



Case Study: Deborah Hay

I have chosen a few case studies, based on the choreographic strand of Independent Dance's professional development programme to try and explore further how my initial descriptive findings of 'support' and 'nurturing' that ID provides is carried through and reflected by participants.

'Constantly 100 % of the time being aware of not doing something because you think you should but because your body is your teacher and because it comes out of you, not because it's forced in any way.' (Anon)

Eleah Waters; a participant of Deborah Hay's weekly intensive wrote on her feedback form:

'I want to stick to this practice for life'. (EW)

I asked her 7 months later whether it had had direct impact in her dancing, or whether the teachings were still as resounding now as they were then.

'It has stuck, but just a tiny little layer. Every time we do improvisation now it comes into my mind. I notice when I'm letting my body go into what I know, rather than challenging myself. I think that will never disappear.' (EW)

We discussed that perhaps Deborah's teachings are so specific and original, that the affect on someone's dancing life depends on when and where in their journey of dance artistry they discover it. So this 'need' that weaves itself as a thread through Deborah's teachings and the very fibres of ID is always moving, always individual and never tangible of predictable. More on this later...

'Unravelling more of this particular philosophy changes my body, my perception, my communication, my teaching.' (Anon)

'My approach to dance has become a continuous evolution on a physical, political and philosophical level.' (Anon)

'It uses the rigor of the work to distinguish itself not as some sort of play of seduction that is so prevalent in this industry. Learning to work like this is a constant and continuing process, always renewing itself, always replenishing. It is empowering, generous, and sustainable.' (Anon)

'I have been surprised every day by the amount of courage the work, of being in the work has taken. I am also surprised that this courage, for myself has been a psychological courage as well as artistic.' (Anon)

Get what you need – a focus of Deborah's teachings and something often repeated throughout my research when describing ID 'as an organisation'.

