

Fresh Freestyle 3

Many participants in group exercise classes probably do not realise the amount of time it can sometimes take to prepare for a class. On the surface the skill required to make it look easy and effortless belies the reality. Often preparation, practice and anticipatory thought can accumulate to more a time than the actual class in question. Sometimes this reality itself can be a de-motivating element for instructors whose goal in this preparation is to hopefully create an atmosphere of excitement and then the reaction is less than positive. Most teachers will confirm that the feeling of having a successful class, in which the students are successful and in turn react vocally, as being the ultimate reward for the preparation. Although not essential these small euphoric exclamations help instructors stay motivated and creative. The infectious nature also helps to create atmosphere within the class dynamic.

Although sometimes few and far between these rewards come in what shall be referred to as wow points. Often these happen in response to achieving a new move or sequence 'Wow! I can't believe my feet are actually doing this!'"

Not unlike watching a fire work display and hearing the exclamations in reaction to the sizes and intensities of each cracker. The technicians will normally choreograph smaller pinwheel crackers to start the show to which the response might be "ooh" A little further in and the intensity increases with some sparkly love heart crackers which garners an "aah" response. But of course they save the best till last and set off one of the crackers that silently looms high into the sky and then explodes filling the sky with a compulsory "wow" exclamation.

The sense of achievement from performing a new move or sequence successfully comes from the different sensation felt performing different combinations of directions and rhythms and gives a feeling of challenge and then (hopefully) achievement. Creating this feeling from new moves and sequences can be difficult as it depends greatly on the particular students' experience and capabilities. As the days of new and original movements in freestyle classes appears to be in decline it is up to the instructor to be a little more savvy and create

this sense of excitement in other ways. It is possible to replicate this sensation without reinventing the wheel.

When a new move is taught its journey has an anticipatory feel. As the progression unfolds the body is moved through positions it hasn't felt before. Once it is perfected then a feeling of elation and achievement arises. First there is work then the payoff. To replicate this feeling you must tap into the feeling of anticipation, and achievement with a reward at the end. To do this with moves and choreography that have been seen many times is challenging as the element of surprise and achievement is reduced. Therefore a re-invention of sorts is needed to spruce up familiar sequences and moves with a little creativity and DIY.

Crash Diet Blocks

Concept

Using the commonly used Reverse Pyramid teaching method in unusual ways to achieve smooth and logical progressions.

Goals

- To create creative choreography in an easy and logical fashion
- Make an easy transition from basic to complex

A good way to visualise this method is by watching those late night infomercials that profess to have anyone loose weight in record time. They usually show a person who is heavy and unfit and then that same photo morphs into another person with the same head pasted on top. You can see the elements of the original larger person in the new svelte one but they are greatly reduced.

Crash Diet blocks firstly uses the premise that 'repetition is good'. The more times someone performs a movement the better their performance of it becomes. In keeping with this idea blocks are repeated separately a number of times creating overall success of the individual movements. Later the number of repetitions is reduced creating a shorter and sometimes more complicated sequence. However because of the previous repetition training the transition from simple to complex is smooth.

The traditional use of this method utilizes blocks of similar lengths and counts. Thus making it easier to reduce the repetitions and still have the required amount of counts remaining.

Traditional Reverse Pyramid Aerobic Example

Step One

Below is a four part combinations. Each part is eight counts in length and is repeated eight times. This is used as the rehearsal and workout phase.

Part 1

Double leg curl 2 step touch x 8 = 64 counts

Part 2

Grapevine & 3 alternate curls x 8 = 64 counts

Part 3

V step forward V Step backward x 8 = 64 counts

Part 4

March fwd 4 cnts, bwd 4 counts x 8 = 64 counts

Step Two

Then the repetitions are reduced to 4 of each part. And again down to 2 repetitions and then finally down to 1 repetition. This is generally thought to be the wow point. All elements are performed in short bursts and have a sense of re invention in comparison to performing them in repetition.

Final 'wow' Product 32 counts RL

Double leg curl 2 step touch R

Grapevine & 3 alternate curls L

V step forward V Step backward L

March fwd 4 counts (knee up), bwd 4 counts (knee up) L

Repeat on other lead leg.

In this traditional variation each of the individual parts is of equal length.

Crash Diet Blocks Aerobic Example

Step One

It is again a four-part combination with the final reduced addition of each part still resulting in a 32-count product. However this time each individual segment is of different lengths and the repetitions of each is also different.

Part 1

V Step x 8 = 32 counts

Part 2

Mambo cha cha (1/2 turn) x 8 = 32 counts

Part 3

6 point mambo 1/2 pivot turn x 8 = 64 counts

Part 4

4 x grapevine in a reverse square shape x 4 = 64 counts

Step Two

Again the repetitions are gradually and equally reduced and the final result is again the wow point.

Final 'wow' Product 32 counts RL

V Step R

Mambo cha cha to face back R

6 point mambo 1/2 pivot to face front L

4 x grapevine in a reverse square shape L

Repeat on other lead leg.

Step Illusions**Concept**

To create combinations that increase in complexity dramatically but in an easy and smooth fashion.

Using the analogy of magician David Copperfield and his "smoke and mirrors" techniques on the stage. When performing say his famous disappearing Elephant Illusion, we the audience know that the Elephant is there for a reason "to disappear" There are many gestures and flares around the elephant before his exit but essentially his sole purpose is to create a link between the before and after effect. Without the elephants size and presence the tricks success would be greatly reduced.

The choreography Illusion technique uses the traditional Holding Pattern Insertion and Removal technique as its base. At its simplest form this technique is used to create an essential link between two combinations that is easy and repetitive. This in between pattern is placed there to give a

sense of calm in between the two perhaps more difficult blocks. Once the outside blocks have been perfected separated by the simple segment it is then removed and the two outer blocks are then joined and the holding pattern (Illusion) disappears. In most cases the holding pattern is a sequence of equal length to the other blocks and is a completely separate segment to the actual choreography

Traditional Holding Pattern Formula Example

This variation on the formula initially has sequences that are held together by disposable links Illusions or equal length. All of the holding patterns are exactly the same so it is easy to them cue that on the next repetition the holding patterns will disappear.

Part A 32 Counts including Holding Pattern

Counts	Primary Move	+	Counts	Hold pattern
1/16	10 pt mambo, 6 point mambo			1/16

Part B 32 Counts including Holding Pattern

Counts	Primary Move	+	Counts	Hold pattern
1/16	2 stomp straddle 2 stomp, 6 pt mambo			1/16

Part C 64 Counts including Holding Pattern

Counts	Primary Move	+	Counts	Hold pattern
1/16	Step up alt double lunge OTT, mambo cha cha 1 x reverse turn			1/16

Part D 64 Counts including Holding Pattern

Counts	Primary Move	+	Counts	Hold pattern
1/16	2 x rpt switch curl			1/16

Counts Formula

Part A 16 + 16

Part B 16 + 16

Part C 16 + 16

Part D 16 + 16

Total 64 + 64

When performing the sequences above initially with the holding patterns you have a nice break in between each of the more complex elements to both rest and regroup the mind as well as ample time to cue what is coming next. While the links are in place you have a less complex block. Remove the links and the existing choreography, although the same becomes more concise and challenging.

Removal of Holding Patterns End Result

10 pt mambo R, 6 pt mambo straddle R

2 stomp R straddle 2 stomp R 6 pt mambo R

Alternate double lunge OTT, mambo cha cha 1 x reverse turn

Repeat on other lead leg

Illusion Example

The same process can be used to create more challenging and interesting sequences. Using the principle that instead of the holding patterns being a separate block from the actual choreography they are a part of the block instead. To use this method in a more creative way means being quite confident with counts and numbers. Also you must be sure that the sum of all the combinations when the illusions are removed adds up to 32 or 64 counts.

In the following example the Holding patterns (Illusions) are no longer separate from the choreography they actually make up a part of the sequence

Part A - 10 count Primary Move + 6 count Holding Pattern

Counts	Primary Move	+	Counts	Hold pattern
1/10	10 pt mambo		1/6	6 point mambo

Part B - 10 count Primary Move + 6 count Holding Pattern

Counts	Primary Move		Counts	Hold pattern
1/10	2 stomp straddle 2 stomp	+	1/6	6 point mambo

Part C 12 count Primary Move + 4 count Holding Pattern

Counts	Primary Move		Counts	Hold pattern
1/12	alt double lunge OTTmambo cha cha	+	1/4	1 x basic step

Counts Formula

Part A 10 + 6

Part B 10 + 6

Part C 12 + 4

Total 32 + 16

When you remove the holding patterns that add up to 16 counts in total you are left with a 32 count combination.

Final 32 Count wow Product

Photo - 407 10 point mambo R

Photo - 433 2 stomp straddle 2 stomp R

Photo - 403 Alternate double lunge, RL

Photo 413 mambo cha cha R

Repeat on other lead leg

Both of these concepts are aimed at creating challenging choreography sequences in an easy and achievable fashion. They are also excellent tools for re using existing choreography in alternate variations. It is best to attempt these concepts first with sequences you are your students are comfortable with and so you the teacher are more at ease with using this new technique.

For more choreography ideas as well as new evolution video releases visit www.marcusirwin.com