

Props in Dance/Movement Therapy: A Journey of Personal and Professional Exploration

- Poster Abstract:

The purpose of this heuristic study was to explore and understand the use of props in both the personal development of the self and the development as a dance/movement therapy graduate student. The goal of this study was to present an overview of the use of props with populations such as children, adolescents, adults and older adults, supported by various psychological theories. Three in-depth semi-structured interviews with two Board Certified Dance/Movement Therapists and one Registered- Dance/Movement Therapist, who use props in their clinical practice were conducted. Interviews were transcribed line by line and data was analysed through following the steps outlined by Moustakas heuristic method (1994). Five core themes emerged from the data analysis that was culminated in a creative synthesis, which was presented in an improvised movement piece. The results of this research revealed five core themes: initiates play, observations in movement repertoire, increase group cohesiveness, sensory and color stimulation and limitations. The results led the researcher to understand that anything can be used as a prop during a DMT session in a creative form so long as it is in service of the clients. In addition, during this study, the researcher also explored the personal experiences with props that helped develop the skills as a fledgling dance/movement therapist.

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Disha Sampat (R-DMT), who currently resides in Mumbai, India. She graduated from Pratt Institute, in 2019. She is a professional member of the Indian Association of Dance/Movement Therapy. As there is limited research on the use of props, her clinical and

research interest is on how various props may be used with different populations around the globe.