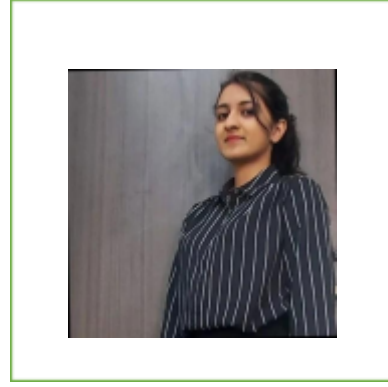


# Dance Movement Therapy



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## **Introduction:**

What is Art Therapy ?

Art therapy is a psychotherapeutic technique integrated with the creative process to improve well being . It includes a combination of other art forms like dance movement therapy, music therapy, Expressive art therapy. poetry, drama therapy and caters to the interest area of an individual to heal them.

## **Dance Movement Therapy :**

A discipline that I am taking a course on from Sanved Kolkata in association with Tata Institute of Social Sciences is one of the art therapies which are used to heal individuals. According to the American Dance Therapy Association it is the psychotherapeutic use of movements to promote emotional, physical , psychological and cognitive integration of the individual , to promote mental health. overall well being & treat mental illness.

The use of dance movement therapy as a healing tool is rooted in the idea that mind and body are inseparable. The therapy doesn't concentrate on dance but on movements by saying this I mean that for this therapy one doesn't require to know how to dance as it doesn't involve a structured choreography, however requires one to be reflective, constantly paying attention & listening to one's body while moving which comes with practice. The therapy sessions follow APA guidelines on the way to conduct the sessions to maintain the flow of movements as well as create a safe space for the clients to move. During the session no client is forced into doing a movement and we let them enter the space themselves by incorporating some basic movements like -as simple as walking in the space around you & being aware of it.

## **The origin of the discipline from the primitive to present time to be recognised as a therapy :**

In the earlier time dance was an integral part of spiritual life and mostly performed in front of god and goddesses. The primitive time reflected on the cultural aspect of dance and feeling of belongingness to be in a community. Many doctors started interrelating the concept of body -mind -spirit to come up with the new concepts to heal others. Despite facing obstacles they came forward to lay the foundation on the impact of dance on our body as well as mental health. Then in the 20th Century many choreographers were inclined towards incorporating the psychological theories with dance to reflect the inner and outward meaning exhibited by the movements. Pioneers in dance movement therapy like Marain Chace, Mary Whitehouse, Trudi Shoop started focussing on individual needs than a structured choreography to bring about their separate observation of movements which are a result of both one's preconscious and conscious. So, these theories brought about a fresh perspective towards mental health & drove future generation to build organizations (Example: Sanved Kolkata and TISS) imparting knowledge on the discipline.

## **Dance movement therapy with respect to India :**

Dance movement therapy is an upcoming field in India which has a lot of potential to grow. India although has a short history of Dance movement therapy, however has rich and diverse dance forms which inculcates many movement patterns which are used during the process of therapy. Currently, there are few dance therapists in India who are providing mental health related services in the community. DMT is applied with different populations and in a variety of locations, including those suffering from mental disabilities, physical disabilities, domestic violence, and trauma in regular schools, slum areas, and red-light areas (Bhatt, 2009; Kashyap, 2005; L. Singh, 2006). Although attempts are made by the media to acknowledge and share the success stories and achievements of these dance/movement therapists, exposure to the field is limited to only certain parts of the country where dance/movement therapists reside. Publicly available interviews and media publications exhibit work of only a few dance therapists currently practicing in India, and in many cases, similar topics or stories about DMT are shared and published by multiple authors.

The Indian Association of Dance Movement Therapist (IADMT) a professional body for professional dance movement psychotherapists to register in, although It is a national association registered under the Tamil Nadu Societies Registration Act, 1975, it has recently been brought into light by the professionals. The idea behind forming was to set ethical standards for professional practice, training, and supervision in the field of Dance Movement Therapy in India. The Indian Association of Dance Movement Therapy (IADMT) defines DMT as a psychotherapeutic method that uses movement and creative expression to further socio-emotional, cognitive and somatic integration. This association had lead to the spread of Dance movement therapy In India & promotes it growth, development as well as recognition.

## Conclusion:

On the whole Dance Movement Therapy is a field which has a lot of scope as it integrates elements of dance , movement as well as therapy in its healing process and involves one to be more reflective , constantly paying attention as well as listening to one's body . It allows professionals in the field of Mental health to take a new approach in addition to the traditional therapies in the therapeutic setting . This therapy prioritizes non-verbal modes of communication over verbal modes of communication in the therapeutic setting , giving clients an agency to take their own time to find their comfort while in the setting & harnesses the power of movements.

## Personal Experience:

I am currently a budding dance movement therapist and pursuing the course in this field from Sanved Kolkata in association with Tata Institute of Social Sciences . It is a very demanding course indeed, however it helps you understand many aspects about the emotional, physical and cognitive aspects of your body . Recently getting that exposure to make a session plan as a budding dance movement therapist and then conducting the session helped us to unlearn a few aspects and embrace this therapy in its true form. During our recent classes one thing that stayed with me was and I quote "body has the mind of its own" which means that even if our brain has pushed back some painful memories in our unconscious and don't remember them vividly, the impact of the same can be felt in our body. So on the whole as this course is based on experiential learning , we feel , listen, explore and create new possibilities through our movements.

## Professional & Educational Background-

I have completed my Masters in Counseling psychology from Amity University Noida , BA in Applied Psychology from Amity Kolkata & 7 years in classical dance form Kathak from Nadam Academy . By profession I have worked for a year as a success coach for kids at a company named Parentof based in Bangalore which gave a boost to my creativity, gave me a way to include the aspects of coaching & counseling together in the process of Skill development for kids 6-16 years of age group. So combining my passion with my theoretical knowledge in the field of study made me aim towards connecting everyday movements with my innate self & taking the chance to branch out to new avenues in the world .

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