

How to Tweet like a Dance/Movement Therapist: Creating meaningful connections.

Twitter is a powerful social networking service where you can find a number of artists, bloggers, health activists, businessmen, sports fans, organizations, public figures, rock stars, scholars and even astronauts tweeting live from outer space; with Twitter we have the potential of reaching millions of users, instantly. Tweets are often mentioned in regular TV News Broadcasts and quoted in articles. Some authors even affirm that, currently, news *breaks* on Twitter.

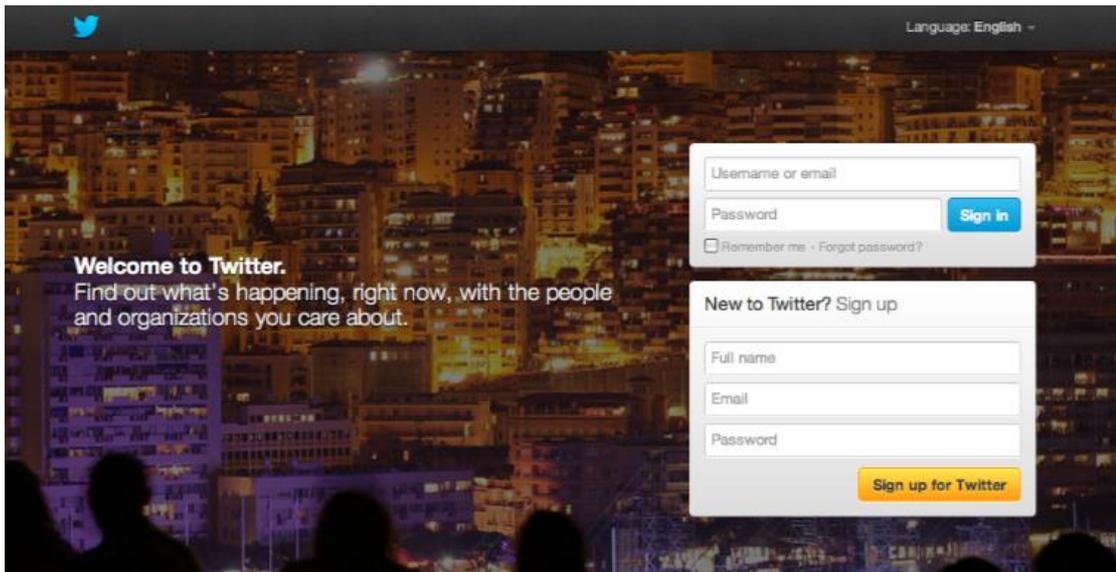
With this social media platform, countries and cultures are brought together like never before and Dance/Movement Therapists want to be part of the conversation! It is free and easy to use, follow these simple guidelines (13 steps):

Requirements to use Twitter:

Essential: A computer with internet access.

Optional: Mobile or iPad with internet access and texting capabilities.

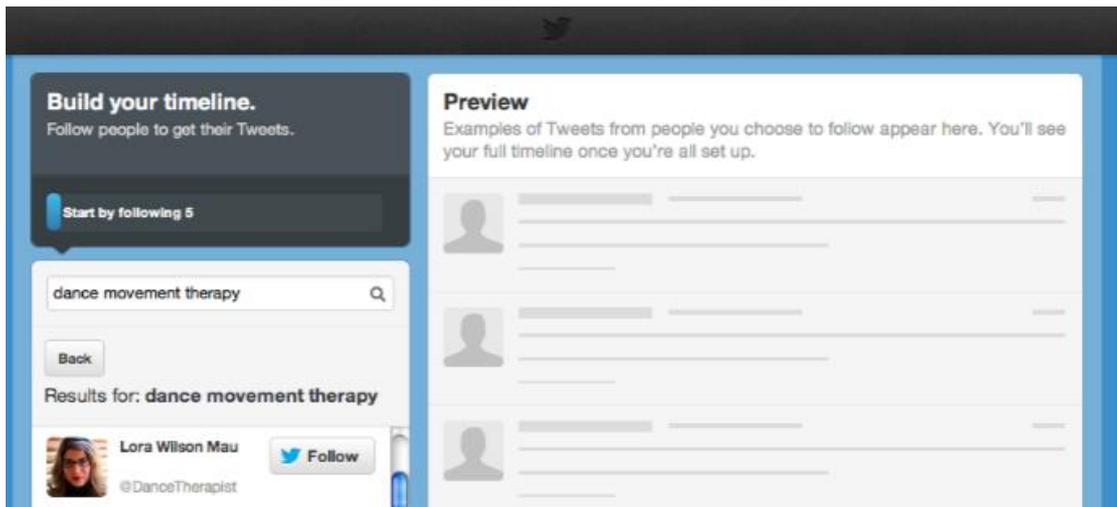
1. To create an account, go to <https://twitter.com/>, and sign up on the square in the lower right corner. Enter your name, email, password, and click the yellow “sign up for twitter” button to join. You will be directed to a second page that will ask you to choose a username (that is not already taken) and click the yellow “Create my Account” button.



2. You will be directed to a “Welcome” page that shows you how to get started. You will be greeted by a “Twitter Teacher” that gives you an example of a Tweet. A tweet is a micro-post that consists of up to 140 characters and may contain links. Click next.



3. To build a timeline, you are invited to follow people to read their Tweets. On the search bar at the left hand side, type in the search terms “Dance Therapy” or “Dance Movement Therapy” to get suggestions of users to follow.



Twitter handles for your ADTA PR Social Media Subcommittee -Twitter Team are:

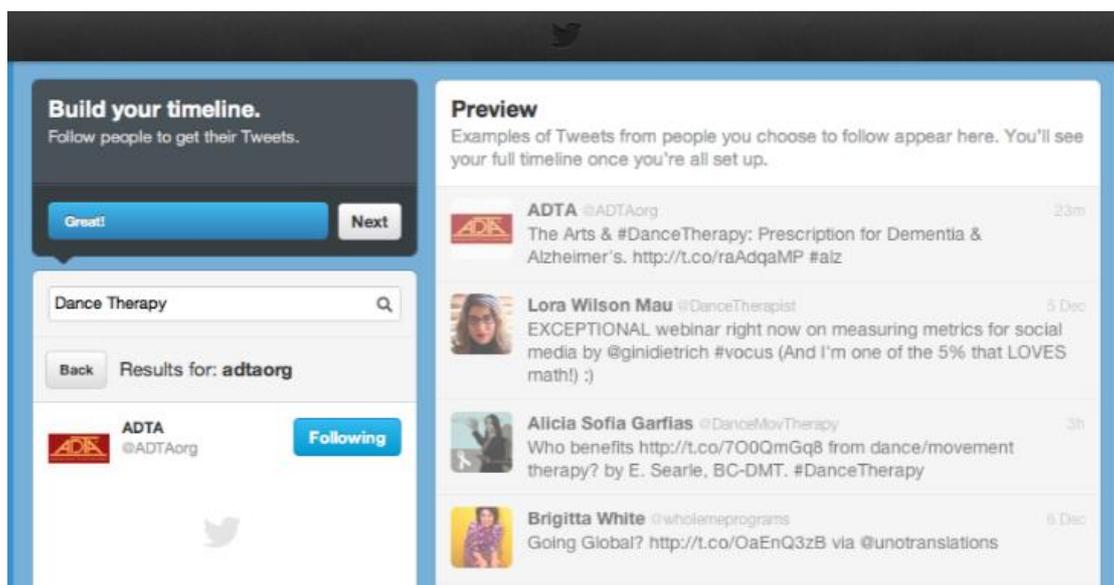
@ADTAorg: American Dance Therapy Association, official account.

@DanceTherapist: Lora Wilson-Mau

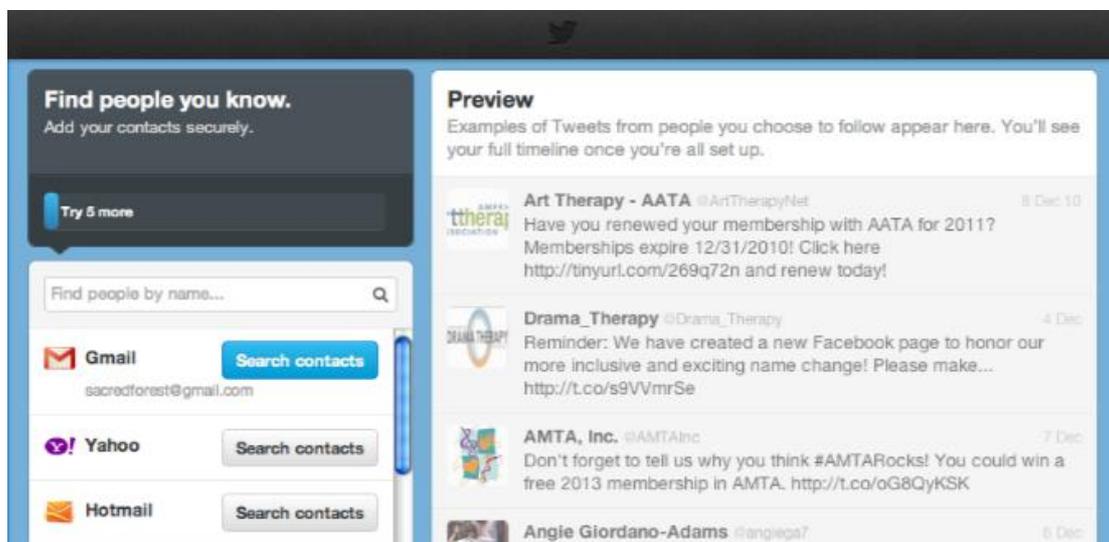
@Wholemeprograms: Brigitta White

@DanceMovTherapy: Alicia Sofia Garfias

You will need to follow at least five persons in order to go on to the next step and begin receiving these tweets on your news feed. Your twitter feed preview will look like this:



4. When you click next, you will be asked to follow five more persons. You can customize the news feed to your particular interests or client population by choosing which organizations and professionals to follow. As an example, I have followed some Creative Arts Therapy Associations (see image below). After choosing who to follow click “next” again. Then, you will be given the option to import your contacts from any Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, or AOL account, but there is an option below the second box on the left to skip this step if required. If you are interested in importing your contacts, just click the “Search contacts” button and follow the instructions.



5. Next, you will be asked to “add character”, which simply means to give your twitter account a personal touch. All new accounts have an image of an egg by default, but you are encouraged to change it so your followers can identify you easily. Accounts that do not have a photo attached are often perceived as potential spam. You may want to use a Facebook profile pic or another headshot that is professional looking or even a logo for your dance/movement therapy practice.

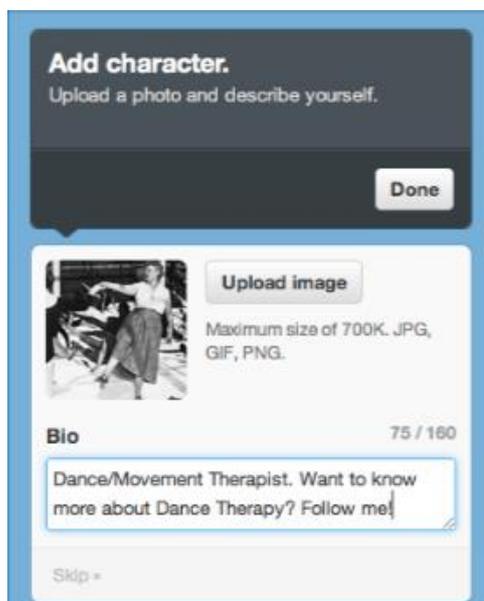


To upload an image, click the “upload image button”. You can use a file from your computer that is either a JPG, GIF or PNG that is not bigger than 700K.

You also can add a 160 character biography that briefly describes you and your interests. Be creative! This is the information that helps potential followers

decide whether they might be interested in following you and listening to you.

Purely as an example, I have uploaded an image from ADTA of Marian Chace. The profile will look like this:



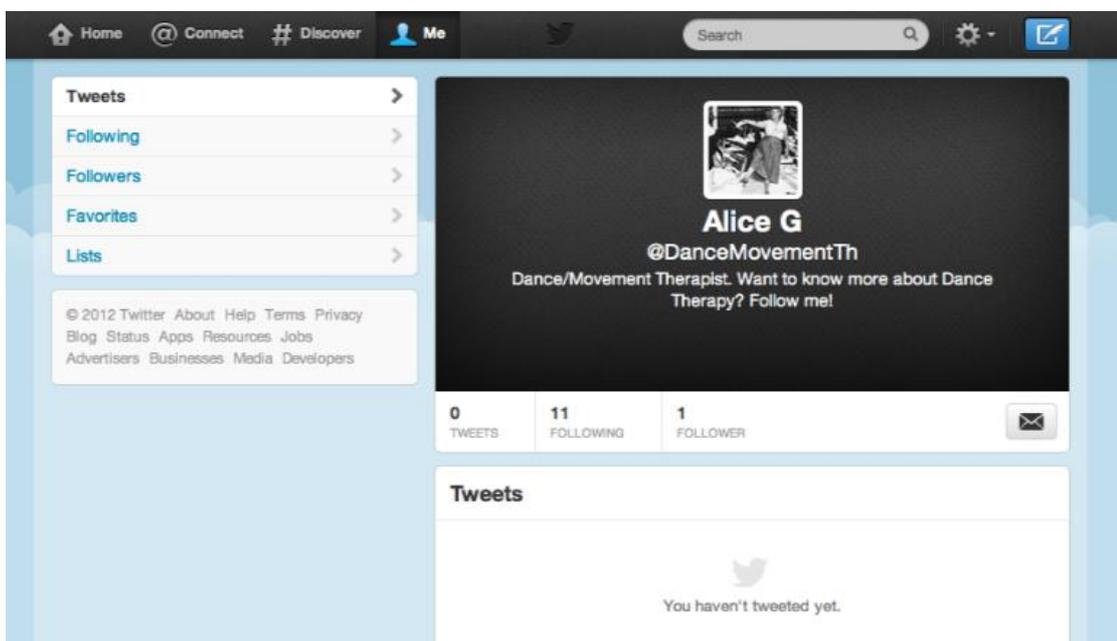
After you have chosen your image write a brief bio and click the “Done” button above to save your settings.

You have now set up your Twitter feed page.

6. You will see on top of the page a confirmation notice. Remember to confirm your email address by clicking on the link you will receive via email to the address you specified when signing up for Twitter. Now click on your name in the box on the left hand side to see your profile so far.



- Once you click on your name you will be directed to your profile page. It is where your tweets will appear. The grey rectangle in the background behind the image we just uploaded is a “header”, which serves the same function as a timeline on Facebook. The background is customized to appear as light blue/white clouds, but we can personalize this also.

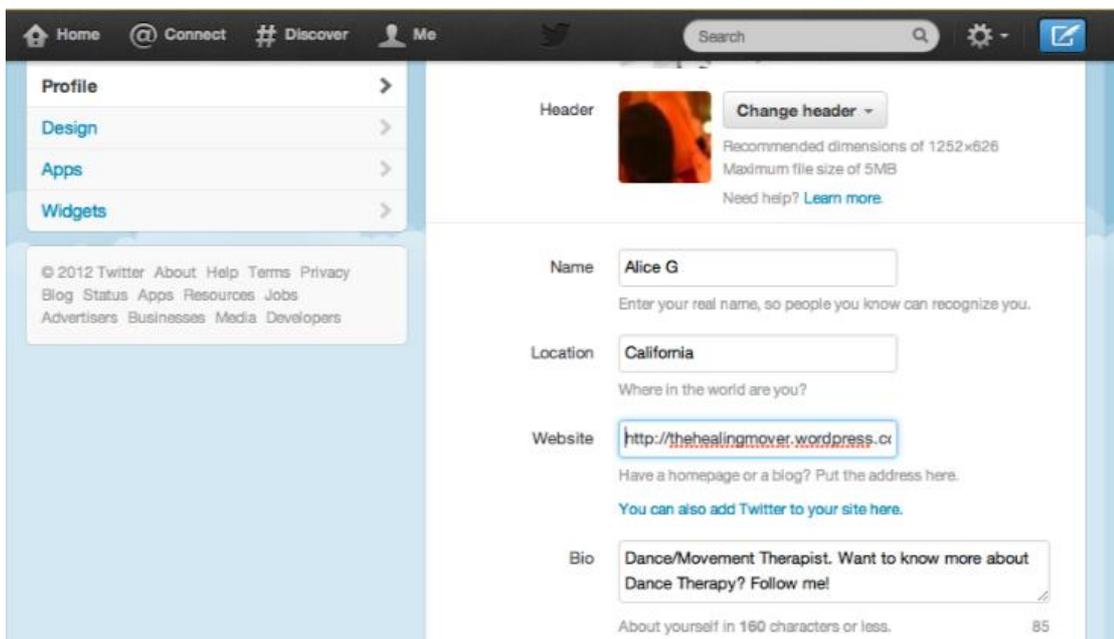


- To change the header, go to the top of the page, to the right of the “search” option, and click on the wheel icon. Choose “settings”. A set of options will appear on the left hand side (shown below). Click on “Profile” and then “Change Header”. This will allow you to upload a

second image. Once you choose it, you have an option to adjust its size. Click “save”.

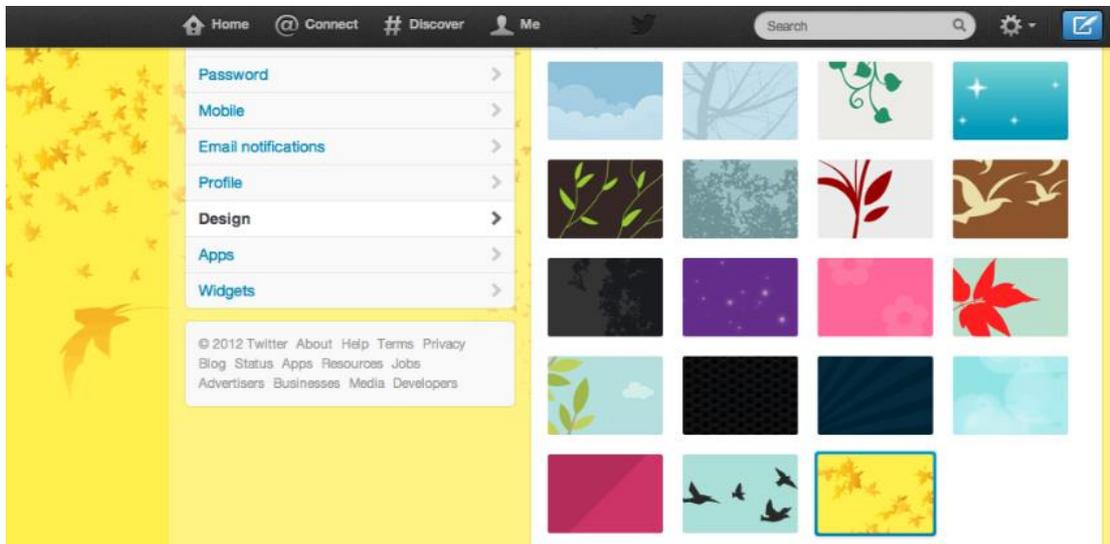


9. For demonstration purposes, I have uploaded an image by ADTA of the 47th Annual Conference. You will be sent back to the profile page. Add your location and website. A link will appear on your profile. These images and information can be changed at any time.



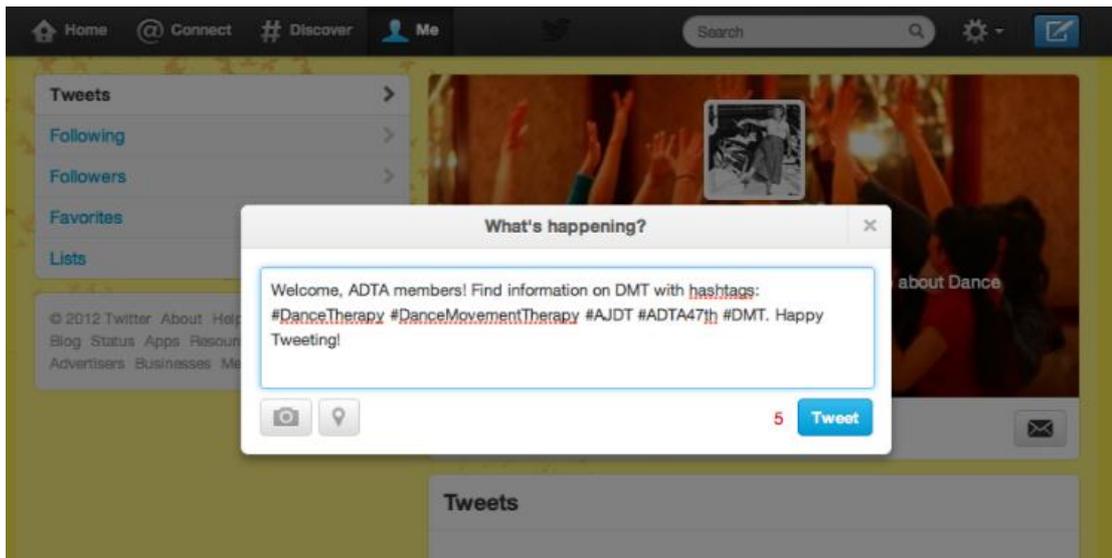
10. For a finishing touch, you can go to “Design” under “Profile” on the box on the left and change the cloud background. By clicking on one of the options offered, your background will change. I clicked on a yellow one.

As you can see, the clouds have now changed to the yellow background. Scroll down and click “save changes”. Now, click on the “me” button on the top left to return to your Twitter homepage.



11. Congratulations! You are now ready to send your first tweet. To write it, click on the blue quill icon on the top right hand side of the screen.

Twitter asks you the question “What is happening?” and you can write your text on the box. The number on the lower left lets you know how many characters you have left to write. A red number like -1 or lower, means you need to shorten your tweet to 140 characters. To send, click “Tweet”.



I have written a tweet with examples of hashtags (such as #DanceTherapy) that are relevant to DMT. A hashtag is a word preceded by the number sign (#) and a hashtag allows the user to qualitatively filtrate tweets according to a particular subject. Once the tweet is sent you can click on a hashtag to be directed to similar tweets. (A good policy is to limit the number of hashtags in a tweet to two or less as more than that can give the impression of being spam. So you would NOT want to write a tweet like this: “#Dancetherapy resources to help #parents with #children on the #autismspectrum on #ADTA website.” Limit the hashtags to two or less.

To send a Tweet to a particular user type @ followed by the user’s twitter handle. (For example: @ADTAorg)

12. Retweets are a wonderful way to recognize other users and to share their content. The retweet is very powerful and the PR Committee encourages you to retweet (or “RT: in Twitter shorthand) as many tweets related to DMT as possible. For our first retweet, I will go to the ADTA’s official account by typing “ADTA” on the search button on the top right and clicking on the ADTA logo. Once on their Twitter homepage, scroll your mouse over the tweet of your choice.

Three options will appear: Reply (answer to the Tweet), Retweet (share with your followers), or Favorite (Save). Click Retweet.



You will be asked: “Retweet this to your followers?” Click the blue retweet button. **We have now sent our first retweet from the ADTA’s official account on Twitter.** Review it by clicking the “me” icon on the top right of the page. The image below shows how our first retweet will look like. This is a wonderful way to get more exposure.



13. By clicking on the “Home” button at the top left, you have access to recent tweets by persons or organizations you follow. Start by following others, retweeting, sharing your news and soon your followers will increase. Keep in mind that all tweets are searchable and PUBLIC. Do not say anything in a tweet that you would not want potential employers to read, clients, family, friends, etc. Twitter’s power is in that it is public. Remember that as you communicate. You can use Twitter entirely for professional purposes or for personal and professional but always remember anyone can read those tweets.

Opening the door to digital media can feel a little intimidating, but there is much to be gained especially as ADTA members are already on Twitter, ready to give you a warm welcome and help you with any questions you may have! If you do have questions, please contact the ADTA Twitter Subcommittee Chair, Alice Garfias at dance.mov.therapy@gmail.com

Your flock awaits. **Happy Tweeting!**

December, 2012