

What is Dance/Movement Therapy?



“Dance/movement therapy can foster creative self-expression, and provides safe and effective options for relating to others and coping with the environment.”

Dance is the most fundamental of the arts, involving a direct expression of one's self through one's body. It is an especially powerful medium for therapy.

Based on the assumption that the body and mind are interrelated, dance/movement therapy is defined by the American Dance Therapy Association as “the psychotherapeutic use of movement as a process which furthers the emotional, cognitive, physical, and social integration of the individual.”

The dance/movement therapist focuses on movement behavior as it emerges in the therapeutic relationship. Expressive, communicative, and adaptive behaviors are all considered for both group, individual, couples, & family treatment. Body movement simultaneously provides the means of assessment and the mode of intervention.

Dance/movement therapists are employed in a wide variety of facilities as well as private practice. They address the needs of a broad spectrum of people, including those with specific disorders and disabilities.

Professional training of dance/movement therapists occurs on the graduate level, and the Masters is the terminal degree. The ADTA publishes a list of colleges and universities that provide appropriate education and training, and the association has established an approval procedure for granting recognition to those institutions that fulfill the guidelines for graduate degree programs

Dance/Movement Therapy Resources

“Dance/movement therapy is the psychotherapeutic use of movement which furthers the emotional, cognitive, physical and social integration of the individual.”

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Stanton-Jones, K. (1992). *An introduction to dance movement therapy in psychiatry*. New York: Tavistock and Routledge.

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