

Significance of Slow and Small Movements in Japanese Dance Therapy

日本のダンスセラピーにおける緩慢で微細な動きの重要性
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The author has been running dance therapy sessions for daycare programme at mental clinics since 1999 in Japan, and has found that the Western ways of dance therapy are not always suitable for Japanese participants: 1) verbalizing one's feelings is not always thought to be essential because nonverbal mutual understanding is historically and culturally appreciated and demanded, 2) small or slow movements are not always regarded as 'non-expressive' but 'significant' because most traditional indoor dances in Japan use delicate movements mainly because they tend to avoid rude movements and the resultant air turbulence and dusts in a small room with a tatami mat floor.

Whereas, as a body-oriented psychotherapy, dance therapists have to ask participants to verbalize what they perceived and thought from time to time in order to make the session psychotherapeutic, those seemingly 'expressive' big movements in swinging one's limbs around are not so much demanded in Japan. Hence, simple dance steps or slow and delicate movements are more important in the dance therapy session, especially for schizophrenic patients with negative syndromes at mental clinics.

The purpose of the workshop is to expand our cultural concept of dance and dance therapy by introducing Japanese innovative ideas about dance in butoh, an avant-garde dance style which originated in the 1950s. Butoh dance employs so-called 'painfully slow' or delicate movements, and often tries to contrast them with fast or crude movements as a performing art. The workshop consists of three factors: a) the utilization of a small space, b) the development of slow and delicate movements, and c) the contrast or combination of the slow-fast or delicate-rude dimension, together with other traditional dance movements.

Biography

Certified Dance Therapist (Japan Dance Therapy Association, JADTA), Vice President, running dance therapy programmes at mental clinics in Japan since 1999.

Professor of Department of Clinical Psychology, and Director of Graduate School of Clinical Psychology in Sapporo Gakuin University, Japan.

One of the research themes is about body-mind psychotherapeutic approach based on Butoh therapy. Prof. Kasai has performed as butoh dancer 'Itto Morita' since 1988.

Recent Publications

Kasai, T. (2013). The structure of indirect body-mind techniques in body psychotherapy. *The Japanese Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 50 (2), p.1-13

Kasai, T. (2013). The amplification method based on abduction for qualitative approach in clinical psychology. *Bulletin of Faculty of Humanities, Sapporo Gakuin University* 94. p.103-114

(2013) 13th European Consortium for Arts Therapies Education, ECArTE, Paris. 'Three phased dance therapy programme for enhanced awareness and reflection'