



Meet Marjolein Wagter, Dutch acrobat and (youth) circus teacher. She is the designer and coordinator of the PEYC Masterclasses.

In this document you will find her findings and solutions she has come up with when organizing them.

Please read what she has to tell you, and if you have any questions contact Marjolein at: [peyc.masterclasses@gmail.com](mailto:peyc.masterclasses@gmail.com)

## Fourth PEYC Masterclass on circus technique - Juggling -

### **Theme: motoricity and coordination in circus training and teaching**

The masterclass juggling was quite an adventure: for me juggling is the one circus technique I don't relate a lot to. I am a very bad catcher and as a child in school I was always the last person to be selected for ball games.

However, I had high expectations because there are many different juggling techniques. I invited Craig Quat as a teacher because he amazed me a few years ago at a NICE meeting with his 5 steps juggling technique for teaching juggling for everybody and with his Quat props.

This time we had a strong response from participants on the questions I sent out beforehand, and together with Steven Desanghere we categorised it as follows:

1. I want to share/exchange: 1 technique, 2 creativity&artistic, 3 pedagogy
2. I have problems with/want to know more about: see above (we found out that in the struggle there were only pedagogical questions! )

We put the outcomes on the wall , but we missed a good opportunity here: if we had sent the categorised answers to all participants before we started the exchange, there would have been more chance of finding solutions beforehand and it is also nice to know the input of your colleagues.

The first evening we showed the video of Strasbourg in the hostel as an introduction. The next day we started with forming a group. The question from previous masterclasses about how to organise the free exchange time was solved because the food takes a lot of time in Italy, so people tend to use all the time left for learning from each other or just take free juggling time for themselves.

It was more difficult to persuade people to take enough rest then to create an exchange. However, how to capture information coming out of these informal exchanges is still a question mark.

Also in this particular masterclass we had the exchange with local participants on the 4th day because of logistic reasons. I think it is more useful to do this in the middle of the working process. The last day there was a juggling jam in town - great ending of a juggling week!

I found out that jugglers are very organized in writing down and filming their findings, and making it public so we can all benefit. While having to explain at least 3 times to the acrobats how to work with google drive, the jugglers thought I was joking when I wanted to explain: they all knew how to use it!

The focus of this masterclass was on Motoricity and Coordination. There were many coordination games and 2 workshops on these topics. It was clear to me that jugglers are more familiar with sharing information because of the popularity of juggling conventions. Here people are used to share their new inventions like 'prechac' and this also happened with Craig's second workshop, which was actually an explanation of something he invented during the masterclass. The participants were so excited about it that they continued to make their own inventions based on the 'Craig' pattern.

So far so good, the process of making/teaching workshops together with another participant was not exactly the best. The focus should have been on the teaching - how to teach juggling to young people - but in some workshops the focus was more on pleasing the external participants. The idea was that external participants would come for the learning process of the masterclass and some participants felt that they were not good enough teachers/ workshops for the external participants. We asked the workshop leaders to take some time to ask for feedback, and those who did felt they benefited from it. Some of them decided not to ask for feedback because they thought there wasn't enough time – this was a pity because they missed out on valuable information for themselves.

The feedback from the Italian participants was good, apart from 'too short'! They learned a lot, especially from the technical workshops, and they are looking for more pedagogical tips.

For a taste of the feedback of masterclass participants, scroll down a little bit further.

It was my last masterclass and a good learning process. I hope many of you will continue to share your knowledge in your country and beyond. It is a small world and I hope we will meet one day again in circus!

X Marjolein

# THIS IS THE PERSONAL FEED BACK OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE JUGGLING MASTERCLASS

## On Facilitation:

I think all facilitators did a very good job and gave very useful information, which can be used in our work. We saw and experienced many ways of teaching, which made us more conscious of how we act.

It was interesting how the facilitators gave the opportunity to the group to propose games or activities: this way all of us were facilitators in a way.

Mixture between theory and activity is very important.  
Classes were nicely structured.  
Really interesting new ideas and tools.

The way the arguments were given and the theme was presented, for me it was too frontal/formal and verbal.  
Useful maps drawn by Steven for visual support.  
Interesting to have more examples how to transfer the concept to our practice.

Amazing expertise and very clear teaching.  
It has truly been a honour and a pleasure to see and experience all this.

The content and the way to explain from teachers takes me easy the compression and get me interesting material to work

The workshops very good, learned a lot from all of them. I especially enjoyed Craig's lessons, both workshop and exercises, which inspired me a lot.  
Also learning by doing and giving workshops yourself with feedback was very useful for me as a teacher.

Workshops had good build-up, teachers had great input.

It was a really good thing to start with Steven's workshop, including the safe learning environment because of naming and explaining. We were all the more relaxed and open to learn and give more. Besides that it was good to have always a practical part in the theoretic sessions.

I like the global idea for facilitation but I found it not always coherent with the work we did. For example we taught about using the experiential learning cycle as a tool to teach and learn but we have used it only a few times

Not different program to different people, only harvest together + strong, sensitive good dynamic, humor, theory in action

- Loss of Steven, Marjolein carry loads, Group self facilitation

+ safe group quickly, and Steven's 'what do we need starter'

Very good teaching, really new and interesting teaching tools.

Really good job, all the teachers and experts in the concepts they expressed.  
I like maybe to have more information before, to get prepared on the concepts.

Using game ideas, concept of manipulating time/force/gravity.  
Using backgrounds and frames for better concepts.

Workshop leaders were really nice and experts on their field, so I felt that my learning is going faster. Maybe more breaks to digest more.

A special thanks to all organizers and participants, You all are wonderful people and I am honoured to call you my friends!

### **On Learning:**

I learn a lot... process in activities. Maybe more materials could help us more.

I learned a lot, I have so many ideas, but have to deal and work with them for a while to make them perfect.

Maybe have given more of myself to the workshop but it is ok. I feel happy with myself, I needed this for my development at this moment.

The subject that I learned gave me new techniques to teach that show the best results and do my work easier

I think I take many things home, that I can quickly apply to my classes. I take some pedagogical things that I will have to reflect on how they will effect my classes.

I got a lot of information that I will use for reflecting on my work and improve it. I missed having a big challenge.

I came to the masterclass with an open mind and learned many good things to take back home.

For example a much deeper view on the effects of my work and juggling in general, how it actually benefits us as human beings deeply and it's not just purely skills and tricks to show off.

Techniques, games, reflecting on my work, very interesting contacts.

Framework to sort already known things and fill in the gaps.  
Concept of different paths.

I learned a lot, but I will learn most in the coming year when I will try to implement the theory.

I learned a lot of theory about juggling and that will definitely help me in different parts of juggling and teaching. Also I am thinking more and more to work and teach in creative juggling, thanks to different sessions.

I have learned a lot during this week - it is difficult to try to describe it all because the sheer amount of information is so huge.

Educational and social models, mainstream theory, games and new tricks

Step away from: place, energy/play.  
Value in creativity and process-train in practice.

The open space system was very interesting.  
For the explanations talking in small groups is better for learning.  
After this masterclass I have a lot of material and knowledge to share with other teachers of my city. A lot of new ideas and inspiration.

I feel that I will go back with new feelings, tools and resources in my bag.  
To tone down as a facilitator

Formal and informal talks.

I can teach in a safe environment and learn from others participants.  
I know more now, I need time to apply this, but it will work out fine.  
Frustration, I cannot see the others, (workshop on Monday).

### **On the Program:**

Good flow, logical, recognised expertise, teaching opportunity, open space.  
Full of nice content, the structure was fixed but not too much. We were quite able to change it. I would like to have a more clear program, think we should have liked one or more time to coach.

I really love the idea to have a flexible and shared program, but I learned that this is not easy to realise. I missed more inputs on how to really improve and organize the program to optimize our aims together and to arrive to share deeper on our experience.  
I missed the experience of many people in this masterclass. A discussion on or example of of how we work and why, difficulties and strategies we came by, methods and goals that can be work in juggling. How? What solid goals? Specific information about this?

The program was very interesting and full of useful information. I feel there was a good balance between theory, practice games and sharing juggling.

Interesting program, very complete.  
I miss in the content more physical activity combined with theoretical.  
Really find usefull all Steven's parts, I missed the 1 day, 1 week, 1 year.  
On the approach of the open circus (space) perhaps it would have worked better if we structured it.  
I missed some technical juggling approach of pedagogy.

Really liked the program and approach. Maybe too long sometimes. Long days could be mixed with short days maby. Amazing content.

Good balance of giving a frame and participants contributing.  
Slight adjustments workshops.  
Astonishing variety of psychology / intelligence/ techniques/methods/backgrounds.

I liked the program a lot; workshops of Steven, Craig, Helen, Lapo, games exchange. That for it was good to leave some open space in the program.  
To work on: even the workshops of Steven which were so interesting were to long. I had trouble keeping that much info in my head. It would be better for me te separate his sessions in more but shorter parts.  
Good organisation, well structured, nice teacher, too much to learn (for me).

Maby 6 days of workshops in 6 hours a day instead of 8 hours a day for 5 days.

Program was very interesting and the content was of high level. Steven's classes were very informative and all the workshops were good quality.

What happened to story telling?

New ways to look at juggling.

First 2 days were too much theory, too much sitting.

New insights in teaching and development.

Interesting and usefull program.

Maby not everything has been developed because of time matters.

Missed some longer sessions by us on topics we agree on ( like "external" workshops but longer and only for us).

Allowing input from participants was good. It gave some freedom and room to adapt the program to the needs of the group.

All topics were connected to paint a larger picture.

High quality facilitation and approach.

I like the mixture of channels that has been used, showed me that its ok to use a lot of time in creating safe learning space.