



# Evaluating Dancing With Parkinson's: Reflections from the perspective of a community organization

Rachael Gibson<sup>a,\*</sup>, Sarah Robichaud<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> The Evaluation Centre for Complex Health Interventions (TECCHI), Dancing With Parkinson's (DWP), Canada

<sup>b</sup> Dancing With Parkinson's (DWP), Canada

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## ABSTRACT

In 2015, Dancing With Parkinson's (DWP), a Toronto-based community organization, participated in the Ontario Brain Institute's (OBI) newly launched Evaluation Support Program. This paper reflects on that experience. In particular, we identify the key lessons derived from the OBI initiative, discuss how these lessons have informed DWP practice going forward, and highlight what we consider to be the most valuable aspects of the Evaluation Support Program. While we now recognize the need to establish an evaluation culture within DWP, we find that there are significant challenges associated with both building and sustaining evaluation capacity in the context of a small community-based organization. Whereas DWP has built considerable strengths in terms of informal evaluation capacity, on its own, such capacity is insufficient to, for example, demonstrate DWP's impact to outside audiences or successfully scale up the program.

## 1. Introduction

This paper reflects on Dancing With Parkinson's involvement in the Ontario Brain Institute's (OBI) Evaluation Support Program in 2015. It is articulated from the perspective of the organization's founder and executive director, Sarah Robichaud, and its executive assistant, Rachael Gibson, both of whom were fully engaged in the evaluation process. The paper speaks to the key lessons learned from the OBI initiative, how these learnings have impacted the way DWP operates, and what we view as the most useful aspects of the evaluation experience. It also briefly touches upon the issue of evaluation capacity building, noting the challenges of not only building, but also sustaining such capacity (Preskill & Boyle, 2008a, 2008b) in the context of a small community-based organization such as DWP. The paper also refers to a less formal variant of evaluation capacity that, while integral to the DWP program, is on its own insufficient, particularly when it comes to scaling up the program.

Before discussing our experience with the Evaluation Support Program, it may be helpful to, first, outline the origins and evolution of Dancing With Parkinson's. Second, we aim to capture the nature and dynamics of DWP through a description of its theory of change, specifically with respect to the dance classes themselves. Third, we discuss the OBI Evaluation Support Program as it pertains to Dancing With Parkinson's. This section also looks at the issue of evaluation capacity, what this means in the context of DWP, and the challenges

associated with building and sustaining it. We conclude by summarizing the paper's main points and reflections.

## 2. A brief history of Dancing With Parkinson's (DWP)

The relationship between dance and Parkinson's disease first caught Sarah Robichaud's attention, in 2007, when one of her clients, Andy, requested her assistance in managing the physical symptoms of Parkinson's disease through exercise. Then a practicing personal trainer and professional dancer, Sarah had limited knowledge of Parkinson's disease and how exercise might help. Although Andy expressed a clear aversion to the more traditional gym-based workouts, he was committed to working with Sarah on functional training in an effort to strengthen his body so that he might be better able to deal with the progression of the disease.

While working with Andy, Sarah began researching the connection between exercise and PD in the hopes of finding specific techniques that would be helpful to her client. In doing so, she discovered that a prominent contemporary dance company, The Mark Morris Dance Group, had developed a dance program for people with PD in Brooklyn, New York, and was offering teacher training workshops. The notion that dance could benefit people with PD on multiple levels – physically, emotionally, cognitively – made intuitive sense to Sarah and she soon began introducing aspects of dance into her weekly exercise sessions with Andy. Almost immediately, Sarah noticed positive

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: [rachael.gibson@utoronto.ca](mailto:rachael.gibson@utoronto.ca) (R. Gibson).

changes in her client; he seemed happier, more determined to master specific movements, and more motivated to continue his exercise sessions. There were physical improvements as well. Andy's balance was better, his body seemed to become "unlocked" when he danced, and he developed a fluidity of movement that the Parkinson's had taken away. In Andy's words: "[It's] the only time I'm unaware of my Parkinson's limitations." Dancing brought about a sense of freedom and joy that he had not experienced through exercise alone.

Based on these early discoveries, Sarah traveled to Brooklyn, New York to participate in the teacher training program offered by the Mark Morris Dance for PD group. She was excited to build on her initial success with Andy and learn as much as she could about the use of dance as an intervention into Parkinson's disease. As part of the training, she was invited to observe a dance class provided by the Mark Morris dance for PD instructors to community members with Parkinson's. Sarah was profoundly affected by this experience and said to herself: "we need to have a program like this in Canada."

In 2008, after returning from the training workshop, Sarah recruited some of her professional dance friends to assist her in launching Toronto's first dance class for people with Parkinson's disease. The first class was held in March on what turned out to be a very wintry day, with blizzard conditions. Surprisingly, the weather did not discourage the individuals that had signed up for the class. The studio was full. The participants' reactions to the pilot class were overwhelmingly positive. Some described it as "life changing", while others said it was the "highlight of their week." Both dance teachers and participants alike felt that they were part of something innovative and potentially transformational.

In response to the success of the pilot class and a growing waiting list of people with PD who wanted to attend the class, a second dance class was soon added. The year 2008 was a time of remarkable growth and momentum for DWP, as Sarah continued to receive requests from people in different parts of the General Toronto Area (GTA) – and eventually across the country – to set up a dance class near them. DWP received charitable status that same year, and it became the organization's mission to increase the accessibility of the class so that as many people with PD as possible could benefit from it. Through a process of trial and error, DWP gradually established new classes in different parts of the city, trained new teachers and volunteers to support the administration of the program, and raised funds to sustain its operations. As of 2016, DWP offers seven classes per week in multiple locations throughout the GTA.

Having provided a brief sketch of the origins and evolution of Dancing With Parkinson's, the next section goes more deeply into the internal operations of the organization, focusing especially on the dynamics of the dance classes themselves.

### 3. DWP's theory of change

DWP undertakes a number of organizational-level and special activities, including intergenerational projects, an annual fundraising gala and performance, visiting guest artists, and workshops and seminars. However, it is the dance classes themselves which represent the core of DWP's regular activities. In an effort to illustrate what goes on in these classes, it is helpful to divide the discussion into two main categories: DWP's specific dance methodology and its formula for social connectivity.

#### 3.1. Dance methodology

DWP's dance methodology contains four main ingredients. The first involves a dance/movement approach called "mirroring" (McGarry & Russo, 2011). Mirroring takes much of the burden of memorizing choreographed sequences off the participant, as the teacher faces participants and leads them through all of the steps and movements. While some participants do learn and remember the choreo-

graphed exercises and routines, those that do not are asked to "mirror" the teacher's movements as closely as possible. This helps to keep the class moving as a whole and contributes to the feeling that everyone in the room is dancing together, including the instructor.

The second ingredient in DWP's dance methodology is the music. Whenever possible, live music is used in the dance classes. Using live music not only allows for greater flexibility and spontaneity from the teacher's perspective (e.g., the speed or quality of the music can be changed on the spot), the presence of a live musician also helps engage and energize participants in a way that is much more difficult with recorded music. In cases where recorded music is necessary (due to funding limitations, for example), the teacher takes great care in selecting specific pieces of music that match the choreography perfectly, have a strong, clear beat, and are likely to be familiar to participants.

The third component of the dance methodology is the use of free dance or improvisation in the class. The improvisational element can be constructed in numerous different ways, such as by playing a piece of music and asking participants to move freely to it, giving participants an instruction to explore two different movement qualities (e.g., large and small, fluid and sharp, heavy and light), or improvise based on specific themes, images, or associations (e.g., imagine they are conducting an orchestra or moving through water). Improvisational dance can also be crafted in a way that gives participants the opportunity to explore variations in time (e.g., everybody moving in unison, call and answer techniques) and ensemble types (e.g., duos, trios, quartets, and so on). While these are just a few examples, the main idea with dance improvisation is to give participants the freedom to express themselves independently and spontaneously to music. For many participants, the improvisational part of the DWP class is a profoundly moving experience.

The final element in DWP's dance methodology is the structured choreography, which is inspired by a wide range of dance styles, including ballet, jazz, modern, musical theater, tap, and ballroom. The structured component of the class includes a fairly lengthy seated warm-up in a circle formation, standing warm-up exercises with participants holding on to the barre or the back of their chair, exercises moving across the floor, and a choreographed dance routine (e.g., the Charleston, Cha Cha, Tango, or Waltz). Every class finishes with a special reverence where participants stand in a circle holding hands. This closing practice creates a deep sense of connection among the group.

#### 3.2. Social connectivity formula

Dance is inherently a social practice. Yet, DWP dance classes place special emphasis on developing strong social connections among participants and between participants, teachers, and volunteers. This is sometimes achieved through the dance methodology itself, as described above in the case of the circle reverence. But it is also accomplished by ensuring that participants have opportunities for one-on-one time with other participants, teachers, and volunteers. In our view, a key part of teaching dance to people with Parkinson's is about building relationships. Instructors and dance assistant volunteers know all of the participants' names and check in with them at the beginning of every class. This is done as part of a safety protocol to determine how each participant is feeling on a given day (e.g., John might have felt dizzy that morning and Betty might be adjusting to a switch in her medication). It is important for us to obtain this information at the start of each class and share it with our dance assistants so that extra attention and support are provided to participants as needed. But we also check in with our participants because we genuinely care about them. The participants in DWP dance classes feel like family to us, and we to them.

Aside from how they are feeling on a particular day, DWP participants often share stories and pictures of their family, especially

their grandchildren. They tell us about important events in their lives, such as the birth of a new grandchild or moving to a new home. And they keep us informed about their travel plans, special activities, hobbies, and so on. In other words, DWP classes provide a strong sense of community. Special events, such as the holiday open house, serve to deepen our relationships with participants and their families. We believe that these relationships are integral to the success of the program and that they greatly enrich the experience of dancing together.

Part of what we hoped to obtain from the evaluation journey was empirical support on whether the above hypothesized ingredients were impacting clients. We were particularly interested in acquiring feedback from the clients themselves regarding which ingredients made a difference in their lives. There is a growing literature on the effectiveness of dance as an intervention into Parkinson's disease (see, for example, Foster, Golden, Duncan, & Earhart, 2013; Hashimoto, Takabatake, Miyaguchi, Nakanishi, & Naitou, 2015; Lötze, Ostermann, & Büsing, 2015; McGill, Houston, & Lee, 2014; Rios Romenets, Anang, Fereshtehnejad, Pelletier, & Postuma, 2015). Yet, despite this growing body of evidence, there is still a need to understand the precise ingredients that matter, and for whom (Pawson, 2013).

### 3.3. Mechanisms

There are a variety of mechanisms by which the dance classes may bring about positive changes in participants' health and quality of life. One such mechanism has already been mentioned in the discussion of Sarah's early experiences introducing dance to her client, Andy. It involves the sense of freedom or release from the physical symptoms of Parkinson's disease, such as slowness, rigidity, or the inability to initiate movement. We have found that the use of imagery, for example, helps to remove some of the physical constraints caused by Parkinson's disease. Joy is another important mechanism. Simply put, the classes are fun. Joy on its own is a powerful mechanism for change, particularly in relation to mood and outlook on life, but it is also instrumental in keeping participants coming back to the class. Physical touch is another key mechanism that generally occurs through corrections and partner work, but also in the form of hugs, which are freely shared at the beginning and end of every class.

Social connection, discussed at greater length above, is another key mechanism. Feelings of social connectivity and support are a central part of DWP's regular dance classes, but such feelings are also fostered through special projects and activities like the holiday open house and workshops with local artists. Both the dance classes and special activities bring participants out of isolation and into a creative community, which encourages emotional and artistic expression. By establishing a safe and supportive environment, we aim to remove physical and emotional barriers. This, in turn, provides participants with a renewed sense of confidence and the freedom to explore the artistry of their own movement.

Through these mechanisms, several short term outcomes can be expected. These include: elevated mood, improved energy, reduced falls and physical symptoms, reduced stress for participants with PD as well as their caregivers/care-partners, deepened social connections, and enhanced artistic expression. Over time, the dance classes and mechanisms identified above can also lead to longer-term outcomes, such as improved quality of life for people living with PD and their caregivers/care-partners, and reduced burden on the healthcare system. Over the course of this evaluation project, we were introduced to theory-driven evaluation (Pawson & Sridharan, 2009) and especially realist evaluation (Pawson, 2013; Pawson & Tilley, 1997). The focus of realist evaluation on contexts, mechanisms, and outcomes resonated deeply with our interest in understanding if what we were doing worked and how it worked.

## 4. DWP's evaluation journey

Prior to learning of the OBI Evaluation Support Program, the idea of conducting a formal evaluation of DWP had not seemed a real possibility. Simply put, there were not sufficient funds to spend on an evaluation, regardless of the potential advantages of doing so. Thus, when we received word of our acceptance into the program, we were extremely excited about the opportunity and looked forward to what might come out of it. Although we did not have clear expectations going in, we anticipated that a formal evaluation would help increase DWP's credibility from the outside, which, in turn, might assist us in acquiring new sources of funding. Ultimately, we hoped the evaluation would help us grow the program so that more people with PD would have access to it.

While the first goal may appear rather superficial, it is important to recognize that questions regarding DWP's sustainability have been at the forefront since we opened our first class in 2008. DWP strongly believes in offering classes at the lowest possible cost to participants, and frequently offers classes free of charge to anyone that is unable to pay the class fee. Yet, with the exception of some separate special projects, DWP operates without the support of government funding or corporate sponsorships. The vast majority of DWP's funding comes from its annual fundraising gala and individual donations. Covering operational expenses has, consequently, been a very practical and ongoing challenge for DWP. The OBI-funded evaluation appeared to us as something that might be able to help DWP with its sustainability challenges, allowing us not only to continue what we are doing, but also possibly expand our program in order to have a larger impact in the PD community.

Beyond issues related to financial support, however, we were also interested in discovering DWP's best practices so that we would be able to develop and deliver the most effective dance program possible to people living with PD and their caregivers. We wanted to explore, in a systematic way, the specific aspects of the program that make a difference in the lives of participants. We have long believed that the program can have a positive impact on the lives of DWP participants and their caregivers/care-partners, but, until recently, this belief has been largely based on anecdotal evidence and first-hand observations (which will be discussed in more detail below). What we were lacking was sound empirical evidence to support our assumptions. In other words, we needed the OBI Evaluation Support Program.

There are several aspects of the OBI program that stand out as being particularly helpful or formative in our evaluation journey. To begin, we found the structure and format of the workshops to be extremely useful. The first workshop was critical, for example, in giving us some basic tools and insight into the evaluation process. It was an ideal environment to start thinking about our main evaluation questions and start working toward a theory of change. Central to the success of the workshops, we believe, was the opportunity to communicate with and learn from other community-based organizations.

By the second workshop, we were connecting with members of these community organizations and sharing the insights, challenges, and successes of our respective evaluation journeys. This sometimes happened in the context of the structured workshop discussions, but more often took place informally, on coffee or lunch breaks, for example. The final workshop was also a time of learning, particularly from the final presentations of the participants. But there was also a feeling of celebration and reflection as we shared and applauded each other's accomplishments. In a relatively short period of time and over the course of only a few workshops, we had begun to build a supportive learning community. While we have not stayed in touch with the other groups since the Evaluation Support Program ended, we think it would be interesting and helpful to reconnect with these community organizations and find out how their evaluation journey has continued since finishing the program.

In our view, the most significant aspect of the program had to do

with the connections OBI made between the evaluation specialists and the community-based organizations, and the relationships that subsequently developed between these parties. DWP's relationship with the evaluation specialists from The Evaluation Centre for Complex Health Interventions (TECCHI) developed and deepened over a series of face-to-face meetings, which were sometimes held at the evaluation centre, but more often at a local café or restaurant. Initially, we planned for these meetings to take place every two to three weeks over the evaluation period, but they often took place as frequently as every week. In between the organized get-togethers, we were also in close email, Skype, or phone contact with the evaluators. From our perspective, this ongoing dialogue was essential in keeping us "on track" with the evaluation and also in helping us think in a more evaluative way about the things we were already doing and observing in our classes. Perhaps most importantly, the regular meetings and ongoing dialogue helped create a trusting and supportive relationship between DWP and TECCHI.

Due in no small part to the personalities and expertise of the evaluation specialists themselves, a sense of mutual openness to learning and sharing ideas was established early on. We felt that our input was always encouraged and valued, and our questions or concerns were always seriously addressed. In fact, we were often made to feel as though we were the experts in the evaluation journey, and this gave us the confidence needed to absorb the more technical aspects of conducting a formal evaluation, such as developing the research design. Beyond this, we always received the impression that the professional evaluators were passionate about what we were doing at DWP; they believed in our program and were committed to finding ways to effectively and creatively capture its impacts. Finally, the evaluation process was a lot of fun. We always looked forward to meeting with the evaluation specialists, and we invariably came away with a renewed sense of energy and enthusiasm about our program and how we might demonstrate its impact.

#### 4.1. DWP's informal evaluation capacity

Before addressing the issue of evaluation capacity building, it is important to note that DWP teachers engage in a kind of informal evaluation on a minute-by-minute basis. This informal evaluation capacity is embodied in the teaching staff and the trained volunteers that support the dance teachers throughout the class. DWP's informal evaluative practices focus particularly on the participants in the dance class (people with PD), but they also address the caregivers and care-partners. At perhaps the most basic level, DWP teachers are continuously watching the dance participants to ensure that each one of them is more or less following the dance steps, movements, and sequences being taught that day. More importantly, we are continuously observing whether participants are engaged in and benefiting from the various aspects of the class. We can determine very quickly, for example, if the music is too fast, too slow, too soft, or too loud. There are times when a particular music selection does not resonate with a majority of the participants (e.g., one with complicated tempo changes or a difficult to distinguish beat), whereas at other times the music selection clearly elevates the spirits and bodies of the group (e.g., often a catchy or familiar piece of music, such as "Singing in the Rain."). There is, of course, diversity within the group; what one participant responds to might not be exactly the same for another. We are, thus, continuously scanning the room, the faces, and body language of participants in an effort to identify patterns regarding what works and what does not.

When it comes to gathering information about participants' engagement in the class, we sometimes look at their facial expressions for signals (e.g., smiling) or listen to their voices (e.g., laughter, singing words to part of a song, shouting "Olé!" at the end of a Flamenco dance). At other times, we assess the benefits of the class by internally noting the transformation of participants' bodies from the time they

enter the class to the time they leave. It is not uncommon, for example, to observe some participants shuffling their feet or relying heavily on a walker upon entering the class, yet waltzing gracefully and smoothly around the room by the end of the 60-minute session. The same can be seen with respect to posture, as many participants begin the class hunched over in their chairs, with shoulders raised and uneven, yet part way through are sitting up straight and tall with more freedom of movement and energy in their bodies. It is remarkable to observe participants who normally have a great deal of difficulty initiating movements easily reach out their hand to "catch a butterfly" or sweep their arm across their body to "push back a curtain" in response to the imagery-driven cues used in dance.<sup>1</sup> Subtle and more overt shifts in mood and energy can often be seen throughout the course of a single dance class, seemingly in response to changes in music, as mentioned above, physical touch,<sup>2</sup> or individual attention from the instructor.<sup>3</sup>

Beyond the moment-to-moment in-class assessments of participants, over the past eight years we have received a great deal of spontaneous feedback from participants regarding the impact of the program on their lives. Although much of this feedback has been through direct personal exchanges with participants or their family members, some has been received in the form of written notes or email communications. As one new participant in the program explains, the dance classes have very quickly had a positive impact on his outlook on life:

On the way home, from today's workshop, I came to the conclusion, that my attitude on everything, has done a complete 180. Just to make sure, I asked my daughters what they thought? Their thoughts were unanimous. They feel that everything for me has done a 180. This all started, last Wednesday. I am not sure how, but I do know why. DWP! Thank you so very much.

It is interesting to note that both the participant and his family recognize the impact of the program, but do not know how or in what ways it has caused a shift in his attitude. In another email, a different newcomer to the class describes the physical benefits he has experienced since joining DWP:

I thought I would tell you that the Parkinson Dance program has been/is good/great so far for me. The day after one of the sessions is a tough day, getting around the house safely. But then as if by magic the next 3 or 4 really show an improvement in my ability to do just that. Hopefully this will continue or even go to the 5th and 6th days. Anyway just to let you know of some positive results thanks to the efforts of you and the Assistants.

Again, while this second participant identifies a connection between the dance class and improvements in his physical health or mobility, it is unclear how or by which specific processes the program is producing these effects. We are aware that something profoundly positive is happening for DWP participants – whether it be in relation to mood, energy, motor function, social connectedness, or general sense of wellbeing. But we are also aware of the need to demonstrate these

<sup>1</sup> Imagery is a common tool used by dance teachers and choreographers to enhance technique, movement quality, artistic expression, and choreography. Imagery seems to be particularly useful in getting individuals with PD to reach specific movement objectives.

<sup>2</sup> Physical touch is an important aspect of dance and occurs in multiple different ways throughout the class. Gentle touch can occur, for instance, when a teacher or teaching assistant corrects the posture, position, or alignment of a participant's body to achieve the desired effect – such as a stretched knee, a more flexed foot, or a turned head. Physical touch is also a key component of many styles of dance that involve partner work, such as the Tango or the Waltz. And, in DWP classes, physical touch in the form of a welcome or good-bye hug is a common practice.

<sup>3</sup> One of the roles of a dance teacher is to provide participants with feedback on how they have executed or "performed" a particular exercise, dance step, or piece of choreography. This can be done in the form of corrections (e.g., "Try to make your movements bigger. Fill the entire space") as well as praise (e.g., "Gorgeous legs and feet everyone!"). In DWP classes, we always refer to each participant by name throughout the duration of the class (e.g., "Well done, Bill.", "Beautiful extension, Sharon!") as a way of engaging them and making them feel "seen".

benefits through evidence-based research as well as the inclusion of a more formal type of evaluation capacity.

Over the course of this evaluation process, and also working on this forum paper, we were introduced to a variety of models of evaluation capacity building (King, 2002; Labin, Duffy, Meyers, Wandersman, & Lesesne, 2012; Leviton, 2014; Preskill & Boyle, 2008a, 2008b). In our view, this growing body of literature needs to go further in clarifying the distinction between formal and informal evidence. It would also be helpful to approach evidence from the perspective of a program implementer, raising questions around “what is useful evidence?” In our view, some of the arguments for evidence-based programs do not sufficiently explore evidence from the perspective of a program implementer. Existing ideas about useful evidence are largely from the literature on clinical interventions (Fearing, Barwick, & Kimber, 2014; Greenfield & Kaplan, 2012). It would be useful to consider ideas about what constitutes useful evidence from the perspective of an implementer working in a community setting.

#### 4.2. Building (formal) evaluation capacity

As indicated above, the OBI program went a long way in setting the foundations for a more formal approach to evaluation at Dancing With Parkinson's. To date, we have made two concrete changes in practice as a result of our involvement in the OBI initiative. First, we have started taking attendance every week at all class locations and keeping these attendance records in our files. While this may be a relatively basic monitoring measure, it will allow us to track participant retention rates and other potentially useful patterns related to participants' class attendance. Regular attendance-taking at all of our class locations was not something we had been doing prior to our participation in the OBI program. Secondly, we have started to ask new DWP participants to fill out a baseline questionnaire before taking their first class with us. Our aim is to follow some of these participants over time and compare the pre-DWP data with data gathered later on – such as, 6 months, 1 year, and 2 years after they have joined the program.

In addition to implementing the above evaluative measures, there has been a fundamental shift in our thinking when it comes to assessing how various aspects of our program work. We are much more sensitive to opportunities to take evaluative steps in different areas of the program, such as our teacher training protocol and special projects involving our DWP participants. We also recognize that successfully scaling up the program will largely depend on a more deeply rooted formal evaluation capacity. Time and financial constraints nevertheless remain important barriers to developing a more robust and systematic evaluation protocol for DWP. We currently do not have the financial resources to hire someone external or pay someone internal to the organization to focus on evaluation. And, while we now see evaluation as a priority within our organization, we are concerned about the amount of time we can devote to evaluation without other areas of DWP suffering. The issue is not just about how to build evaluation capacity, but also how to sustain it.

From our perspective, there are two ways that the OBI capacity building model might be improved. The first would be to implement some kind of online resource site for “graduates” of the OBI Evaluation Support Program. Such a site could charge a small annual membership fee and include various resource materials that are relevant to evaluating community-based organizations. Ideally such a site would share resources or new innovations that make evaluation faster and easier for resource-strapped organizations. The site could also include an online forum where participants could connect with one another and share stories regarding their ongoing evaluation journey. A second suggestion

would be to develop a follow-up to the first phase of the program to assist community organizations in solidifying and sustaining their evaluation capacity.

#### 5. Concluding thoughts

This paper discusses the process of evaluating Dancing With Parkinson's from the perspective of its executive director and executive assistant, both of whom were deeply engaged in the evaluation journey. It is a reflection piece, focusing on what was learned from the OBI initiative, how these learnings have changed DWP practice, and what we see as the most valuable aspects of the evaluation experience. The paper also touches briefly upon the issue of building evaluation capacity. We suggest that evaluation capacity, at least in the context of DWP, can assume different forms – i.e., informal as well as formal. And we believe that there is value in raising questions around what constitutes useful evidence from a community implementer's perspective. While we consider both types of evaluation capacity important and mutually reinforcing, we recognize that formal evaluation capacity may be more helpful in persuading our biggest skeptics that dance is a crucial intervention into Parkinson's disease. Moreover, when it comes to scaling up the program, formal evaluation capacity offers important advantages. Finally, we suggest that, for small community organizations such as ours, the problem of sustaining evaluation capacity is perhaps as pressing as that of building evaluation capacity.

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