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### FINDING MY MELODY!

Background:

– For nearly 30 years I have worked as a music teacher in different positions, mainly as a classroom teacher in primary and secondary school, but also as a principal in a «Culture school» and with music students at the University of Stavanger.

– I have become more and more interested in the connection between creativity and learning processes in general, also in order to meet the needs of pupils with different learning difficulties.

– The theoretical basis for my practical teaching are mainly the works of John Dewey (especially his book «Art as experience»), Jean Piaget, Howard Gardner («Multiple Intelligences»), Keith Swanwick («A Basis for Musical Education») and the Russian constructivist psychologist Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky.

Theme for the workshop:

#### **Finding my melody!**

How to stimulate creative thinking through music and dance? Simple methods for practical composing in the classroom using music fundamentals and body percussion.

How can we as teachers inspire and motivate our pupils to find and give expression to the music within themselves? What kind of pedagogical tools or methods can we use in order to help each individual find his or her «melody»?

My pedagogical basis is to develop through discovery and experience rather than explanation and definition (J. Dewey: «Learning by doing and reflecting.»). Working with singing, dancing, playing and composing leads to understanding of a musical concept through immediate and practical application. The approach should be adaptable for everybody starting at their own level (Piaget's theory about assimilation and accommodation). Through music fundamentals - such as sound, dynamics, rhythm, form, harmony and melody – we can help pupils recognize and express emotions and feelings. To get to this point, it is of vital importance to create a psychologically «safe» learning environment.

Due to very little time for music activities in secondary schools in Norway, we need to find methods where musical concepts and skills are developed at the same time. With one music teacher for a group of 20-30 pupils we must motivate and challenge each pupil to take the responsibility of finding their own way of constructing musical knowledge. In this we can lean on Vygotsky's theories about proximal learning zone and scaffolding.

In the workshop (if possible) we will get to know each other a bit through musical «ice-breakers», and together create a safe environment for exploring and learning through music and dance activities.

My strong belief is that music making is for everybody – we can all be composers and shape sound (or movement) in our own way. And we should not forget to have fun while doing it! As the American music professor James O'Brien (University of Arizona) puts it: « - after all, we use the phrase **play music** not **work music**».