

Dance Performance and Movement with Infinite Flow **- ACCESS 2024 - 3Play Media**

[00:00:00.08] JENA WALLACE: So we're going to go ahead and get started. Welcome and thank you for joining us today at Access 2024. My name is Jena Wallace. I'm on the marketing team here at 3Play Media. I use she/her pronouns. And a quick self-description, I am a white woman in my 30s with wavy light brown hair and green cat-eye glasses.

[00:00:19.85] Before we dive into the session, I'd just like to go over a few quick housekeeping items. This presentation is being live-captioned, and you can view those captions by clicking the CC icon in your control panel. This session also features ASL interpretation, courtesy of Deaf Services Unlimited. We will have time at the end of the segment for a brief Q&A. So please feel free to ask questions using the Q&A window or chat.

[00:00:47.44] And, with that, I'm happy to welcome you all to this very special segment featuring Infinite Flow Dance. Today we are joined by Marisa Hamamoto, founder of Infinite Flow Dance. Thank you so much for joining us today, Marisa.

[00:01:02.50] To start this session off, we're going to share a quick-- or about 15-minute video that showcases some of the amazing performances by Infinite Flow Dance. We're going to share a link in the chat so you can access the audio-described version.

[00:01:17.57] And, just a heads up, this video does include captions. And, after consulting with our ASL team, we decided that we are just going to be using the captions for the musical portion as to not take away from the dance performance. And we will get that set up right now.

[00:01:42.02] [VIDEO PLAYBACK]

[00:01:42.52] [TAIO CRUZ, "DYNAMITE"]

[00:01:47.52] (SINGING) I came to dance, dance, dance, dance

[00:01:51.18] I hit the floor

[00:01:52.11] 'Cause that's my plans, plans, plans, plans

[00:01:54.98] I'm wearing all my favorite brands, brands, brands, brands

[00:01:58.83] Give me space for both my hands, hands, hands, hands

[00:02:02.73] Yeah, yeah

[00:02:03.67] 'Cause it goes on and on and on

[00:02:07.50] And it goes on and on and on, yeah

[00:02:12.32] I throw my hands up in the air sometimes

[00:02:15.35] Saying, "Ayo, gotta let go"

[00:02:19.94] I wanna celebrate and live my life

[00:02:23.07] Saying, "Ayo, baby, let's go"

[00:02:26.56] 'Cause we gon' rock this club

[00:02:28.86] We gon' go all night

[00:02:30.75] We gon' light it up

[00:02:32.79] Like it's dynamite

[00:02:34.58] 'Cause I told you once

[00:02:36.47] Now I told you twice

[00:02:38.48] We gon' light it up

[00:02:40.29] Like it's dynamite

[00:02:42.15] I came to move, move, move, move

[00:02:44.94] Get out the way of me and my crew

[00:02:47.08] [APPLAUSE]

[00:02:48.49] [ANDRA DAY, "RISE UP"] You're broken down and tired

[00:02:52.65] Of living life on a merry go round

[00:02:56.82] And you can't find the fighter

[00:03:00.79] But I see it in you so we gonna walk it out

[00:03:04.78] And move mountains

[00:03:11.34] We gonna walk it out

[00:03:12.87] And move mountains

[00:03:19.95] And I'll rise up

[00:03:22.17] I'll rise like the day

[00:03:24.27] I'll rise up

[00:03:26.25] Our eyes aren't afraid

[00:03:28.48] I'll rise up

[00:03:30.52] And I'll do it a thousand times again

[00:03:35.39] [APPLAUSE]

[00:03:35.85] And I'll rise up

[00:03:38.66] High like the waves

[00:03:40.64] I'll rise up

[00:03:42.44] In spite of the ache

[00:03:44.33] I'll rise up

[00:03:46.89] And I'll do it a thousand times again

[00:03:52.63] For you

[00:03:56.55] For you

[00:04:00.96] For you

[00:04:03.41] [CHEERS, APPLAUSE]

[00:04:04.88] For you

[00:04:13.22] Ooh, ooh, ooh

[00:04:24.86] Ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh

[00:04:38.50] [CHEERS, APPLAUSE]

[00:04:43.74] [MUSIC PLAYING]

[00:04:44.21] - Hello, everyone. My name is Lionel Taplin. I am a professional dancer. I am a Michael Jackson imitator. And I was born with a little autism. Dance, for me personally, is life. It's personally my life because I've been dancing for 12 years now. And I'm here now. and I'm loving it.

[00:05:12.26] [MICHAEL JACKSON, "JAM"] Jam, jam jam

[00:05:18.74] If you wanna get up, then jam

[00:05:21.74] Jam, if you wanna get up, then jam

[00:05:25.68] Jam, if you wanna get up

[00:05:30.15] If you wanna get up, then jam

[00:05:32.13] If you wanna get up, then jam

[00:05:34.12] If you wanna get up, then jam

[00:05:36.10] If you wanna get up, then jam

[00:05:38.08] If you wanna get up, then jam

[00:05:40.56] If you wanna get up, then jam

[00:05:42.55] If you wanna get up, then jam

[00:05:44.04] If you wanna get up, then jam

[00:05:47.51] Jam, if you wanna get up, then jam

[00:05:50.48] Jam, jam, if you wanna get up, then jam

[00:05:54.95] Jam, jam, if you wanna get up, then jam

[00:06:00.40] If you wanna get up, then jam

[00:06:01.89] Nation to nation, all the world must come together

[00:06:05.48] Face the problems that we see, then maybe somehow we can work it out

[00:06:10.46] I asked my neighbor for a favor. She said later

[00:06:13.85] What has come of all people? Have we lost love of what it's about?

[00:06:18.71] I have to find my peace 'cause no one seems to let me be

[00:06:22.80] False prophets cry of doom, what are the possibilities?

[00:06:26.99] I told my brother there's be problems, times and tears for fears

[00:06:30.55] But we must live each day like it's the last

[00:06:33.26] Go with it, go with it

[00:06:35.04] Jam

[00:06:37.10] It ain't, it ain't too much stuff

[00:06:39.79] It ain't too much

[00:06:41.74] Ain't too much for me

[00:06:43.33] Just jam

[00:06:44.73] It ain't, it ain't too much stuff

[00:06:47.50] It ain't, don't you

[00:06:49.32] It ain't too much for me to

[00:06:51.56] Jam

[00:06:51.93] The world keeps changing, rearranging--

[00:06:53.43] [MUSIC PLAYING]

[00:06:53.77] - Hello, everyone. My name is Mia Schaikewitz, and I am a dancer on Infinite Flow. And I also do graphic design and other sports, including swimming. I love the water. And that's what I do all the time.

[00:07:07.63] Dance for me means freedom. I danced as a very young child, and then I got paralyzed when I was a teenager and thought I would never do many of the things I love to do again, mostly dance. I didn't think it was possible. But now that I am over that hurdle in my life and still paralyzed, but realize that I can still dance, I love it. It makes me feel free. It makes me feel like I can do anything I want to do, which is the truth.

[00:07:33.75] [LEMONADE MOUTH, "BREAKTHROUGH"]

[00:07:46.21] (SINGING) Ooh, yeah, mm-hmm

[00:07:50.13] Breakthrough

[00:07:51.30] Up, down, spinnin' all around

[00:07:53.37] Fly high, falling to the ground

[00:07:55.48] Sometimes dreams can feel so far away
[00:07:59.71] Time keeps skipping out a beat
[00:08:01.75] Left, right, tripping on your feet
[00:08:04.10] Life is like a string of cloudy days
[00:08:06.45] Here we go
[00:08:07.48] Sometimes it's raising your voice
[00:08:09.83] Sometimes it's making some noise
[00:08:11.96] Sometimes it's proving to the world, it was wrong
[00:08:15.37] Whenever you can't see the light
[00:08:18.18] Whenever there's no one in sight
[00:08:21.18] Keep on, keep on moving on
[00:08:23.35] Keep on moving on
[00:08:24.85] Here comes a breakthrough
[00:08:26.69] Here comes a day
[00:08:28.67] Here comes a moment that you gotta go for it
[00:08:31.13] So don't let it get away
[00:08:33.10] It's all about breakthrough, just turn the page
[00:08:38.03] 'Cause every day I'm getting closer
[00:08:40.34] Life is just a roller coaster
[00:08:41.94] Here we go
[00:08:42.58] Stop, still, take another breath
[00:08:44.86] Road block, move it to the left
[00:08:46.97] Get around whatever's in your way

[00:08:51.27] Heartbreak, pick up all the pieces
[00:08:53.53] Don't stop dancing in the bleachers
[00:08:55.69] It's going to be your turn to play
[00:08:57.51] Gonna to be your turn to play
[00:08:59.25] Sometimes it's raising your voice
[00:09:01.36] Sometimes it's making some noise
[00:09:03.46] Sometimes it's proving to the world it was wrong
[00:09:07.57] Whenever you can't see the light
[00:09:09.67] Whenever there's no end in sight
[00:09:11.98] Here we go
[00:09:12.69] Keep on, keep on moving on
[00:09:14.79] Keep on moving on
[00:09:16.36] Here comes a breakthrough
[00:09:18.04] Here comes a day
[00:09:20.52] Here comes a moment that you gotta go for it
[00:09:23.00] So don't let it get away
[00:09:24.99] It's all about a breakthrough
[00:09:26.97] Just turn the page
[00:09:29.45] 'Cause every day I'm getting closer
[00:09:31.43] Life is just a roller coaster
[00:09:32.92] Here we go
[00:09:33.65] Here comes a breakthrough
[00:09:39.49] [MUSIC PLAYING]

[00:09:39.71] - Hi, my name is Shaheem I am a dancer, and actually, I happen to be deaf. What dance means to me? Dance makes me happy and free

[00:09:50.54] How I dance without hearing? I put my hands on a vibration, and I count and feel the music. You really won't become friends with a deaf person without learning ASL. Can't expect us to hear. It would be nice for them to show that you care for that person. All right.

[00:10:14.26] [BEYONCÉ, "7/11"]

[00:11:44.40] [BRIAN SAFDIE, "UPTOWN FUNK SALSA"] Don't believe me, just watch

[00:11:47.04] Hey, hey, hey, oh

[00:11:50.31] OK, this time, we want some salsa in the house

[00:11:56.37] Come on

[00:11:58.08] I said uptown funk you up

[00:12:00.78] Uptown funk you up

[00:12:02.64] I said, uptown funk you up

[00:12:05.35] Uptown funk you up

[00:12:06.85] I said, uptown funk you up

[00:12:10.00] Uptown funk you up

[00:12:11.71] I said, uptown funk you up

[00:12:14.48] Uptown funk you up

[00:12:16.12] Come on, dance, jump on it

[00:12:18.43] If you're sexy, then flaunt it

[00:12:20.88] If you're freaky, then own it

[00:12:23.11] Don't brag about it, come show me

[00:12:25.42] Come on, dance, jump on it

[00:12:27.54] If you're sexy, then flaunt it

[00:12:29.86] 'Cause it's Saturday night, and we're in the spot

[00:12:32.62] Don't believe me, just watch

[00:12:34.78] This hit, that ice cold

[00:12:36.92] Michelle Pfeiffer, that white gold

[00:12:39.38] This one for them hood girls

[00:12:41.35] Them good girls, straight masterpieces

[00:12:43.87] Styling, wiling, living it up in the city

[00:12:48.04] Got Chucks on with Saint Laurent

[00:12:50.54] Gotta kiss myself, I'm so pretty

[00:12:52.54] I'm too hot

[00:12:53.96] Hot damn

[00:12:54.91] Call the police and the fireman

[00:12:57.13] I'm too hot

[00:12:58.27] Hot damn

[00:12:59.44] Make a dragon want to retire, man

[00:13:01.73] I'm too hot

[00:13:02.75] Hot damn

[00:13:04.26] Say my name, you know who I am

[00:13:06.31] I'm too hot

[00:13:07.53] Hot damn

[00:13:08.46] And I'm all about that money

[00:13:12.05] - Hi, my name is Dmitriy Kim. I'm from Russia. My father, Korean, my mother, Russian. So my first language, Russian. I moved to America because I want to feel freedom because it's dangerous to be a gay in Russia. So I moved here to feel freedom, yeah.

[00:13:33.41] Dance, for me, I think it's kind of my meditation, where I can really be who I am. And, sometimes, I play different roles. It's cool for me. Right now, I understand it's a gift.

[00:13:51.95] But, of course, when I lost my leg, I thought, why? For what? But, right now, I really thankful for this situation because I actually find myself and start to be more thankful and learn enjoy the moment and trust universe.

[00:14:15.19] [PINK, "WHAT ABOUT US"]

[00:14:23.97] (SINGING) La-da-da-da-da, la-da-da-da-da da-da-da

[00:14:31.86] We are searchlights

[00:14:35.09] We can see in the dark

[00:14:40.22] We are rockets

[00:14:43.47] Pointed up at the stars

[00:14:48.68] We are big billions

[00:14:52.28] Of beautiful hearts

[00:14:57.09] And you sold us

[00:15:00.29] Down the river too far

[00:15:05.48] What about us?

[00:15:07.49] What about all the times you said you had the answers?

[00:15:14.03] What about us?

[00:15:15.66] What about all the broken happy ever afters?

[00:15:20.60] Oh!

[00:15:22.02] What about us?

[00:15:24.43] What about all the plans that ended in disaster?

[00:15:29.92] Oh! What about love?

[00:15:32.92] What about trust?

[00:15:34.45] What about us?

[00:15:54.20] Oh! What about us?

[00:15:57.92] What about all the plans that ended in disaster?

[00:16:04.57] What about love?

[00:16:06.53] What about trust?

[00:16:08.42] What about us?

[00:16:12.66] What about us?

[00:16:14.70] What about us?

[00:16:16.68] What about us?

[00:16:21.02] What about us?

[00:16:23.12] What about us?

[00:16:25.16] What about us?

[00:16:30.80] [JANET JACKSON AND DADDY YANKEE, "MADE FOR NOW"] If you're livin' for the moment

[00:16:34.21] Don't stop, and celebrate the feelin'

[00:16:36.89] No

[00:16:38.35] Go up if you're livin' for the moment

[00:16:42.49] Don't stop 'cause there ain't no ceiling

[00:16:45.08] Brr!

[00:16:46.33] Go up

[00:16:47.16] Way up

[00:16:47.71] We're made for now

[00:16:49.86] Not tomorrow

[00:16:52.12] We're made for now

[00:16:54.46] Look around

[00:16:55.57] We're made for now

[00:16:58.60] Not tomorrow

[00:17:00.08] We're made for now

[00:17:01.56] Uno

[00:17:02.54] Look around

[00:17:03.52] Dos, tres

[00:17:04.51] We're made for now

[00:17:05.49] Fuego

[00:17:05.98] Everybody, move your body, everybody

[00:17:09.92] Everybody, move your body, everybody

[00:17:12.38] We're made for now

[00:17:13.86] Everybody, move your body, everybody

[00:17:17.79] Everybody, move your body, everybody

[00:17:20.73] If you're livin' for the moment

[00:17:24.04] Don't stop, try to celebrate the feeling

[00:17:28.21] Go up, if you're livin' for the moment

[00:17:30.88] The moment, baby

[00:17:32.35] Don't stop, 'cause there ain't no ceilings

[00:17:36.49] Go up

[00:17:39.22] Love is in the rhythm now, we're

[00:17:41.49] Dancing with a whole new meaning

[00:17:43.07] Love is on the way to fill you up

[00:17:45.59] We're made for now

[00:17:48.43] Not tomorrow

[00:17:49.89] Made for now

[00:17:52.33] Look around

[00:17:53.79] We're made for now

[00:17:56.72] Not tomorrow

[00:17:58.28] Made for now

[00:17:59.20] Uno, dos

[00:18:00.58] Look around

[00:18:01.50] Tres

[00:18:02.42] We're made for now

[00:18:03.20] Fuego

[00:18:04.14] Everybody, move your body, everybody

[00:18:06.97] Right now

[00:18:08.38] Everybody, move your body, everybody

[00:18:10.61] We're made for now

[00:18:12.33] Everybody, move your body, everybody

[00:18:15.28] Right now

[00:18:16.27] Everybody, move your body, everybody

[00:18:19.22] We're made for now

[00:18:21.19] Not tomorrow

[00:18:23.15] We're made for now

[00:18:24.63] Janet Jackson

[00:18:26.11] Look around

[00:18:27.58] [END PLAYBACK]

[00:18:28.09] JENA WALLACE: Wow, that was so cool, Marisa. Thank you so much to you and Infinite Flow for sharing that with us today. Now I'm just going to pass it off to you. Marisa has a great movement session for us. So we'll get started.

[00:18:46.43] MARISA HAMAMOTO: Thank you so much, Jena. And hello, everyone. How are we doing today? Thank you so much for tuning in to Access. So I know that, for many of you, you've probably been tuning in to some amazing sessions in the morning and that there's more coming this afternoon, tomorrow.

[00:19:06.50] For right now, I know it's lunchtime, lunch break. We're going to move our bodies just a little bit. I know that everyone's probably in their own quarters, at home, in their offices, et cetera. Nobody can see you, so there are no mistakes. [LAUGHS] Nobody's going to see you. So I would say, just follow along.

[00:19:28.97] So at Infinite Flow, one of the questions I often get is, so how do you get so many different types of people to dance together? And so, anyways, we have a-- instead of using the word "adapt," we actually use the word "translate," meaning that we all have a unique body, and we can translate movement into our own unique bodies.

[00:19:51.41] With that said-- and, actually, I'm sorry, I forgot a visual description of myself. I'm sorry. Again, hi, my name is Marisa Hamamoto, and I am wearing a pink sweater. I'm actually in a hotel room. I am not in my home. I'm just glad that I have enough space to move with you all today. And my disabilities are non-apparent. I am a stroke survivor. I am autistic, and I also have PTSD.

[00:20:17.27] So, with that said, whether you are going to be seated or not, it is up to you. You can rise to your highest position or not. But let's just get comfortable. I will be doing this with my screen just so that I can show you different examples, but just follow along. We're just going to move for a few minutes.

[00:20:36.44] And then, after this, we're going to go into a fireside chat. Please do send in your questions in the chat box, and Jena and Casey will be monitoring that in the back.

[00:20:45.57] All right. So give me a moment to share my audio. One second. All right. Here we go. Again, translation, just-- and a way that I do something, you don't have to do it the same. I will give you some tips along the way.

[00:21:04.71] [MUSIC PLAYING]

[00:21:07.41] All right. I hope we can hear the music. All right, so let's just start with some head movement. We're going to go up and down, up and down, up and down.

[00:21:27.67] A little faster. Up, down, up, down, up, down. Turn one way, and left, left, and right. Faster, left, right, left, right, left, to the right, to the left, now and to the side. Side, just do what's comfortable. Don't force anything. A little bit faster.

[00:22:06.29] All right, let's do some shoulder rolls backwards. Translation, do what is comfortable. Do what is the right for your body. Listen to your body. And back, shoulder rolls back.

[00:22:20.54] Now let's go forward. Forward, forward, forward. Forward. Now one shoulder. Then you're welcome to-- if you want to rise to your highest position, whatever that is, you can, or stay seated. Forward.

[00:22:45.09] Let's just shake it out. Shake it out. Woo! Everyone just make some noise with your mouth. Oh! Shake it out. Shake it out. I know that a lot of you are behind your computers a lot. You probably just want to shake things up so that we can feel better [INAUDIBLE].

[00:22:59.91] OK, all right, I can't see you all, but I'm assuming that you are dancing. So we're going to do a little bit of salsa. If you've done any salsa, please just put it in the chat. Yeah, I've done some salsa before, just so I don't know how many of you have. But I'm going to teach a salsa basic step. And I'm going to-- OK, we have some salsa dancers here.

[00:23:24.83] So I'm going to teach the salsa basic step. And this is also a demonstration on how I teach the salsa basic step to different types of bodies. So just go along with the flow.

[00:23:38.69] And so let's first talk about the salsa basic step rhythm. For any salsa [LAUGHS] pros or advanced people out there, I'm going to teach the salsa basic step on salsa on one.

[00:23:52.24] So the rhythm goes like this-- a bum, bum, bum, a boom, bum, bum. So just clap with me. One, two, three, five, six, seven. A dun, dun, dun, a dun, dun, dun. One.

[00:24:09.39] Now, if you were clapping, use a different part of your body to make that rhythm. So I'm going to use my shoulders. Boom, bam, bam, a dun, dun, dun. A 1, 2, 3, a 5, 6, 7. Or you can use your head. 3, a 5, 6, 7, a 1, 2, 3, a 5, 6, 7.

[00:24:31.78] Or maybe you can use your nose. 1, 2, 3, a 5, 6, 7. A 1, 2, 3, a 5, 6, 7. A 1, 2, 3, a 5, 6, 7. And a boom, bum, bum, a boom, bum, bum.

[00:24:48.33] Now I'm going to put some numbers to the steps as well as some rights and some lefts. I'm going to show this first standing. Excuse me one second.

[00:25:02.27] So if you can see my feet, great. So I'm going to step left, right, left, and right, left, right. Left, right, left, a right, left, right. A 1, 2, 3, a 5, 6, 7. A 1, 2, 3, a 5, 6, 7.

[00:25:22.53] Now, there might be some of you that are not able to do it on the feet. And that is OK. You have your own version, your own translation. Maybe you can use your shoulders-- a left, right, left, a right, left, right, a left, right, left, and right, left, right. Or maybe it's your fingers. Left, right, left, a right, left, right, a left, right, left, a right, left, right.

[00:25:48.89] All of these versions are correct. And, in my career, I have taught people with many, many, many different types of bodies. And I think I've also taught someone whose

mobility was limited to just moving a couple fingers. And so her version of the salsa basic step of going left, right, left with her pinkies-- is this right? Is it wrong, rather? No, no. That is her version of salsa.

[00:26:14.68] So I'm going to turn on some music, and we're going to step in that rhythm. So here we go. And then I will progress through. So one second. Let me just get the music going.

[00:26:28.05] [MUSIC PLAYING]

[00:26:30.14] Can we hear the music? If you can't, please do let me know in the chat. 5, 6, 7, 8. Left, left, right, left, right. Left, right, left, right, left, right. Left, left.

[00:26:46.70] I'm sorry. Hold on one second. Sorry, I'm hearing something weird in the background. One second, you all. I don't know what that is. Give me a moment. Let me just change the song.

[00:26:59.17] [MUSIC PLAYING]

[00:26:59.52] (SINGING) Hoo, ha

[00:27:00.45] Hoo, ha

[00:27:01.12] OK, here we go. 5, 7, 8. Step, step, step. Boom, ba, ba, a boom, ba, ba, a boom ba, ba. Left, right, left, right, left, right. Left, right, left, right, left, right. Right, left, right. Left, right, left, right. Great. Ba, ba, ba, boom, ba, ba. Ba, ba, ba. Great. [INAUDIBLE]

[00:27:34.54] [SPANISH SINGING]

[00:27:37.28] You can use any part of your body to make that rhythm happen. So we're stepping in rhythm. We're moving in rhythm. 1, 2, 3, a 5, 6, 7. A 1, 2, 3, a 5, 6, 7.

[00:27:53.42] Now I'm going to put a little bit of a twist-- well, I shouldn't say a twist-- a little bit more context to this. And you're going to come up with your translation. I'm going to do it-- I'm going to show it two ways, one standing up and one seated. And you're going to come up with your own version, whatever that may be.

[00:28:12.33] So this is the traditional basic step for salsa. I'm stepping left foot forward. 1, 2, 3, right foot back, 5, 6, 7. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7. Left foot forward, right foot back. A left foot forward, a right foot back. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7. 1, 2, 3, a 5, 6, 7.

[00:28:40.48] Now, I can also do this seated. We have a left, right, left, a right, left, right. Left shoulder forward, right shoulder back. Left shoulder forward, a right shoulder back. A left shoulder forward, a right shoulder back. So we can also do this seated.

[00:29:01.66] So I'm going to turn on the music again. In your version, you're going to step the salsa step. So here we go. And there is no right or wrong in this. So just keep grooving to the music. All right, give me a moment to turn on the music.

[00:29:19.90] [MUSIC PLAYING]

[00:29:22.04] Here we go. 7, 8. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7. [INAUDIBLE]

[00:29:32.36] Left, right, left, right, left, right. Great. [INAUDIBLE]

[00:29:38.52] [SPANISH SINGING]

[00:29:46.05] 1, 2, 3, [INAUDIBLE].

[00:29:53.11] I can do it seated too. So back. Shimmy, back. Shimmy back. I can't see you, but I'm assuming that y'all are dancing [INAUDIBLE]. Woohoo! All right.

[00:30:12.90] Take a deep breath. Let it go. Hope you're having fun. Breath in. And breath out. Shake it out. Shake it out. Brain break.

[00:30:26.52] So just remember, I know many of you are in the accessible tech sector in which you're probably on your devices a lot. Whenever you need a brain break, put on your favorite music and just move a little bit.

[00:30:39.60] I'm going to teach one more thing-- one more thing. Oh, unless, Jena, how are we doing on time? We can end right there. What time are we going till for this?

[00:30:49.14] JENA WALLACE: We have another 15 minutes. You're good to go. I wasn't--

[00:30:52.68] MARISA HAMAMOTO: Well, you know what--

[00:30:53.68] JENA WALLACE: I'm here whenever.

[00:30:54.10] MARISA HAMAMOTO: --this is a good segue.

[00:30:54.93] [LAUGHTER]

[00:30:55.35] Let's go in. All right, so, everyone, just give yourself a big, big round of applause. And if you have-- now, Jena's going to-- Jena and I are going to go into a fireside chat. But if you have any questions, please do put it in the comments, and either Casey or Jena will see them.

[00:31:09.75] So all right, Jena, how are you feeling? Did you dance a little bit in the [INAUDIBLE]?

[00:31:13.74] JENA WALLACE: I did. This is going to be such a great recording to have for every day, honestly. I can definitely see myself using some of this because I am one of the many tech people that sits in a chair all day.

[00:31:29.91] MARISA HAMAMOTO: Yeah. You know what? And you know what? This gave me an idea, actually, as Casey was presenting this opportunity to me where, you know what? We could do a accessible dance workshop for the disability community, specifically in the tech sector, because we are on devices all the time.

[00:31:50.44] So anyways, if anyone does feel better after just moving a little bit, please let me in the chat. But anyways, I'm going to turn it over to Jena. [LAUGHS]

[00:31:59.16] JENA WALLACE: Yeah, so thanks so much for sharing that movement with us, Marisa. I really love how inclusive it is. And I know, historically, the dance community, there's always been very right ways to do things, and I like that this makes it so inclusive. And, yeah, just makes sure that everyone's able to do it.

[00:32:24.94] MARISA HAMAMOTO: Mm-hmm.

[00:32:25.80] JENA WALLACE: To get started, I'd just really love to know more about Infinite Flow Dance. What gave you the inspiration and motivation to start Infinite Flow?

[00:32:37.35] MARISA HAMAMOTO: Absolutely. So the short story-- and if anyone starts googling my name, you'll find that I am a stroke survivor. And that is true. I am a stroke survivor. When I was 24, I had a stroke in my spinal cord that initially paralyzed me from the neck down.

[00:32:55.43] And that was a huge event in my life concerning the fact that I was a dancer. I lived and breathed dance. And never did I ever think that becoming paralyzed from the dance was going to be part of my fate. And, at that moment, I thought that I would never, ever be able to dance again. Never did I know that I would be teaching many people who have all kinds of different physical disabilities and disabilities later.

[00:33:23.33] Now, that's the short story. If I were to go just a little bit deeper, so, for me, dance was something that I became passionate of very, very early. It was a place where I found belonging. As oftentimes the only Asian-American in various cities and spaces, that's where I found belonging.

[00:33:45.52] Yet, when I actually pursued a professional ballet career, I was constantly told that my body wasn't right for dancing. And so I lived in this duality where, on one end, I knew in my gut that dance is a universal language that belongs to everyone. Yet here was the dance world, the dance industry, saying, no, it's only for a select few.

[00:34:07.60] There was an episode during my high school years that forever changed my life. I went to a-- just for my last year of high school, I went to a wonderful performing arts high school

that really valued diversity and inclusion. And this was maybe the first time that I ever felt like I belonged.

[00:34:25.60] The last student dance concert was a student-choreographed dance concert where all the senior dance students had an opportunity to choreograph a six-minute work. And I was one of the seniors.

[00:34:39.55] On the day that casting was going to be announced, I decided to sneak into the dance studio a little earlier than everyone, just very anxious to see which of my friends had selected me. But when I looked at the casting notice, I didn't see my name anywhere except for as choreographer for my own work.

[00:35:01.54] But when I kept on looking at the notice, I mean, I was very hurt. I mean, imagine-- I mean, think we've all had the experience of being left out, not being invited to a birthday party, being excluded from our peers. I mean, it's one thing to be rejected by authority and grown-ups. It's another to be rejected by your peers. So this was really hurtful.

[00:35:22.94] But when I looked at the casting notice again and again, I noticed that seven other students, mostly in the lower grades, were also missing. And I said, hmm, that's not right. This is a student dance concert. Everybody should be included. This doesn't make sense. And that injustice inside of me was just so strong that, in that moment, I took out a pencil out of my backpack and wrote down all seven names into my own cast. I barely knew these dance students. [LAUGHS] But, by the time performance came around, five, six weeks later, I got to know them well.

[00:36:01.52] I was very new at choreography, and I actually recently looked at the video and I'm like, OK, this was a start. I'm glad that I progressed since then. But, I will say, I did my best to really do what I actually do today, is really taking everybody's unique talents and creating something amazing by bringing everyone together. And that was when I was 18.

[00:36:27.07] Fast-forwarding a little bit, I was named dance major of the year at commencement. But the bigger win is that, since I graduated high school in year 2000, there was a policy placed in the dance department ensuring that all dance students were included in the student choreography concert. And the student choreography concert happens annually. And it's been 24 years, and that policy is still there. So the act of me taking out a pencil out of my backpack and adding seven names that were missing into my own cast, just that little, tiny, small act became-- ended up changing the policy of the dance department and impacting hundreds of dance students to come.

[00:37:13.57] So that planted a seed for me to later on create Infinite Flow, where, when I did find myself 14, 15 years later in Hollywood, feeling, again, like I was excluded, being told that I don't have the look of the Hollywood dancer. Being Asian-American, I don't look certain roles.

[00:37:34.14] I asked myself, well, who's left out? And, when I looked around, I was like, well, what about people with disabilities? And being a stroke survivor, I was like, well, at one point, I

was physically disabled. Maybe I should do something about this. [LAUGHS] And so one thing led to another, and that eventually led to Infinite Flow.

[00:37:56.79] So, anyways, that's the origin story. So to this day, even as I build Infinite Flow, I do ask myself, who is left out? Who am I not-- whose voice is missing from our work or from our community? And it's something that I constantly work at as well. And so it's something that we need to all continuously ask, who can we include? Whose perspective is missing from the table?

[00:38:24.55] JENA WALLACE: Yeah, I love that. That was the first thing I thought when you're talking about adding people with a pencil to your own list. You were literally making sure that everyone had a seat at the metaphorical [LAUGHS] dance table, and that's amazing.

[00:38:42.40] MARISA HAMAMOTO: And, yeah, I also-- I'm just going to put in the link. I actually created a short film based on this taking out this pencil episode. I was encouraged to make it into a short film. So I put the short film in the chat for anyone that's interested and maybe sharing it with their colleagues, their kids, their families.

[00:39:00.64] JENA WALLACE: Awesome. Thank you. You've covered a lot of what I was about to ask, but I'll pivot to collaboration, Infinite Flow's collaboration with other brands. So it seems like that's a central theme in your work.

[00:39:16.50] I know you've partnered with some major brands like Apple, Meta, Microsoft, and more. How have these partnerships contributed to your mission of fostering inclusion and dismantling biases through dance?

[00:39:32.45] MARISA HAMAMOTO: So, first of all, I just want to put it out there that I-- most of these brands, actually, maybe all of the big brands I've worked with, they actually reached out to me. I didn't pitch [LAUGHS] anything. They saw what we were doing at Infinite Flow and were like, hey, there's something magical with what you're doing. Can we work with you?

[00:39:54.93] So whether it was through a content partnership, or a performance, an event, a keynote, et cetera, we were brought in. And, even for me, I had to go, what are we doing at Apple here next to Tim Cook? What are we doing here?

[00:40:10.05] And what it comes down to is this, because, at first, I was going-- I was just going with the flow. But I had-- after Apple, then Meta, and then Red Bull, and then Adidas, I was like, OK, we need to take a moment to ask ourselves-- obviously, we're a tiny little organization that's suddenly [LAUGHS] getting the attention of these big brands.

[00:40:32.28] And I realized this-- and let me know in the comments if this actually makes sense because it's actually-- I'm finally able to articulate this in words. I know that everybody in our audience today wishes and has a vision for an inclusive, accessible world.

[00:40:52.21] And we can't stay in this little silo community of just disabled folks and some allies. We actually need everyone involved to make space for more disability inclusion and

accessibility. I mean, when we're talking about diversity, equity, and inclusion, disability is still lost or forgotten. So we really need to bring people along, even if they're just totally ignorant in the moment.

[00:41:21.43] So what I realized is it's one thing to learn disability inclusion and accessibility with our heads, but it's a whole other thing to feel it with our hearts. And this is what we're doing at Infinite Flow. We're getting people to really feel the impact and the positivity and the innovation and creativity that can come out of disability inclusion. And so that's the power of dance in so many ways.

[00:41:57.31] I will also say, I mean, this is the last day of Autism Acceptance Month. And the last couple years, for me, has been navigating this space of, OK, all right, I'm diagnosed with autism at 40. All right. After leading Infinite Flow for six years.

[00:42:18.44] And I'll be very honest. When I first got diagnosed with autism, and six years after leading Infinite Flow, I had to sit with my-- I actually was really scared to come out autistic. And I had to really sit with myself, saying, OK, what are these ableist beliefs and thoughts that I have? I mean, I've been a disability inclusion advocate for six years, and I'm afraid to say that I'm autistic. I should not be doing this job. I mean, I really went-- I really questioned myself.

[00:42:48.99] But it was actually through the practice of dance, [LAUGHS] practice of now, first and foremost, giving myself time to tap into my own creativity outside of Infinite Flow and also working with my dancers with and without disabilities in my dance company to create something together, it was through these practices that I was able to actually accept my own autism. Now I'm loud and proud-- hey, I'm autistic. I have partnerships as an autistic-- as a late-diagnosed autistic with different organizations now too.

[00:43:25.62] And so the power of dance, dance and movement, and something that I think I need to learn how to better quantify and talk about with evidence-based research. But I'll just say, some things are better felt and said through dance than in words. And that's the power of dance. [LAUGHS]

[00:43:45.13] JENA WALLACE: There's probably no better way to end, no better note to end on for this session. So we'll just end with that. Thank you so much, Marisa, for being here today, for sharing that movement exercise and that amazing performance with everyone.

[00:44:03.55] We'll be posting the session recordings on our website in the following weeks. I also want to thank Deaf Services Unlimited once again for their interpretation services, as well as our own 3Play captioner for helping make this session accessible today. We truly appreciate it.