

Introduction to Dance Movement Therapy/Psychotherapy

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Dance Movement Therapy & Psychotherapy

Dance movement therapy is the relational and therapeutic use of dance and movement to further the physical, emotional, cognitive, social, and cultural* functioning of a person.

Dance movement therapy is based on the empirically-supported unity of body and mind. It recognizes that change and growth in one supports change and growth in the other.

Dance movement therapists combine the elements of dance, movement systems, creative processes, and psychological and scientific theories, to address the specific needs of groups and individuals.

Dance movement therapists work in clinical, institutional, community and private settings, using clear therapeutic contracts, agreements and goals, often within a defined time frame. Verbally and non-verbally, they attune to client/s' needs and provide the therapeutic relationship requisite for growth and change. Dance movement therapy can be offered individually or in groups.

In Australasia, the **Dance Therapy Association of Australasia** recognizes four levels of practicing members (Professional, Provisional, Associate, and Clinical) as credentialed to deliver dance movement therapy.

Other therapeutic practices of dance and movement, including those provided by members of the DTAA who have not reached credentialed membership status, are not recognized as dance movement therapy by the DTAA.

*Culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by [a human] as a member of society (UNESCO, 1982).



Therapeutic Intent in DMT/P

- ▶ To connect to Self
- ▶ To connect to the Environment
- ▶ To connect to Others
- ▶ To be able to express to Others
- ▶ To be seen and understood by an Other
- ▶ To be in relationship with an Other
- ▶ To connect to Self while in Relationship

Through the use of nonverbal and verbal modalities.



Basic Human Needs

- ▶ To see and to be seen
- ▶ To understand and be understood
- ▶ To belong, to feel part of a community

These can and are communicated nonverbally by all sentient beings.

Expression and Movement – the essence of connection to Self and others

- ▶ DMT's efficacy comes from features that emanate from placement of the expressive, moving body **foremost** in the therapeutic process
- ▶ Daniel Stern's theory of vitality affects suggests that dynamic events (space, time, force, and flow) offer a **physical-emotional experience of vitality** which humans require in order to know our self and our connection to the world (2010). Stern is describing dance.
- ▶ in Australia, a **continuous healing lineage using the body, dance and rhythm** can be traced back over 40,000 years through our Indigenous Aboriginal populations (Jordan, Searle, & Dunphy, 2017).

Dance Movement Therapy's Core Processes

- ▶ Providing a non-judgment presence for the other (a task of the therapist);
- ▶ Accessing memory and information not available to the conscious mind (an internal process of client)
- ▶ Recognizing the importance of symbolic communication (an intersubjective process between client and therapist)
- ▶ Rhythm as a basic organizing principle of self and interactions (a basic DMT principle)
- ▶ The regular use of groups. (a basic DMT practice)

Dance Movement Therapy's Unique factors

- ▶ Use of expressive movement – DANCE
- ▶ Origins in the ancient healing arts
- ▶ Use of specialist movement analysis frameworks
- ▶ Prioritization of Feeling and the Animated SELF
- ▶ Therapist's body as the primary tool
- ▶ DMT as an enactive and embodied practice
- ▶ Using an enactive approach to psychoanalytic theory
- ▶ Using creativity as a tool not an outcome
- ▶ Focussing on process and dynamic change

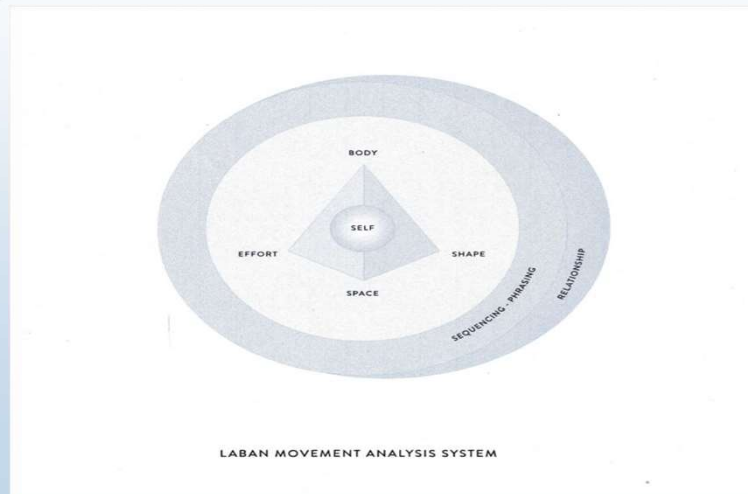
Lauffenburger, 2020, Something More: the unique features of dance movement therapy/psychotherapy, American Journal of Dance Therapy, 42, 16-32.

The Prison of Language

Dan Siegel states

“our ordinary language can be a prison, locking us in the jail of our own redundancies, dulling our senses, clouding our focus” (2007, p. 54).

DMT's movement analysis framework: Laban/Bartenieff Movement Systems



General principles of LBMS

- ▶ Change is the essence of movement, and of life
- ▶ Movement is patterned and orderly
- ▶ Movement is relational
- ▶ Human movement is motivated by inner needs, and other psychophysical phenomena
- ▶ Movement can be described in orderly ways
- ▶ Movement can only be understood fully if approached (and studied) at multiple levels.

Taxonomy of LBMS part one

LMA | LBMS Taxonomy Version 1.2

Movement (= change)

Movement Patterns

Themes/Dualities

- ◆ I/O
- ◆ M/S
- ◆ F/E
- ◆ EX/R
- Macro/Micro
- Self/Other
- Part/Whole
- Simple/Complex
- Individual/Universal

Phrasing

Aspects of Phrasing

- Duration, length
- Discrete vs Overlapping
- Emphasis
- >> Accenting
- Rhythm

Developmental Progression

Flow & Weight as underlying baseline for all movement

Sensing Body

Whole Body Connection

- Principles
 - Breath Support
 - Core Support
 - Access to Weight (Shift & Support)
 - Rotation
 - Spatial Intent
 - Effort Intent
 - Shape Intent
 - Developmental Support
 - Axis of Length
 - Body Level Phrasing
- Developmental Patterns/Body Organization
 - Breath
 - Radial Symmetry
 - Head Tail
 - Upper Lower
 - Homo Lateral
 - Contra Lateral
 - Base 5
 - Thigh Lift
 - Sagittal Pelvic Shift
 - Lateral Pelvic Shift

Feeling Effort

Quality, Energy, Dynamics

Factor	Elements
Intention	Weight: Light, Strong
Progression	Flow: Free, Bound
Decision	Time: Scatterd, Quick, Sudden
Attention	Space: Indirect, Direct

Effort Graph

Thinking Space

Body moving in Space

- General Space
- Inner Space
- Personal Space/Kinesphere
 - Zones in Kinesphere
 - High
 - Middle
 - Low
 - Right
 - Left
 - Front
 - Back
 - Reach Space in Kinesphere
 - Near Reach
 - Far Reach
 - Mid Reach
 - Approach to Kinesphere
 - Central
 - Peripheral
 - Transverse

Intuiting Shape

Changing Form in relation to Self and Env.

- Still Shape Forms
 - Pin
 - Wall
 - Ball
 - Screw
 - Tetrahedron
- Modes of Shape Change
 - Shape Flow (Self to Self)
 - Directional Movement
 - (Bridging Self to Environment)
 - Spoke-like
 - Arc-like
 - Shaping (Accommodating Self to Other)
 - Inner Shaping
 - Outer Shaping

Taxonomy of LBMS part two

- Body Halves (in □ and □)
- Gross Lateral Knee Drop/ Knee Reach
- Arm Circle
- Other, like X Rolls etc.
- Dynamic Alignment
 - Bony Landmarks
 - Kinetic Chains
 - Vertical Throughness
- Rhythms
- Grounding
 - Weight Sensing
 - Flow Sensing
 - Active & Passive Use of Weight
 - Base of Support
 - Center of Levery, Center of Gravity
- Body Phrasing
 - Initiation
 - Core
 - Mid-limb
 - Distal
 - Sequencing
 - Core to Limb
 - Limb to Core
 - Simultaneous Sequencing
 - Sequential Sequencing
 - Successive Sequencing
 - Postural mvt. vs. Gestural mvt.
 - Scattering and Gathering
 - Growing & Shrinking
 - Lengthening & Shortening
 - Widening & Narrowing
 - Bulging & Hollowing
 - Basic Body Actions
 - Locomotion
 - Jump
 - Fall
 - Rotation
 - Condensing
 - Expanding
 - Change of Support
 - Connect
 - Body Parts
 - Related terms and concepts to Body
 - Yield, Push, Reach

- States (combinations of 2 Effort Factors)
 - Stable – Weight and Space
 - Mobile – Time and Flow
 - Rhythm – Time and Weight
 - Remote – Space and Flow
 - Dream – Weight and Flow
 - Awake – Space and Time
- Drives (combinations of 3 Effort Factors)
 - Action Drive – no Flow (Basic Effort Actions (BEA's))
 - Float
 - Punch
 - Slide
 - Slesh
 - Dab
 - Wring
 - Flick
 - Press
 - Transformation Drives
 - Passion Drive – no Space
 - Spell Drive – no Time
 - Vision Drive – no Weight
- Effort Phrasing
 - Types of Phrasing
 - Even
 - Impulsive
 - Impactive
 - Swing
 - Increasing
 - Decreasing
 - Vibratory

- Platonic Solid Forms
 - Tetrahedron
 - Octahedron
 - Cube
 - Icosahedron
 - Dodecahedron
- Spatial Pulls
 - Tension – Counter tension
 - Directions (2D)
 - 1 Spatial Pull
 - Dimensions (3)
 - Vertical
 - Horizontal
 - Sagittal
 - Dimensional Scale
 - 2 Spatial Pulls
 - Diameters (6) – 2 unequal Spatial Pulls
 - Planes (3)
 - Vertical
 - Horizontal
 - Sagittal
 - Axis, Circle, Primary, A, B Scales
 - 3 Spatial Pulls
 - Diagonals (4) – 3 equal Spatial Pulls
 - Diagonal Scale
 - Space Phrasing
 - Related terms and concepts to Space Category
 - Transversals
 - Deflection – Inclination
 - Flat, Slope, Suspended Phrasing
 - Volute, Steeples Phrasing
 - Vectors

- Shape Qualities (Core Shape Change)
 - Advancing, Retreating, Raising, Sinking, Spreading, Enclosing
- Convex-Concave Relationship
- Shape Phrasing

Space Harmony Dynamics Kinesphere

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This taxonomy was created with input from Karen Studd, MS, CMA, RSMT, RSME

Mapping the Geographies of SPACE

- ▶ **SPACE** is an imaginary architecture that stabilizes and mobilizes the body.
- ▶ Systematic, geometric description of motion to orient and provide clear intent to organize movement more efficiently
 - ▶ **Spatial intent** organizes the neuromuscular system
- ▶ Models of natural sequences of movement for exploration and stimulation of balance in alternation with increased movement repertoire
 - ▶ **Scales** are the prescribed ordering of movement, occurring within platonic solids, that echo common movements as well as offer new possibilities and challenges to the moving body
- ▶ Space offers us infinite pathways for expression
 - ▶ **Spatial pull** is an invisible line of inherent power (potential energy) which is revealed in movement through achievement of our spatial intent

Introduction to effort

What is EFFORT?

All movement contains within it an energetic or dynamic nature, which gives the movement its colour, feeling tone, and suggests the inner attitude of the mover.

"The source whence perfection and final mastery of movement must flow is the understanding of that part of the inner life of man where movement and action originate.... Man's inner urge to move has to be assimilated into the acquisition of external skill in movement." Rudolf Laban

Effort and Space

"The study of movement deals with the spatial order of the paths which the limbs make in the kinesphere, and also with the connection between outer movement and the mover's inner attitude. This attitude is not only shown in the choice of a certain path or the employment of a certain limb, but is also characterized by the choice of dynamic stresses." Rudolf Laban

Effort elements

Space is the effort exerted to aim and orient movement. A fighting attitude is expressed in *direct* motion, in which linear aim with a singular focus is noted. An indulging attitude is expressed as *indirect* motion, in which curvilinear plasticity and continuous changes in the direction prevail.

Time is the effort exerted to pace the movement adroitly. A fighting attitude is expressed as *sudden* action, in which quickness and acceleration are noticeable. An indulging attitude is expressed in *sustained* movement, producing a lingering action in which deceleration prevails.

Weight is the effort exerted to apply the right amount of pressure. A fighting attitude is expressed as *strong* weight, in which firm pressure and forcefulness prevail. An indulging attitude is expressed as *light* weight, in which delicacy and a gentle touch are noticeable.

Flow is the effort exerted to control movement. A fighting attitude is expressed as *bound* flow, in which the motion is restrained and easy to stop. An indulging attitude is expressed as *free* flow, in which the action is relaxed, on-going, and difficult to stop.

Introduction to SHAPE

- ▶ Connection to Self – Shape flow baseline
 - ▶ Postural, breath
- ▶ Influence of connections/environment: shape qualities
 - ▶ Rising, sinking, widening, narrowing, advancing, retreating, spreading, enclosing
- ▶ Forming connections/relationships: Modes of shape change
 - ▶ Shape flow, directional movement, Carving/molding (aka shaping)
- ▶ Body Attitude - Still forms:
 - ▶ Pin Wall Ball Screw (tetrahedron)
- ▶ Trace forms – forms in process:
 - ▶ droit, ouvert, toille, rond

Laban and Bartenieff on the Body

- ▶ Body movement can be roughly divided into **steps, gestures** of arms and hands, and **facial** expressions.
- ▶ The astonishing structure of the body and the amazing actions it can perform are some of the greatest miracles of existence.
- ▶ Each phase of movement, every small transfer of weight, every single gesture reveals some feature of our **inner life**.
- ▶ BFs emphasize the **internal connections** that are key to dynamic rather than static movements.

Major Movement Themes Review

- ▶ Stability/ Mobility
- ▶ Function/ Expression
- ▶ Exertion/ Recuperation
- ▶ Inner/ Outer

Important Body component concepts

Dynamic Alignment – a readiness to change and ability to form and maintain a constellation with body parts, referred to as “connectedness,” and “ongoing changing relationships within the architectural framework of the body”*

Weight Shift – In weight transference, level change, and propulsion

Internal/ Core Support – aspects of deep muscular, skeletal, organ support for the Body’s central core with coordination and flow of breath

Rotary Factor – using full range of motion (R.O.M.) in global joints with core accommodation (internal & external as well as graded)

Initiation & Sequencing – Types include: Simultaneous, Sequential, & Successive

Breath Support – essential to proper use of internal support and efficient energy flow; sensing three-dimensionality

Developmental Movement

- Underpinning of all movement
- Developmental as progression and building blocks in fundamental body organization.
- Builds body connections between core and limbs – physically, psychologically and relationally
 - Navel Radiation, Homologous, Homolateral & Contralateral Patterns
 - Yield Push Reach Grasp Pull Release

LBMS aids observation and understanding of Self and nonverbal expression

- Experiential

Upside and Downside of Dance Movement Therapy

UPSIDE!

- ▶ Engages the entire bodymind in therapist and client(s)
- ▶ Creates a bridge between inner and outer worlds by connecting internal sensorimotor processes to external communications, without entrapment by words
- ▶ Movement is the origin of words (Johnson & Lakoff, 2002)

DOWNSIDE

- ▶ Is ephemeral as there is no enduring record such as art or music
- ▶ Changes continually
- ▶ Requires ability to track the process of continual change through awareness and understanding of own body/movement

Forms of Expressivity

- ▶ Affect, Feeling, and Emotion used interchangeably creating confusing. Thus need to be clearly defined
- ▶ **Affect**: bodily sensations and motoric impulses that can occur out of conscious awareness.
- ▶ **Feelings**: bodily sensations and motoric impulses that are made conscious and can be symbolized, through movement, image or words.
- ▶ **Emotions**: feelings that have been contextualized within a narrative which is based on the person's developmental history, relational experiences, and environmental situations.

Affects

- ▶ Affect is subcortical, physiological, is dynamic and occurs continuously
- ▶ Affect consists of two subcomponents
 - ▶ Sensation – which we attempt to bring to consciousness through techniques such as mindfulness
 - ▶ Action tendency/motoric impulse – which we suppress or enact often unconsciously
- ▶ **DMT attends to sensation, AND gives movement an equal place**

Movement and Evolution

- ▶ Movement, internal and external, is the goal of life, not thought.
- ▶ The neural concept of **motoricity** states that lifeforms developed a **brain and nervous system** when they evolved to move (Llinas, 2001).
- ▶ Once this motoric evolutionary path had formed, it made **action, not thinking**, the key organizing focus of Self (Lee, Rountree, & McMahan, 2009).