



NCCD, Advanced Course held in Wales January 2010. Photo: Nina Atkinson.

## Wintry reflection

In snowy January NCCD ran an advanced retreat course in Wales with Gill Clarke, independent dance artist, as facilitator. Open only to those dance practitioners with over ten years experience, it catered for the dance artist looking for new directions in their work. During the course participants dug beneath issues that were pertinent to their situations, and used the course to air their concerns and blocks about new initiatives and collaborations. What follows isn't a hard-edged review of that part of the course, but rather offers a window into the essence of the participants' collective experience. It is, writes Gill, 'a "manifesto"- not in the sense of a carefully worded outline of future plans, but instead a container that might conserve something of the spontaneity and passion of individual reflections that emerged during our time together, balancing the serious attention that was given to better understanding our own practices with a lightness that came through the opportunity to share with peers.'

## Welsh retreat manifesto

### Monday/Tuesday

No to boxes that confine  
 No to information without discovery  
 No to delivering  
 No to the homogenous, and monochrome and monotone  
 No to fixity

Yes to 'being with' and 'letting' and 'allowing'  
 Yes to the magical journey  
     to following a line  
     and knowing there is a next time

Yes to TIME  
     To be  
     For me  
     (But not tooooooooo much!)

Yes to spaces  
     for experiences  
 and active stillness

Yes to integrating  
     and exploring  
 and ebb and flow

Yes to discovering for yourself  
 Yes to the individual and to commonality  
 Yes to confidence, to creativity and collaboration  
 Yes to suggestion, and imagery and to self-awareness  
 Yes to adapting  
 Yes to what lies under the stuff  
     And to nourishing ME

### Wednesday

Yes to TIME  
 Yes to discipline and to taking time  
     Yes to going out and coming back in  
     and re - investigating  
     and stripping away

Yes to sharing exploration  
 Yes to experience  
 to the unspoken  
 to immersion  
 and  
 ..... readiness

Yes to noticing  
 Yes to garnering  
 Yes to re-visiting  
 and to centring  
 and to trusting movement  
     and Hoorah for the 'Ah-has'

Yes to the journey  
 to passing on the journey  
 Yes to the person  
     and to taking bits  
     and to making it new

Yes to traces and to gubbins and to sparks  
 and to fires that burn  
 and snow and stew  
 and

Yes to .....TIME  
     Together