



# Volunteer Handbook

*Spring 2017 edition*

# Welcome!

Volunteers were not part of the original concept for Dance for PD® classes but they--you---have become integral to the success of the classes. This handbook presents excellent information on some of the key symptoms of Parkinson's disease (PD) and extraordinarily thoughtful suggestions of how you can assist people in classes.

Apart from all the symptoms of PD, the biggest problem that most people with PD face (as a consequence of the disease) is isolation. Very often participation in everyday conversations even within the family and among friends becomes difficult. Getting out can take so much physical effort and so much time that getting places seems too big an obstacle to face.

Many people with PD end up staying home, not talking much and losing direct contact with the world. It is not uncommon for people with PD to comment, "The only times I get out and the only people I see are doctors and therapists."

This is where you come in. The fact that you are sharing your time and interest in dance with the participants with PD, their family and aides, all together before, during, and after class is a bit of normal human contact that is very often missing in the lives of families affected by Parkinson's. You are a big part of the welcoming spirit of the classes that motivates people to make the effort to attend. In addition to the specific help you give, your interactions with people in the classes is so welcome, and so appreciated. Your volunteer time has helped to elevate Dance for PD® classes to a degree of excellence that is hard to match.

# Thank you!



Olie Westheimer  
Founder, Brooklyn Parkinson Group  
Visionary behind Dance for PD®

# Introduction to the *Dance for PD*<sup>®</sup> program

## Program Background

**Dance for PD**<sup>®</sup> started as an idea, was born as an experiment, and has emerged as an innovative global program that has launched in more than 120 communities in 17 countries, impacting thousands of people with Parkinson's, their families, and care partners.

In 2001, Olie Westheimer, the Founder and former Executive Director of the Brooklyn Parkinson Group (BPG), approached the Mark Morris Dance Group (MMDG), an internationally-acclaimed modern dance company that had just opened a new dance center in Brooklyn. Olie proposed the idea of a rigorous, creative dance class for members of her group. She also knew from her own dance background that professional dancers train their minds and bodies to execute difficult movement with confidence, power and grace. In doing so, they develop cognitive strategies that she thought could be naturally beneficial and enjoyable for people with Parkinson's.

That year, two dancers from the Mark Morris Dance Group—John Heginbotham and David Leventhal—along with a professional musician, started leading monthly classes for about six people. A third dancer, Misty Owens, joined shortly the teaching team shortly after, and composer and pianist William Wade became the program's lead musician in 2003. From the beginning, the Brooklyn classes were—as they still are today—offered free of charge in a state-of-art building devoted to dance.

In 2004, MMDG begin leading Dance for PD<sup>®</sup> classes in cities where the company toured, and developed a training program for dance teachers soon after. Dance for PD<sup>®</sup>'s founding teachers have offered more than 100 free demo classes and more than 30 teacher training workshops around the world. The original Brooklyn program serves as a model and inspiration for a growing network of Parkinson's dance classes around the world, including seven class locations in New York that welcome 45-50 participants each week.

Throughout its expansion, the Dance for PD<sup>®</sup> teaching approach has remained true to Olie's vision and fundamental ideas: that professionally-trained dancers are movement experts whose knowledge about balance, sequencing, rhythm and aesthetic awareness is useful to persons with PD; that all classes welcome and include people of all abilities, as well as families, friends and caregivers; and that the class is about the art, technique, and fun of dancing, not about Parkinson's and not called therapy. Simply stated, the class allows participants to explore the range of physical and creative possibilities that are still very much open to them.

The program has also been an important catalyst in creating active, engaged Parkinson's communities where there were none. In the act of dancing together, people learn together, talk together, and inspire each other to explore their creative and physical potential through group singing, yoga, and fitness classes that complement their dance training.

As the program continues to grow, its teachers and leaders try to chart a course that is ever respectful and aware of local community needs, interests, and diversity. But whether the classes take place in Brooklyn, Edinburgh, or Pune, India, the fundamentals are the same: dance and music of the highest quality led by teachers and musicians who are sensitive, knowledgeable and passionate. And with its inclusive philosophy that welcomes all, regardless of ability or level of mobility, the program inspires people with Parkinson's—and those close to them—to experience the grace, fluidity, and joy that dancing brings.

## **What makes a dance class a Dance for PD® class?**

All Dance for PD® classes incorporate five components that we feel are essential to the classes' success:

- ✓ **Classical and contemporary technique training** builds strength, flexibility and coordination skills
- ✓ **Improvisation and aesthetic interpretation** stimulate creativity and the imagination
- ✓ **Choreographic repertory and new movement sequences** help participants develop cognitive strategies
- ✓ **Circle dances, line dances and scene work** foster social interaction and create a sense of connection and community
- ✓ **Strong musicality informs every aspect of the class** so that melody, structure and rhythm guide and inspire participants' physical and emotional exploration and expression.
- ✓ **Families, friends and caregivers are welcomed and included in all class activities** to foster mutually positive perceptions and relationships

## **Core program principles**

1. Dancing for the sake of dancing
2. Learning from professional, experienced teaching artists who love what they're teaching and who are trained in the method
3. Dancing to live musical accompaniment whenever possible
4. Aiming for mental and physical development through an aesthetically-informed artistic experience (not teaching in response to symptoms). Setting aesthetic and expressive goals without striving for perfection.
5. Emphasizing the use of imagery to invoke a wide range of specific, contrasting movement qualities
6. Integrating specific, identifiable dance styles and techniques to develop strength, balance, coordination, rhythm and grace
7. Expressing emotion and exploring imagination through specific choreography, structured improvisation, and physical storytelling
8. Dancing together in circles, lines, couples and groups and supporting each other as a community
9. Learning and dancing actual choreography by dancemakers of local and international stature
10. Learning to think like a dancer
11. Emphasizing the essentially joyful nature of dance
12. Including spouses, friends, partners and caregivers in the class

## **Core program values**

Innovation  
Creativity  
Artistic Excellence  
Collaboration

Inclusiveness  
Community  
Mutual Respect  
Enjoyment

## **Brooklyn Parkinson Group**

Until June 2016, **BROOKLYN PARKINSON GROUP (BPG)** supported persons with Parkinson's disease and their families with arts and wellness programs in collaboration with community organizations and artists. Activities were designed to engage mind, body and spirit, and encourage persons with Parkinson's to remain active. The learning, creativity and aesthetic enjoyment inherent in artistic endeavors promote physical and mental activity. These are key components of PD care.

Its original collaboration with Mark Morris Dance Group in 2001 to create Dance for PD® classes inspired similar partnerships to develop sing, experimental movement, fitness classes and art workshops, all taught by professionals in their fields, as well as support services for persons with PD and care partners. With dance at the core class for most within the BPG community, Dance for PD and the Mark Morris Dance Group are pleased to support the continuation of Sing for PD<sup>SM</sup> and PD Movement Lab<sup>SM</sup> classes, in addition to providing space for both General and Care Partner Support Group meetings. Though no longer a 501(c)(3) entity, the BPG community remains a vibrant and dynamic group who contributes to the continued growth and success of Dance for PD. Their Fitness for PD<sup>SM</sup> is still offered in collaboration with Long Island University and Art Workshops are available in partnership with the Museum of Modern Art.

## **Mark Morris Dance Group**

Mark Morris formed the **MARK MORRIS DANCE GROUP (MMDG)** in 1980 and the company gave its first concert that year in New York City. The company's touring schedule steadily expanded to include cities both in the U.S. and in Europe, and in 1986 it made its first national television program for the PBS series Dance in America. In 1988, MMDG was invited to become the national dance company of Belgium, and spent three years in residence at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels. The company returned to the United States in 1991 as one of the world's leading dance companies, performing across the U.S. and at major international festivals. Over the past 30 years, Mr. Morris has created more than 120 works for the company.

Based in Brooklyn, NY, the company has maintained and strengthened its ties to several cities around the world, most notably its West Coast home, Cal Performances in Berkeley, CA, and its Midwest home, the Krannert Center for the Performing Arts at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. MMDG made its debut at the Mostly Mozart Festival in 2002 and at the Tanglewood Music Festival in 2003 and has since been invited to both festivals annually. From the company's many London seasons, it has also garnered two Laurence Olivier Awards.

MMDG is noted for its commitment to live music, a feature of every performance on its full international touring schedule since 1996. MMDG regularly collaborates with leading orchestras, opera companies, and

musicians. MMDG's film and television projects also include *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Hard Nut*, two documentaries for the U.K.'s South Bank Show, and PBS' *Live From Lincoln Center*.

The Mark Morris Dance Center in Brooklyn, which opened in 2001, serves as a cultural resource for the community by offering low-cost, high quality dance and music classes for all ages, as well as subsidized rehearsal space for local artists. In addition to the Dance for PD® program, the company offers an innovative arts in education curriculum in the Brooklyn public schools—the Mark Morris Dance, Music & Literacy Project—and provides free community outreach programs for local residents of public housing. MMDG also hosts an annual Open House with a day of free classes for all. Access/MMDG is a humanities-based program that offers a more complete Dance Group experience by integrating the company's performances with events and exhibits that draw upon the rich artistic resources of the company.

## Founding Dance for PD® Program Staff



### **DAVID LEVENTHAL (Program Director and founding teacher, Dance for PD®)**

leads classes for people with Parkinson's disease around the world and trains other teachers in the Dance for PD® approach. Since 2007, he has trained more than 600 teachers in the Dance for PD® approach in 25 cities around the world. He's co-produced three volumes of a successful At Home DVD series for the program and has been instrumental in initiating and designing innovative projects involving live streaming and *Moving Through Glass*, a dance-based Google Glass App for people with Parkinson's. Along with Olie Westheimer, he is the co-recipient of the 2013 Alan Bonander Humanitarian Award from the Parkinson's Unity Walk. He has written about dance and Parkinson's for such publications as *Dance Gazette* and *Room 217*, and has chapters about the program in two recently published books: *Moving Ideas: Multimodal Learning in Communities and Schools* (Peter Lang), and *Creating Dance: A Traveler's Guide* (Hampton Press). He is in demand as a speaker at international conferences and symposiums, and has spoken about the intersection of dance, Parkinson's and health at the University of Michigan, Rutgers, Penn State Hershey Medical Center, Brown University, Stanford, Columbia, Georgetown, and Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Liège (Belgium), among others. He's featured in the award-winning 2014 documentary *Capturing Grace* directed by Dave Iverson. As a dancer, he performed with the Mark Morris Dance Group from 1997-2011, appearing in principal roles in Mark Morris' *The Hard Nut*, *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*, and *Prokofiev's Romeo & Juliet, on Motifs of Shakespeare*. He received a 2010 Bessie (New York Dance and Performance Award) for his performing career with Mark Morris. He graduated from Brown University with honors in English Literature.



**OLIE WESTHEIMER (Founder, Brooklyn Parkinson Group and Visionary behind Dance for PD®)** combined her dance training with study of cognitive psychology and work with families affected by Parkinson's to develop Dance for PD® classes in collaboration with Mark Morris Dance Group. Her presentations on dance for people with Parkinson's include World Parkinson Congresses in Washington DC and Glasgow, GEL Health in New York, support groups in Japan, the New York Academy of Sciences Music, Science and Medicine conference, Movement Disorders division of Columbia University Department of Neurology, Weill

Cornell, Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine, among others. The video "Why Dance for Parkinson's Disease?" she wrote and produced with Mark Morris won first place in The Society for the Arts in Healthcare 2010 film festival. She has developed and coordinated two studies on dance. Her paper Why Dance for Parkinson's Disease, appeared in 2009 in Topics of Geriatric Rehabilitation. She is lead author on "Dance for PD: a preliminary investigation on the effects and quality of life among persons with Parkinson's Disease, published September, 2015 in Journal of Neural Transmission. Together with David Leventhal, her work Dance for PD® work has been honored with the Alan Bonander Humanitarian Award of the Parkinson's Unity Walk and the Title II Public Service Award from the New York City Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities. She has received recognition for community service to the Parkinson's community by the Mary Ellen Critchlow Award presented by Heights and Hills, the Brooklyn senior service organization, and the World Parkinson Program Award. Prior to the founding of Brooklyn Parkinson Group and Dance for PD®, she worked as a magazine editor, freelance writer on health issues and Executive Director of Association for Research in Nervous and Mental Disease. She graduated from Oberlin College with majors in French and political theory, and received an MA with honors in applied linguistics from Columbia University Teachers College.

## **Volunteer Orientation Facilitators**



**JANELLE BARRY (Lead teacher, Dance for PD®)** earned her BFA in Dance Performance from Chapman University. She has performed works by Bella Lewitsky, Nakul Dev Mahajan, and Mike Esperanza, as well as performed with Backhausdance, I KADA Contemporary Dance Company, the Czech-American Marionette Theatre, The Metropolitan Opera, and with Mark Morris Dance Group. Her choreography has been featured at Regional Dance America in addition to numerous venues in California and New York, and she has had the pleasure of setting work on the Orange County Regional Ballet, Ballet Unlimited, the Chapman Dance Alliance, and the Folklore Dance Theater. Janelle currently teaches dance to all ages at the Mark Morris Dance Center as well as for the Dance for PD® program.



**AMY BAUMAN (Programs Assistant)** has worked as a volunteer, Teaching Assistant, and Lead Teacher for Dance for PD and PD Movement Lab classes since 2012. Amy recently retired as an occupational therapist, having worked primarily in nursing home rehabilitation settings with patients who suffered strokes, underwent joint replacement surgeries, and lived with PD. Her dance background is primarily in modern, but while living abroad in the Soviet Union in the early 1980s, she rediscovered ballet. Amy is grateful to be an integral part of the Dance for PD community, which she considers to be a second family.



**MARIA PORTMAN KELLY (Programs and Engagement Manager, Dance for PD®)** has supported the expansion of the New York City based flagship program since 2011. She created the Volunteer Training Program, and has co-facilitated Introductory Training and Professional Development workshops for dance teachers, movement experts, and medical professionals, and will serve as an adjudicator for those seeking Certification as the program continues to grow. Maria acted as production assistant for three volumes of a successful At Home DVD series for Dance for PD®, and has been instrumental in supporting innovative projects involving live streaming and Moving Through Glass, a dance-based Google Glass App for people with Parkinson's. She has represented the program at various panels and events, including Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health Arts in Aging, the Lincoln Center Global Exchange, and the World Parkinson Congress. Maria appears in the award-winning 2014 documentary *Capturing Grace* directed by Dave Iverson, which follows the process of the inaugural Dance for PD® Performance Project. She is a former dancer with the Louisville Ballet, Susana B. Williams Modern Dance Company, and Ballet Español. Maria holds a BFA from the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music and a Certificate in Nonprofit Management from Medgar Evers College. She was selected by the New York Foundation for the Arts as an Emerging Leader, and was invited to co-facilitate an art and entrepreneurial residency with The Amahoro Dance Troupe of Gisenyi, Rwanda. Maria is in early stages of pursuit of an MA in Disability Studies at CUNY School of Professional Studies.

# Parkinson's Disease: 101

Parkinson's disease (PD) is a chronic and progressive movement disorder, meaning that symptoms continue and worsen over time. Nearly one million people in the US are living with Parkinson's disease. The cause is unknown, and although there is presently no cure, there are treatment options such as medication and surgery to manage its symptoms.

Parkinson's involves the malfunction and death of vital nerve cells in the brain, called neurons. Parkinson's primarily affects neurons in an area of the brain called the substantia nigra. Some of these dying neurons produce dopamine, a chemical that sends messages to the part of the brain that controls movement and coordination. As PD progresses, the amount of dopamine produced in the brain decreases, leaving a person unable to control movement normally.

The specific group of symptoms that an individual experiences varies from person to person. Primary motor signs of Parkinson's disease include the following.

- **tremor** of the hands, arms, legs, jaw and face
- **bradykinesia** or slowness of movement
- **rigidity** or stiffness of the limbs and trunk
- **postural instability** or impaired balance and coordination

(Information from Parkinson's Disease Foundation: [http://www.pdf.org/symptoms\\_primary](http://www.pdf.org/symptoms_primary))

## Working with persons who have PD

Parkinson's is a difficult disease to codify because it manifests itself in so many different ways from person to person, and in different ways in an individual at different times. There is very little logic to what you can expect to see in someone with Parkinson's. But this guide will attempt to give you a sense of what to anticipate from students in the class so that you can understand what you're observing and assist in a safe and compassionate manner.

The most important thing to keep in mind with Parkinson's is that each individual student will have different challenges on different days and at different times. Parkinson's is unpredictable. It's one reason people with PD need to be especially creative in their approach to the challenges of the day, and why many of the people we've worked with rely on cognitive strategies, patience, and sometimes even a bit of humor to cope. There is no one single manifestation of Parkinson's disease, but in one group of people

dozens of combinations of symptoms that come and go over time. With that in mind, here are some observations:

Observation	Sensitivity
Parkinson's can make people <b>stiff</b> , and muscles <b>tight</b> . Often people with PD are clumsy and slow.	Slow movement (bradykinesia) is a cardinal sign of PD. People with PD have to work hard to move. Their muscles are often sluggish and tight. Effort is involved and when prolonged, fatigue sets in.
Parkinson's takes <b>swing and logic</b> out of movement.	Basic automatic movement coordinations that involve swinging the arms or oppositional movement are hard for most people to do. It may take some people more than one class to be able to get the movements and some won't be able to for quite a while, if ever.
People with Parkinson's may have trouble with <b>balance</b> .	The automatic reflex to "catch" oneself with legs, arms or change of position does not automatically kick in for persons with PD who lose their balance. Some persons with PD fall backwards. Others fall forwards. Loss of balance can happen when just standing still or while walking, or changing from one position to another. Falling forwards or backwards commonly occurs when getting in or out of a chair. Stay alert and use all of the information about balance in the Safety Module. You may have to provide physical assistance—but ALWAYS ask permission before making contact.
People with Parkinson's can <b>freeze</b> and be unable to move.	Teachers, Assistants, and Volunteers are trained to help people get out of a freeze using successfully tested techniques.
As Parkinson's progresses, people need to take <b>medication</b> in order to move. When medication stops working, people may seem to switch off like a light and then on again after they take pills.	Participants move with much more ease when they're on (the medication has an effect) than when they are off. It's important to have water and cups nearby.
Parkinson's can affect the <b>voice</b> and speaking patterns	Give people time and space to say what they want. Don't rush them. Some people have trouble getting the words out, or they may speak slowly or much too fast, and be hard to understand.
Many people with Parkinson's have <b>tremors</b> , which can cause shaking in limbs.	It may be hard for someone with a hand or arm tremor to hold hands with other people in a circle; making

	connections in other ways, such as touching a shoulder, are equally special.
People with Parkinson's can experience <b>fatigue</b> and sleepiness.	Exhaustion is one of the biggest difficulties with Parkinson's. Muscles can fatigue quickly, and because some people experience sleep disorders and have difficulty getting a good night's sleep, participants might get drowsy in the class.
People with Parkinson's might find it <b>hard to smile, frown or express emotions</b> in their faces, and the muscles that allow someone to speak may be affected, creating a monotone or expressionless voice. Some people experience drooling that they have trouble controlling.	Don't take it personally. People may look like they couldn't care less about what you're doing, but this couldn't be further from the truth! Participants might be feeling especially invested and committed to the class, but their faces may not show their excitement.
People with Parkinson's might find it hard to do two things at once, and they have to think through <b>multitasking</b> and concentrate very hard.	As a volunteer you may be in the situation in which you need to break down movement, slow down movement, or do one part at a time for an individual or a small group that's following you. Emphasize the idea of the students having fun with the challenge (like the Sunday crossword), rather than striving for perfection or an end results. It's the attempt that counts in in this class.
<b>Stress</b> can make everything harder.	The calmer you can be in your interactions the better.
People with Parkinson's may be on a very strict <b>pill schedule</b> .	You may hear alarms and beepers going off during class, and people may excuse themselves to take medication.
Some people with Parkinson's may experience uncontrolled <b>writhing movements</b> (dyskinesia), often resulting from too much medication.	Imagine exercising in high speed with no way to slow down. Dyskinesia can lead to exhaustion. It is always appreciated when volunteers place value on the uniqueness of each person's movement potential so that all ranges of motion, from small to large, are welcome and beautiful.
Some people with Parkinson's have <b>cognitive impairments</b> that affect, for instance, planning a sequence of things to do, memory and spatial orientation, or the comprehension of instructions.	It's not important for you to understand the source of slowness. What's important is maintaining your calm, friendly demeanor. Don't be afraid to repeat what you've said or cue someone if they don't seem to understand what's going on, but don't pressure anyone either. There's a balance between friendly inclusion and bullying.

## Safety concerns

The main safety concern for persons with PD is preventing falls. They occur much more commonly in persons with PD than in the general healthy, older populations. People with PD commonly fall, often due to poor control of balance, misjudgment of surrounding space, slowed reaction response to being put off balance, and occasional dizziness. Commonly persons with PD who freeze and cannot move at all for some time are more at risk for falling than those who do not. Some persons walk much too fast with small steps (festination) which leads to a fall.

Falls are more likely to occur during class transitions—moving from sitting to standing, or moving from the barre to center work. And it can happen when people get carried away in the movement and misjudge their balance or strength. Keep in mind that most people with Parkinson's fall from time to time and have probably fallen. Also keep in mind that in our experience, being conscious, musical and directed in a dance studio—a wide open space without obstacles—seems to reduce both the chance of falling and the potential dangers of falling (hitting an object or twisting an ankle on an uneven floor).

A second concern is dizziness, which can cause falls. Dizziness may occur from low blood pressure, common among persons with PD. Quick lowering or raising of the head should be avoided. A third concern is fatigue. Persons with PD may tire very quickly and have to rest for a while. Always ask someone who looks suddenly tired if he or she would like to sit down or take time out. Safety really does come first. Knowing about the difficulties persons with PD have in moving will guide you in assisting people with sensitivity and compassion.

## Falls

**Please defer to directions of the lead teachers and assistants in the class whenever a fall occurs.** These guidelines are so that volunteers can provide necessary support to the teachers and lead assistants, of whom are certified in CPR, in the event of a fall.

First: You may not necessarily want to lend a hand to someone who is in the middle of a fall. Many people with Parkinson's are used to falling, and may have a technique that they are comfortable with. When you try to reach out to prevent the fall, you could throw them off. You'll need to assess this quickly in the moment, but often it can be safer to let people fall rather than grabbing their arms and trying to steer them.

As soon as they have fallen, you'll want to assess their physical state. Ask if they are ok. Are they injured? Are they bleeding? Do they seem disoriented? You are not a doctor, so don't try to treat or diagnose; just use your common sense and call for medical support right away if you have any doubt.

Don't rush to help them up. First determine the seriousness of the fall. It may be better not to move them, but you'll know pretty quickly if this is the case. If you have a pillow, you might offer to place it under the person's head while they are recovering. If they seem to be ok, ask them if they would like to get up on their own, or if they would like a hand. Don't assume they need your help. Some persons prefer getting up by themselves. They know that assists can sometimes be destabilizing. Ask them how they usually like to get up. Again, we want to empower our students, not take on the role of medical attendants. If the person is with a caregiver, he or she may know the best way to help and should be asked their advice before you do anything.

If you are asked to assist, it's useful to compare getting up after a fall to climbing a mountain—your goal is to pace the recovery, establish comfortable basecamps along the way, and guide the participant to do as much of the work by herself. We find that the best approach is to use a chair and guide people through these 'basecamps':

1. Lie comfortably on one side; use hands to press up to rest weight on leg, hip and hands. Wait.
2. Transfer to all fours. Wait.
3. Position chair near participant; guide participant from all fours position to resting hands or elbows on the chair seat, to pressing up, to rotating and sitting on the chair, using the chair to provide support along the way.
4. Rest in chair before returning to class.

Throughout the process, assess your student's emotional state. Are they embarrassed? Amused? Anxious? Scared to continue? Make sure they know that however they want to continue (jumping back in, or sitting for a few minutes, or watching the rest of class) they are still participating, and that they are free to do whatever feels best.

If it's appropriate (and it has been in 98 percent of all falls that have occurred in our class), light humor is often a good approach: "Well that was dramatic!", or "Some people will do anything to get attention". Again, humor works only if you've assessed the situation, ruled out a serious problem AND know the participants well.

## Building relationships

Your best technique for preventing falls and creating a safe atmosphere is also the most rewarding and fun—get to know the participants personally. This will create a relationship that is based on an on-going, relaxed conversation about limits, concerns and daily conditions. You will get to know who has balance issues, who tends to get carried away and end up on the floor, who is anxious but wants to be pushed. This will enable you to ask: “Can I dance this phrase with you today?” if someone looks unsteady, or “How about dancing with Joe today and doing this as a duet?”.

## Dance for PD® Classes

*Dance for PD® Classes began in Brooklyn in 2001 and since then there have been regular access to dance classes for persons with PD at the world-renowned Mark Morris Dance Center. The program has continued to expand and grow, with the flagship classes in Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens and the Bronx remaining a model for other programs all over the world. The program is managed by the Dance for PD® team, MMDG staff, as well interns and our vibrant volunteer community.*

## Dance for PD® Classes, Flagship Program, New York

Please refer to our online calendar for most up-to-date information regarding class schedule. Flagship classes in New York run September-July; there are no classes during the month of August.

### Mark Morris Dance Center | Brooklyn

**Open Class: Wednesdays | 2:15-3:30 PM**

**Dance for PD Advanced Level: Mondays | 6-7 PM** (12-week seasonal workshops, call for exact dates)

3 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn NY 11217

*Subway: Nevins St. (2/3, 4/5), Barclays Center (LIRR, N/Q/R, B/D, 2/3, 4/5) and Lafayette Ave. (C)*

*Buses: B41, B45, B67 to Atlantic Terminal; B38 to Long Island University; B52 to Fulton St. and Flatbush Ave.*

### The Juilliard School | Manhattan (West Side)

**Sundays | 1:30-2:45 PM** (September-May)

**Mondays | 2:30-3:45 PM** (June-July)

155 W. 65<sup>th</sup> St., New York, NY 10023 (between Broadway & Amsterdam)

*Subway: 66<sup>th</sup> St. Lincoln Center (1), 59<sup>th</sup> St. Columbus Circle (A/C, B/D C, 1)*

*Buses: M5, M7, M104 to Broadway; M11 to Amsterdam Ave.; M20, M66 to 66<sup>th</sup> St.*

Ballet Academy East | Manhattan (East Side)

**Fridays | 11 AM-12:15 PM**

1651 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave., New York, NY 10128 (between 92<sup>nd</sup> & 93<sup>rd</sup> Sts.)

Subway: 96<sup>th</sup> St. (Q, 6)

Buses: M101, M102, M108, M98 to 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave., M96 to 96<sup>th</sup> St.

The New School | Manhattan (Downtown)

**Select Saturdays | 10:30-11:45 AM** (September-May)

**Select Tuesdays | 10:30-11:45 AM** (June-July)

66 W. 12<sup>th</sup> Street., New York, NY 10011 (near Sixth Ave.)

Subway: 14<sup>th</sup> Street (F, M, L), W. 4<sup>th</sup> St (A/C/E, B/D)

Buses: M1, M2, M3, M55 to 12<sup>th</sup> St.

NYU Center for Ballet and the Arts | Manhattan (Downtown)

**Select Mondays | 10:30-11:45 AM**

16 Cooper Square, New York, NY 10003 (at Fifth Ave.)

Subway: Astor Pl. (6), Broadway-Lafayette St. (B/D/F/M)

Buses: M103 to 4<sup>th</sup> St., M15 to 6<sup>th</sup> St.

BambooMoves | Forest Hills, Queens

**Two Fridays per month | 1:45-3 PM**

107-40 Queens Blvd., Suite 206, Forest Hills, NY 11375

Subway: Forest Hills/71 Ave. (E, F/M, R)

Buses: QM 11, QM18, Q23, Q60 to 71<sup>st</sup> Ave.

Bronx House | Bronx

**Monthly, select Tuesdays | 2:30-3:45 PM**

990 Pelham Parkway South, Bronx, NY 10461

Subway: Morris Park (5), Pelham Parkway (2, 5); Buses: Bx8, Bx12 to Williamsbridge Rd.

College of Mount St. Vincent | Riverdale, Bronx

**Select Thursdays | 11:00-12:15 PM**

6301 Riverdale Ave, Bronx, NY 10471

Transport: Metro North Station RIVERDALE

Buses: Bx7, Bx10 to College of Mt. St. Vincent

## Registration

To attend a Dance for PD® class in one of the New York locations (excluding Brooklyn), advanced registration is required for all participants (dancers as well as volunteers and interns); for many classes, there is a maximum capacity and number of spots allocated for each type of participant, which are reserved on a first-come first-serve basis. **This excludes the Brooklyn Wednesday classes for which there is no limit and no registration necessary.**

Again, due to limited capacity, **all participants—including volunteers—must register for classes outside of Brooklyn.**

There are two ways to register:

**Online** (preferred) via registration notifications or our website: <http://danceforparkinsons.org/find-a-class/classes-and-events/dance-for-pd-class-calendar>

Click on the location you wish to attend; you will be redirected to the class registration page with a complete list of available dates.

- Enter promo code VOLUNTEER, which will reveal a hidden ticket type and reserve the appropriate space for you. Please note VOLUNTEER tickets are listed *below* Returning Participant tickets. You must scroll down the page to view them after entering the promo code.
- Following this protocol helps to ensure each session is adequately staffed and prevents inadvertently using a ticket type allocated for our returning participants.

By **phone**, call the registration hotline [718-218-DFPD \(3373\)](tel:718-218-DFPD)

## Inclement Weather Policy

In case of inclement weather, classes will be canceled if New York City Public Schools are closed. The class may also be canceled if weather conditions (including cases of extreme heat) make travel too difficult. Cancellation notices will be distributed via email and announcements posted on the website home page and outgoing messages by 9 AM on the day of the class.

# How to assist in Dance for PD® classes

## Set-Up

- Please arrive 15-30 minutes early for class to help to set up the studio. In most host venues, chairs are provided and need to be set up for class.
- Before the class starts, make sure the chairs are placed spaciouly. Chairs are set up in concentric circles around the center of the room with the teacher's and teaching assistant's chairs placed in the middle facing each other; please ensure the teacher has a clear visual path to communicate to the accompanying musician. Stagger chairs so that participants have enough room to move their arms around without hitting each other. Make sure that each participant can see either the teacher or assistant.
- When choosing your own place for class, it is helpful to place yourself in the back or periphery of the class so you can scan everyone in class to see if anyone needs help. Avoid sitting close to other volunteers – the class is best supported when volunteers are evenly spaced between the participants.
- Most of our ongoing volunteers wear Dance for PD t-shirts for easy identification in classes. These can be purchased for \$15 from Maria.



## Before & During Class

- Learn participants' names as much as possible.
- Always ask if they need help before doing anything—don't assume.
- Don't get carried away with your own dancing. Always be on the lookout for anyone unstable or needing help (while you enjoy the class).
- Participants tend to fall "back" more than forward. If you are assisting someone, it will be more helpful to stand behind them or to their side.
- Stand near someone who seems unstable or may need help. If you are assisting using physical contact, think of partnering a dance partner. Gentle touches are as useful as firm grips. It helps to stand near a person, and simply place a palm on his/her back, just to let them know you are there if/when they need.

- If you see them walking backward to get somewhere, keep an eye on him/her. Guide the student to make sure he or she doesn't fall back or suggest a turn around to walk forward.
- Place chairs strategically. It's helpful to have chairs in front for standing portion of the class. For more unstable participants, place a chair behind them also in case they need to sit down or fall back.
- Use your intuition. If you find participants isolated, encourage them to join the group, make eye contact, and dance with them.
- Place students with balance issues between two ballet barres so they can support themselves more completely.
- Do make sure people can see you when you're helping to show a combination so they don't have to crane; space yourself well so that everyone can see you or one of the teachers.
- Keep a few chairs in the studio, at the side, or just outside the door. Fatigue is a very common symptom of PD. If you see someone who looks tired, ask if he or she would like you to bring over a chair.
- Demonstrate standing exercises in a chair for those who wish to remain seated. Don't assume that people will be able to translate what the lead teacher is doing to a seated position. Volunteers can help the students translate and adapt the materials to suit their specific needs and position.
- Do not hesitate to "disturb" the class. Sometimes, someone needs help at a not-so-appropriate time and/or volume. Help latecomers get settled in class as quickly as possible. Some people have a difficult time getting to class, and they can often be late due to their physical and transportation limitations. All you can do to help is to welcome them and find them a seat, guide them to available seats.
- For the standing portion of the class, ask the seated participants if they want to try to stand up. They may not be able to do much standing, but just simply standing up is a big achievement for them. Once they are standing, place yourself nearby and keep an eye on them.
- Smile! Enjoy yourself and smile! Your smiles make their day!

## **After Class**

- Plan to stay 15-30 minutes after the class ends to offer assistance.
- Please help remove and place chairs into their original place.
- Take note as to who may require assistance leaving class. Volunteers often help with shoes and jackets walkers or wheelchairs, even navigating halls, elevators, and doors to exit the building. As always, offer help before assuming it is needed.

- Participants may ask you for information – if you do not know the answer, do not be afraid to say you do not know. Always refer them to Maria, Amy, or other Dance for PD® staff members who will be able to answer their questions. If no staff member is available, ask them to be in touch with Maria. Most participants will have the contact details of staff on the program; if not, you can always share email addresses and phone numbers located on the last page of this handbook. Please do not share personal cell phone numbers or email addresses with participants.

## Logistic Considerations

There are many participants who have been attending classes for years. While our classes typically take place in the same studio each week, it is important to confirm the class location with front desk/security or program staff upon arrival. The lead teacher of the class rotates between a pool of Lead Teachers, supported by a Lead Teaching Assistant. There is also often an apprentice/teacher-in-training in class that will lead some exercises. There is always live music.

### Attendance

In Brooklyn, participants should sign-in at the Front Desk. If you are signing in people, ask the names of participants as they enter reception and programs they are attending. For new participants or first-time visitors to classes at the Dance Center, please ask the participants to complete and return a Dance for PD information form and Photo/Video release. Information from this form will be entered into the Counterpoint system at the front desk before being archived by Maria.

The Security Staff at The Juilliard School and The New School has a list of registered participants for each class and requires all to complete an online waiver and release of liability in advance of their first visit. Attendance is generally managed at all satellite class locations (Juilliard, BAE, Downtown, Bronx, Riverdale, and Queens) by the Teaching Assistant and/or program interns via the Eventbrite Organizer App. Should you be responsible for this task, you will receive access information and a tutorial session. Attendance can also be tracked manually and given to Maria to enter into our online record.

### Set-Up

Beginning 15-30 minutes prior to each class, dependent on studio availability, volunteers help set up chairs in concentric circles around the dance studio. Chairs should be available outside the studio; if there are no chairs please ask Facility Staff (Brooklyn), Security Staff (Juilliard/Downtown), or Front Desk Staff (BAE, Bronx, Queens).

In Brooklyn, there are a few cushions kept in the fourth floor closet, dedicated to BPG and Dance for PD® storage. These should be pulled out and available to participants for class, and put away again at the end of class. Please ask Maria or a Facilities team member to unlock the closet, if necessary. Additional seat cushions are stored at the front desk.

### **Arrival and Departure: Access-A-Ride (Brooklyn classes)**

Many Dance for PD® participants use Access-A-Ride. This is the city's paratransit service, offering door-to-door transport for those that are unable or who find it difficult to access the public transport system. Drivers will drop off and pick up participants outside the main entrance to the Dance Center, on the corner of Rockwell Place, or across the street at BAM's loading zone (30 Lafayette Ave.), depending upon congestion associated with traffic or construction, or access need to the wheelchair lift.

Upon arrival, participants will simply be dropped off by their driver. For departure, it is very important to have one person at the building entrance to keep an eye out for Access-A-Ride vans and cars and act as a liaison between drivers and riders, as well as ensuring the entrance to the Dance Center doors are kept clear. (Participants tend to stand in front of the doors, or behind them, which creates traffic with incoming/outgoing children/parents, not to mention a hazard for personal injury.) All participants should be asked to wait in the first floor lobby, not by the front desk, not in the vestibule, nowhere near the door. Your presence at the door is designed to assuage their anxiety of missing their ride. Some may choose to wait outside opting for fresh air, which is fine; you can offer them a chair, but please encourage them to be clear of the door when it's open.

If you will be assisting with Access-a-Ride collections, please leave class by 3:20 pm and sign out two walkie-talkies from the 3rd floor. Please set both to channel 2 and turn on. Pass off one to someone in class (Maria/intern/volunteer) on the fourth floor who will communicate with participants still in class or who haven't yet come downstairs, allowing you to remain on the ground level at the entrance. Wait outside the main entrance of the Dance Center and approach any Access-A-Ride cars/vans that pull up/stop close by.

When a driver arrives, simply ask the driver for the name of the rider and appointment time. If the BPG member is waiting in the lobby/outside you can simply notify them. If they are not on the ground floor, please radio the person on the fourth floor and ask them to send the BPG member downstairs. Access-A-Ride drivers are required to wait five minutes beyond the appointment time, so it's helpful to know when the appointment time is to avoid pulling the BPG member out of class early. When a driver

arrives before 3:30 pm, simply ask the driver for the name of the rider and appointment time. With that information, you can use your discretion about when to radio the BPG member. Please remember to return the walkie-talkies to the 3rd floor before you leave. Most participants have been picked up by 4:30 pm.

## Community Programs

These programs are offered in conjunction or as a complement to Dance for PD® classes:

Sing for PD<sup>SM</sup>

**Wednesdays (except 2nd of the month) | 1-2 PM | Mark Morris Dance Center (Brooklyn)**

**Two Fridays per month | 1:15-1:45 PM | BambooMoves (Queens)**

**Select Sundays | 12:15-1:15 pm | The Juilliard School (Manhattan/West Side)**

PD Movement Lab

**Fridays | 2-3 PM | Mark Morris Dance Center (Brooklyn)**

Brooklyn Parkinson Group Support Services

*General Support Group Meeting*

**Monthly, second Wednesdays | 12-2 PM | Mark Morris Dance Center (Brooklyn)**

**Weekly, Fridays | 12:20-12:45 | Ballet Academy East (Manhattan/West Side)**

*Care Partners Support Group Meeting*

**Second and Fourth Wednesdays | 12-2 PM**

## Contacts

### Dance for PD®

(718) 218-3373 (registrations & cancellations)

(800) 957-1046 (toll free)

[www.danceforpd.org](http://www.danceforpd.org)

Maria Portman Kelly

[maria@danceforpd.org](mailto:maria@danceforpd.org)

(718) 624-8400, ext. 235

### Brooklyn Parkinson Group

(929) 262-0317

[www.brooklynparkinsongroup.org](http://www.brooklynparkinsongroup.org)

[info@brooklynparkinsongroup.org](mailto:info@brooklynparkinsongroup.org)

## Acknowledgements

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