

Three phased dance therapy program for enhanced awareness and reflection

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The author [1] has had dance therapy sessions for daycare program at mental clinics since 1999 in Japan, together with professional butoh dance activities [2] to comprehend so-called “insanity” , and has found that the combination of three different physical /mental modes is effective to create a safe and reflective dance therapy session. The three modes are following: The first phase consists of the medium or high movement strength for bodymind activation by utilizing cheering exercises, the second phase is the relaxation where the bodymind excitation calms down by introducing slow and meditative movements in the lying position, and the third phase is a preparation stage to come back to the normal bodymind state by sharing the words obtained by “focusing technique” (Gendlin,1961 [3]) with “the felt-sense” and “the handle” or descriptive phrases for the experiences.

The first president of Japan Dance Therapy Association, Tadayuki Umeda, a physician, combined the physically and mentally dynamic dance therapy with a calm and meditative mental state in order to make the dance therapy session much more effective in terms of hypnotherapy [4]. The author’ s three phased session was influenced by his approach, and the focusing technique was found suitable to make the transition of the participants’ bodymind into the ordinary state smoothly because the individualized nonverbal self-reflective stage is followed by the conscious verbalizing process in the group. Shared reflections of participants then give the instructor/practitioner important clues and evidence about how they experienced their bodymind through the session.

[1]Toshiharu Kasai (2011). A body psychotherapy employing delicate movements and peaceful voices. The 20th Annual Conference of Japan Dance Therapy Association, 12. (Japanese)

[2]Toshiharu Kasai (2009). New understandings of Butoh Creation and Creative Autopoietic Butoh - From Subconscious Hidden Observer to Perturbation of Body-Mind System. Bulletin of Faculty of Humanities, Sapporo Gakuin University, No.86, 21-36.

[3]Gendlin, Eugene.T. (1961). Experiencing: A variable in the process of therapeutic change. American Journal of Psychotherapy, 15 (2), 233-245.

[4] Tadayuki Umeda (2001) “Dancetherapy and Hypnotherapy” Futaba Shobo (Japanese)