602

Email: Helen.ruth.ayres@gmail.com

Please find contact details below which the participant can contact if they are not happy with any aspect of the project and wish to complain; Ethics Committee Chair:

Dr Jana Funke, Chair of the College of Humanities Ethics Committee, University of

Exeter, Department of English & Film, Queen's Building, The Queen's Drive, EXETER

EX4 4QH j.funke@exeter.ac.uk 01392 725612

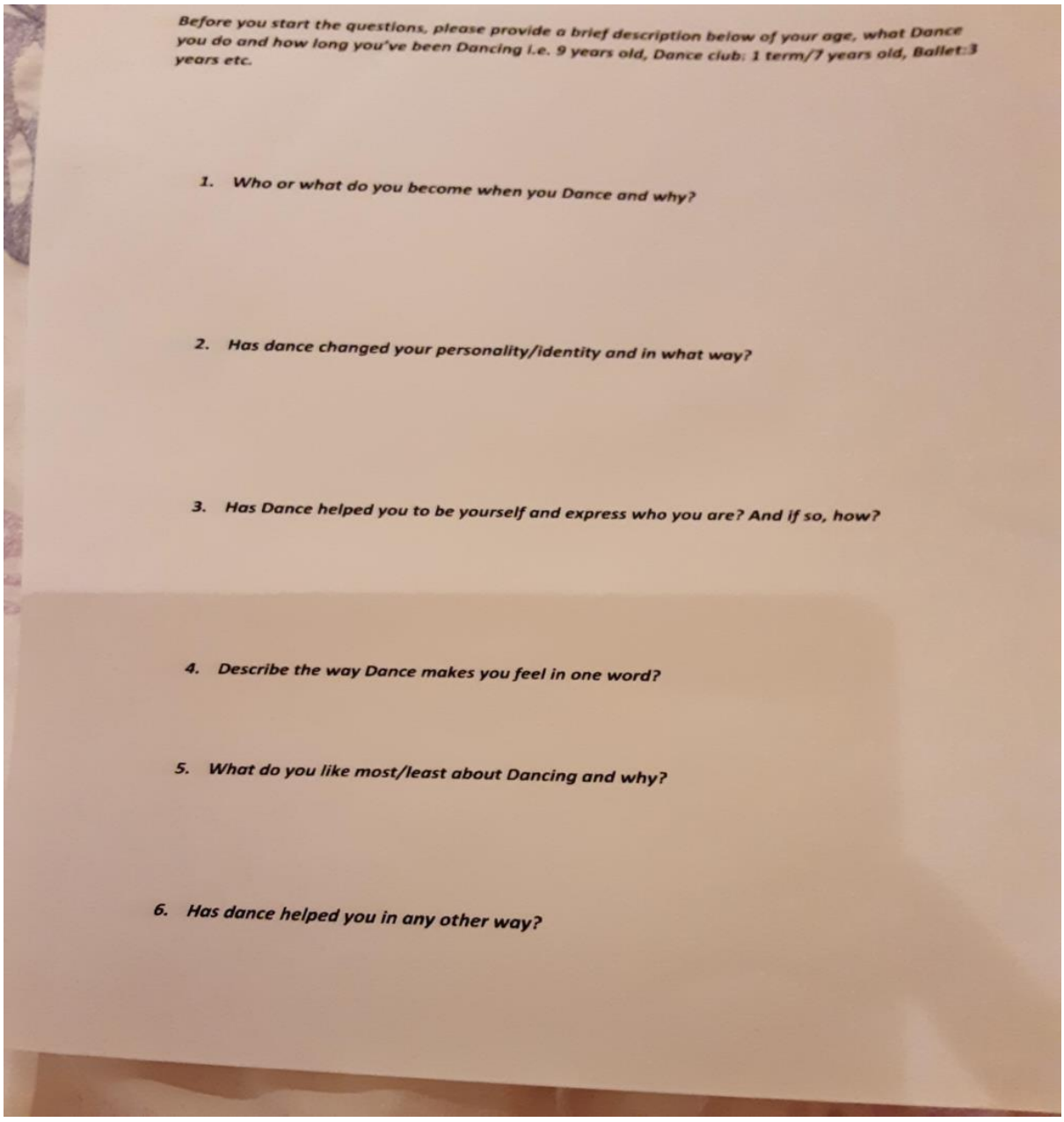
Gail Seymour, Research Ethics and Governance Manager g.m.seymour@exeter.ac.uk,

01392 726621

Thank you for your interest in this project.

Appendix 2

Research Questionnaire



Before you start the questions, please provide a brief description below of your age, what Dance you do and how long you've been Dancing i.e. 9 years old, Dance club: 1 term/7 years old, Ballet:3 years etc.

1. Who or what do you become when you Dance and why?

2. Has dance changed your personality/identity and in what way?

3. Has Dance helped you to be yourself and express who you are? And if so, how?

4. Describe the way Dance makes you feel in one word?

5. What do you like most/least about Dancing and why?

6. Has dance helped you in any other way?

Appendix 3

Flutterby Dance© Class structure

Class Structure (Flutterby Dance)

- *Please note: Each class should run for **45 mins**. If a parent/child arrives late, welcome them in but do not stop or restart the class. The class should always start and finish on time. Teachers should always arrive 15 mins prior to the start of the class to enable them to set up/test music and become familiar with their surroundings.*

The Breakdown of each class is as follows-

-Welcome/Introduction to style/theme and Warm-up

5 mins

-Co-Ordination/Balance/flexibility/musicality exercises

15 mins

-Main dance component, dependent on style/theme

20 mins

-This would usually involve teaching the main dance routine; the use of Props/Costume, learning about rhythm/timing and different steps used in that genre of Dance

-Cool Down/stickers/Goodbyes!

-

5 mins

-Please let them know what style/theme it will be for next week. And anything they could bring in and share with the group.

Age Range Structure (Flutterby Dance)

Butterfly Babies (*6-18 months)*

A fun and friendly class for your little ones. Includes puppetry play, instruments, an introduction to movement and interaction with other baby dancers!

***Butterfly Bouncers** (18mths-3yrs)*

A fun and friendly class, transforming little ones and their carers into the magical world of Butterfly Dance! Includes the use of props, dress up and fantastic music to encourage self-expression, rhythm and movement.

***Butterfly Bloomers** (3-5yrs)*

Hence the name, this is a fun and relaxed class where you can watch your little butterflies spread their wings and truly bloom! Different styles and themes encourage co-ordination, balance and rhythm…setting their imaginations free!

***Butterfly Dreamers** (5-6yrs)*

In this amazing class you can watch your little ones develop into confident Dancers. With 20 different themes and styles used you can be sure their imaginations will be flying! Skill and technique will be developed but in a fun and relaxed environment. Your dreamers won't be put under pressure here!

***Butterfly Dancers** (6+yrs)*

This is where the uniqueness and talent of your little Dancer really transcends! Learning challenging but fun routines from some amazing dance styles…your butterfly will want to spread their wings and fly away after taking part in this class! Termly showcases and events are included, where your little ones can wow you with their new moves!

Appendix 4

Flutterby Dance© class plan

<u>An Example Class Plan (45 mins)</u>

Theme/Style: Hawaiian

Age Range: Butterfly Bloomers (3-5 yrs)

Hello Butterfly Bloomers! Welcome ☺ I hope you're all ready to spread your wings and Dance! Today our style of Dance will be Hawaiian! Has anybody been to Hawaii or bought anything with them to do with the theme of Hawaii?

Short discussion/Introduction to what you will be doing today (in a circle formation)

Right now let's start with our warm –up! Get your Butterfly wings on and let's fly!

Warm up Selection: 'Clap our Hands and Tap our feet'

(Sitting in a circle; toes in the middle, knees bent)

We're going to clap our hands and tap our feet.
Clap and tap to our own beat.
Stretch up high to the sky then down below to touch our toes! (straighten legs)
Then we're going to sit up straight and say to our feet…Hello toes! (flex feet) Bye Bye Toes! (Point feet) Hello Toes! Bye Bye Toes!
Then we're going to stretch over to the sides
Then wave our arms like a butterfly!
Then wiggle wiggle wiggle like a worm
Before we rock the boat side to side (knees outwards, feet together)
Moving our heads up and down, round and round
And now we're all ready to Dance let's all jump up with one big bounce! (jump up to feet)
Now we can fly fly fly like a butterfly
Ready for anything we might try!

Co-Ordination Exercise Selection: 'Hands on Hips' Action Song

(Music gets gradually faster giving different actions to follow to the music)

Musicality Exercise Selection: The Grand Old Duke of York

Instruments may be introduced here. Musicality is encouraged as they interpret the music and march around the room to the beat!

Balance/Flexibility Exercise Selection: Limbo

All the children (and parents if they want to have a go!) get the chance to limbo under the Butterfly pole! This helps and encourages both flexibility and balance. As this is the Hawaiian theme, Hawaiian music can be used for this! I would even introduce the ***Lays*** *here! Stickers/sweets may be given for the winner!*

Main Dance Component

Teach them the dance routine to Lilo and Stitch- 'Hawaiian Roller Coaster Ride'. Teach them the moves first step by step and then add the Music. Make it fun! Moves include the 'surfboard', 'hula arms' and 'finger rolls'.

Cool Down (Music Option: Twinkle Twinkle Little Star)

Remove The Lays. Get all the children calm before starting the Cool Down. Cool Down to Twinkle Twinkle includes high stretches/reaches, twinkle fingers, the windmill stretch, curl down the body, the ball curl, the star shape stretch and the shake off! ***Disco Light*** *may be used here.*

Finish by saying goodbye to all the Flutterbye's! Let them know if you will be changing themes for the next class or if it's a continuation of this week (in which case encourage them to practice their moves!) Hand out special ***butterfly dance stickers*** *to each child and wave them goodbye!*