

Dance/Movement Therapy & Eating Disorders



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“Healing cannot fully take place unless individuals are able to challenge themselves to live in their bodies, a central component of their body image.”

Dance/movement therapy (DMT) serves as a powerful medium for people suffering with eating disorders to explore their relationship to their bodies. A characteristic of eating disorders is the tendency to detach from feelings and focus on body distortions, obsessive thoughts and concrete, black and white thinking. DMT provides a way to safely become more aware of feelings that arise from the body's sensations, and teaches people with eating disorders how to listen to their body's needs. This is critical to recovery. People with eating disorders also can become socially isolated. The relationship focus of DMT, both in group and individual formats, helps the individual risk connecting to others in supported, honest and meaningful ways. Discoveries made in DMT--about one's own mind/body connection and about relating to others-- transfer to other relationships and how one moves through life.

When everyday movements are transformed into expressive movements, participants become able to release and externalize their feelings. In this creative process it becomes possible to find the metaphoric connections between the expressive movement and the familiar patterns in their lives that may underlie the eating disorder. DMT helps people understand how their feelings are given form through their actions, and empowers them to take risks. Healing cannot fully take place unless they are able to challenge themselves to live in their bodies, a central component of their body image. DMT provides a structure so that this can occur.

DMT is used with people with eating disorders in psychiatric hospitals, residential treatment programs, partial hospitalization and outpatient programs, as well as in private practices all around the world.

DMT & Eating Disorders Resources

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

-American Dance Therapy Association

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