
IADMS Education Committee

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Optimizing Dance Performance and Well-being **Suggestions for Dancers from Research in Dance and Positive Psychology**

- Effort is more important than talent—focus on your personal improvement as a dancer rather than focusing on whatever talent you feel you have or lack compared to others (you can't measure it anyway!)
- Work with different dancers on different days—you can learn something from everyone, and cooperation is both more enjoyable and productive than rivalry.
- Focus on the feelings of movements rather than on how they look. And try not to let the mirror distract you—you don't need to look like everybody else (at least not all the time!)
- Use imagery as it can help you learn skills, communicate artistically, and more. Try rehearsing in your head daily, imagining the feel of movements, music and creative expression as well as how things look.
- Be in control of your own development, taking classes and doing exercises that link in with your own goals. If you are not sure why an exercise is done the way it is—ask!
- Work with structured improvisation and give movements your own “flavor” or “voice.”
- Value your creativity. Both discipline and open-minded creativity are valuable to the dancer: try to make sure you get practice in both, and value your individuality.

