What is Dance/Movement Therapy (DMT)?
1) DMT is a form of psychotherapy that incorporates the use of movement & dance into the therapy session.
2) It is the psychotherapeutic use of movement as a process, which furthers the emotional, social, cognitive, & physical integration of the individual. DMTs have an in-depth understanding of how the body and mind interact in health and in illness.
3) DMT is not about teaching a dance technique of a specific way of moving; instead our work
   • Stresses the interrelatedness of the mind, body and spirit
   • Begins where the client is functioning and incorporates the client’s strengths
   • Empowers by making the client an active partner, a collaborator in his or her own healing process
   • Provides a safe container for strong emotional content, supporting an exploration of one’s strengths & healthy potential.
   • Organizes internal sensations & emotions: Therapists observe movement behavior & develop movement structures & experiences to organize & contain emotional material.

Why is Dance/Movement Therapy therapeutic?
1) DMT espouses a holistic view of the individual, recognizing the complex interaction between the mind & the body. Our first sense of ourselves is a body sense, which remains core to our self-identity. All mental health issues have a body component & DMTs holistic approach incorporates this into treatment.
2) Adaptive communication & expressive behaviors are all considered in treatment. Body movement, artwork, & verbal expression provide a means for assessment & intervention.
3) Movement is used as a vehicle for self-expression, insight & behavioral change in a safe, affirming, non-judgmental environment.
4) DMT helps to develop strengths such as: healthy self-image, anger management, creativity & playfulness, positive problem solving, effective communication skills, relationship building, & emotional stability.

Training and credentials of Dance/Movement Therapists
1) DMTs are Master’s level prepared therapists. There are several programs throughout the country that offer training programs that have been approved by the American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA.) These programs are regularly reviewed and meet standards set by the ADTA.
2) DMTs have two levels of registry
   • **R-DMT**: REGISTERED DANCE/MOVEMENT THERAPISTS have a Masters Degree, which includes 700 hours of supervised clinical internship & are fully qualified to work in a professional treatment system.
   • **BC-DMT**: BOARD CERTIFIED DANCE/MOVEMENT THERAPIST have completed 3,640 hours of supervised clinical work in an agency & are fully qualified to teach, provide supervision, & engage in private practice. 100 hours of Continuing Education every 5 years is required to maintain the BC-DMT.
3) **DTRL**: DANCE THERAPISTS REGISTERED AND LICENSED The state of Wisconsin provides state licensure for therapists with the BC-DMT level of registry to practice psychotherapy through our profession.

Populations we work with
1) DMT is an effective treatment for people with psychological, social, developmental, medical, & physical problems. We work with issues such as depression, anxiety, abuse, anger, attachment, eating disorders, self-mutilation, bi-polar, ADHD, ADD, obsessive-compulsive, schizo-affective, psychosis, autism, etc.
2) DMT is used with people of all ages, races, & ethnic backgrounds in individual, couples, family, & group therapy formats.
3) DMT is practiced in psychiatric hospitals, day treatment programs, jails, public schools, senior centers, medical & educational settings, outpatient therapy clinics, nursing homes, day care, disease prevention & health promotion programs.
CULTIVATING SAFE SPACES TO DO TRAUMA WORK

Caution! Please be aware that these are techniques primarily used by professionals with training in the use of the body in psychotherapy. Please proceed with caution as you develop your own body skills. If you are not comfortable doing these techniques yourself you should not do them with your clients. These techniques are not meant to be used at once.

External safe place – Clients cannot be expected to do internal work until they have an external sense of safety. Allow clients to placing themselves in the room where they need to be and then place you where they want you in relationship to themselves.

Tracking – This is a non-judgmental process that helps clients become oriented in the present and in their body. Help clients track body sensations by asking them to pay attention to their breath, areas of tension, comfort and discomfort, temperature (what feels warm/what feels cold) images that might arise and other physical sensations. Tracking exercises can be verbally led by the therapist moving from the feet on up or the head on down the body.

Grounding – If seated have clients feel what parts of their body are connected to the chair and the floor. Can they feel their back against the back of the chair, their feet on the floor, etc. Arms can push against the chair in different places and feel the effect on the rest of the body. Feet can push against the floor. Gentle rocking that puts weight on the feet and might eventually lead to standing. Once standing, have clients notice if they are locking their knees or if they are slightly bent. Have them explore shifting weight from one leg to another feeling their feet against the floor. Have them put one leg in front of the other and explore shifting weight back and forth as if they were rocking again feeling the ground under their feet. Keeping their feet in the front-back position, with knees bent, you can eventually have clients push against the wall with their hands. With children you can have them push against you in order to feel their strength. Children also enjoy stomping around the room … this is a wonderful way to get them grounded with out them knowing it! Make sure you do not overwhelm them. The goal is for them to connect into their strength.

Body and feeling connections – Once your clients start to feel safe exploring space, body awareness, and feeling the ground beneath them, you may be able to move into developing a relationship between feelings and body sensations. Go slowly! Feel free to use only part of a technique during a session. Use your and your client's comfort level as your guide. Ask them what is going on, if you are moving too quickly, etc. Sometimes you need to leave the bodywork and use verbalization and artwork for a time. Abused clients can take a long time to connect to their body.

Body-scan – This can be used as a warm-up to ground the body. In an organized fashion either move from the feet up or the head down. Tell clients that their eyes can be open or closed whatever feels the most comfortable. Start by saying something like, “We are going to pay attention to what is happening in the body right now. Bring your attention into your scalp, notice
if you have any sensation, any thoughts, feelings, etc. Take a minute to notice. (Wait a short time.) Now move to the back of the head, etc. Gradually move through the entire body.

**Emotional arousal** – When you notice clients becoming aroused or they report to you feeling overwhelmed you can slow things down by utilizing the tracking, grounding and body scan listed above. You can help move the feeling to the external by asking the client to imagine a place or space they would like to put their anger, sadness, memory, etc. This could be an object, a box, a place in nature, the therapy room itself.

**Breathing** – Helping your client be aware of their breath, be it held or flowing is critical to self-awareness. Be careful about trying to direct your clients’ breathing, for example asking them to breathe more deeply. Breathing is very connected to emotion and defenses. Clients need to have control over the speed that these things are explored.

**Self-Touch** – Self guided touch can allow clients to feel their body boundary (skin) in the present. This can be a powerful way to help your clients move from the outside of their body to their inner sensations. They can experiment with rhythmic patting or rubbing during a body-scan. After clients have had several experiences doing the scan without touch and have learned to recognize body sensations without becoming overwhelmed. Self-touch can be grounding and nurturing. Most clients protect themselves if feelings are too overwhelming by disassociating. None-the-less, go slowly. Different types of self-touch such as patting, hugging, rubbing or caressing themselves can be explored regarding feeling connections. Some people prefer firm touch and find gentle caressing to be distressing or visa-versa. This is true in the general population, not just with survivors.

**Self-Talk** – Self-talk is a very powerful technique for dealing with anxiety, or overwhelming feelings. Start by having the client become aware of the messages s/he is saying inside his or her head. Discuss whether these messages are positive or negative. Have your clients brainstorm positive messages they can say to themselves while doing self touch or during the body scan exercise. Clients can then explore self talk messages they might use outside the session.
EXPERIENCES FOR ESTABLISHING BOUNDARIES

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APPROACHING PERSONAL SPACE:

**Variation I:** Have clients pair up. Have one partner approach the other in different ways, guided by the client being approached, to see how far away or close they want others. As soon as the client notices that they are becoming dysregulated (notices physical sensations, thoughts etc.) have them stop the person that is moving towards them. Have them check in with themselves, noticing anything that is happening for them. These approaches can vary in speed, level (walking, crawling), direction (front, side, back), direction (straight on or meandering), etc. The client being approached gets to tell the client approaching how to come towards them. Give time to experiment with several ways. Switch roles so everyone gets to approach and be approached. Leave time to process how the different approaches felt.

**Variation II: Assertion** can be developed while learning to protect one’s space. One of the pair approaches their partner. The partner's job is to say "Stop" or "No" in an assertive voice. Before doing this exercise with partners have the whole group practice saying "Stop" or "No" with appropriate facial expression and strong body stance.

**STREAMERS:** Using crepe paper streamers, have clients outline their personal space. How big a space do they want around themselves? If you do this on different days the size may vary. How are they most comfortable allowing you or someone else to enter their space? Is there a way two spaces could share a boundary with each other? If not, respect that need. How could two people sharing a boundary go back and forth between spaces with both parties feeling comfortable?

**NESTS:** With children, safe spaces can be used as a nest and they can hatch out as different creatures, born in a comfortable, safe place. They can venture out into general space and return back to their nest. They can experiment with visiting other’s nests, getting permission first. They can work on social skills as these different creatures. And work on respecting others’ boundaries.
Prevention Interventions

1. “Stop!” or “No!”
2. “Hey! Look…”
3. Compliment
4. Oh NO! I’m late
5. Asking for help
6. Act friendly
7. Join other people (move away from bully)
8. Making a joke
9. Broken record
10. Ignoring
11. Distracting
12. Changing the subject
13. Being silly or goofy
14. Getting help from a grown-up

More for Emergencies
15. Acting sick
16. Acting crazy
17. Wetting your pants
18. Pretend to throw up
19. Yell a description of attacker as loud as you can
20. “Help!” or “Fire!”
21. Doing what the attacker demands until you can get help
22. Calling 911
SPACE ISSUES: MAINTAINING SPACE – DECREASING SPATIAL INTRUSION

Space rules: No sharing space bubbles without permission- Use words like My Space-Your Space, I need more space please, Respect other people’s spatial needs, Use Self-talk messages about respecting space to keep peace

1. Define area for moving in –walking. Make space to move in smaller and then even smaller.
   - What are different movements needed for smaller and smaller spaces e.g. smaller steps, body parts closer to body, slower speed, more weaving, more visual attention.
   - How do you sense a space is getting too crowded and what can you do then - e.g. leave that space and come back later, see if space available can be increased.

2. Review the rules for moving in large space vs. small space. Play with maintaining different size space bubbles with different movement challenges – decide what size space bubble to be maintained before each movement challenge.
   - Start children on their feet walking, then allow skipping, hopping or galloping, then decide if there is room for running or not. Follow this with different movement challenges (good for following directions too) such as travel with one hand and one foot off the floor, no feet touching the ground. Have children come up with parameters that allow choices.

3. Respecting spatial needs of others - Connection vs. Disconnection
   - Explore approaching others in different ways. Use crepe paper & have the children define the size space bubble they want. Have the child stand in the space and direct a partner to approach in different ways – walking, running, crawling, from the front, behind, side, etc. Have partner walk around the perimeter of the space – have them ask if they can come in or not and where they can be in that person’s space.
   - Switch roles – discuss how different people felt

4. Respecting spatial needs of others - Connection vs. Disconnection
   - Have children explore non-verbal ways people signal they want you with them or they don’t want you. Initially just as they approach but work toward being together and how you might signal that you want to end your connection for the time being.
   - Ask people to demonstrate some of the ways they can think of.
   - Evaluate respectful vs. disrespectful ways and how each of these ways feels. What do you do if someone indicates they don’t want to be with you?
     - Remember self-talk and self-calming techniques
     - Make a plan for other things you could do or other people to be with
   - If it’s a friend, how might express your feelings?
   - What are the signs that tell you that you are close enough or too close?

5. Maintaining space while sitting or working on things on the ground like building with blocks or Legos, or working at a table with others
   - See if group can sit down and maintain elbow-room, balancing the use of space.
   - Have group practice changing positions without invading anyone’s space – not getting up and moving to a new space but staying put and fidgeting safely
   - See if people can get up and leave space and rejoin without invading space

6. Maintaining space while sitting or working on things on the ground like building with blocks or Legos, or working at a table with others
   - Actually set up scenarios such as working on a block structure. Have children practice moving around each other – ask them how to guess how many people can fit in that space
   - This can be done as situations are happening during a day

Disarming the Playground: Violence Prevention Through Movement & Pro-Social Skills by Rena Kornblum rbkornbl@wisc.edu
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IMPULSE CONTROL - SELF-SETTLING – POSITIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

1. IMPULSE CONTROL OR PUTTING ON THE BRAKES, BEING ABLE TO STOP YOUR BODY
   A. TRAVELING BRAKES Set up lines w/cloth or tape about 1 foot from the wall on either side across room.
      Have children, a few at a time run full tilt and try to stop on the line, not touching the wall
      Ask the children to figure out what technique they used to stop; jump, pushing feet into ground, twisting, etc.
      Have them try several times and try different techniques. Goal is to feel the need to add tension in the body to
      stop forward direction.
      If there’s time have them try different ways of moving across the room and stopping, cartwheels, rolling, etc.
   B. BRAKES IN PLACE Have children find a spot in the room or in the area you are working in where they
      have a large space bubble (important because they are going to move wildly)
      Have them feel their feet on the ground and pretend they are glued there
      Have them move wildly in place & then freeze in whatever position they are in when you say STOP or BRAKES
      Have them hold the position for a while to feel that stopping requires adding tension.
   C. PLAY WITH CONCEPT OF BRAKES Make a game where at any time the adults can say BRAKES
      and everyone has to freeze and stop what they are doing until you say release at which time they take some
      slow breaths to release the added tension and go on with what they were doing.

2. 4 B’s BRAKES, BREATHING, BRAINS, BODY
   A. BREATHING: Explore the difference between abdominal and chest breathing. Have the children lay down
      with hands on the stomach & try to breath in a relaxed way. Check each child. If they are having trouble put
      your hands on their hands & gently push down as they exhale. This usually activates them to breathe against
      the pressure & activate the abdominal muscles. When they can do it lying down, have them try it standing up
      & then sitting. You could have them sit crossed legged & close their eyes and meditate, keeping focus on the
      breath & feeling their bottom on the floor (grounding).
   B. TWO B’S: Now incorporate brakes from above with abdominal breathing in the playing
      with brakes activity. And start them doing the 2 B’s with arm brakes and breathing from the handout.
      Ask for & reward them for catching themselves & yelling in their head STOP, BREATHE & then doing it.
   C. SELF TALK: Do the ‘I am weak – I am strong’ activity with the arm. Talk about self-talk, introduce the
      BRAINS – talk about using it to calm down in other situations brainstorming other places to use it & what they
      might say. Encourage placing hands on the head because it reminds and stimulates them to use the brain.
      Make a Brain game – at any moment of tension or difficulty or even in a good moments add BRAINS to
      STOP and BREATHE – Use this for calming AND for self-control in tense situations
   D. BODY: All four B’s See Handout
   E. FIFTH B – BREAK (For anger) – STOP, BREATHE, THINK ABOUT SOMETHING ELSE
   F. PRACTICE: Do exciting activity and practice four Bs, Pretend you are annoyed or angry practice Fifth B

3. POSITIVE PROBLEM SOLVING: Incorporating Self Talk into problem situations See handout. This is more of
   a talking and role play situation but again out of no where you can yell BRAINS and they have to come up with
   something to say to themselves about whatever they are doing at the moment. Then discuss some of the situations.

4. OPPOSITE MIRRORING: Pair children have them start with mirroring, watching closely enough that as you walk
   by you cannot tell who is leading.
   Then have the children do the opposite of what their partner is doing. Do not follow their partner. Then try it in groups
   of three or four. Play with this idea – two children mirroring with one doing the opposite. Have discussions about it.
   Bring up the idea of resisting temptation to follow bad ideas and how it is hard and might feel bad in a social situation to
   not follow someone who is strong or pushing at you to follow.
ROLE OF THE WITNESS
Help Stop Bullying without Getting Hurt

- Stand up to the bully and say stop in an assertive manner
- Say “Hey Look” - walk away w/target to draw away attention
- Compliment the bully as a way to side track the aggression
- Change the mood of the interaction through humor
- Ask the bully to help you with something as a way to distract
- Remind target frantically that they are late and take them quickly away w/you
- Change the mood by talking about something else with the bully
- Join other people and bring the target away with you
- Help the target ignore the bully by engaging the target in friendly conversation
- Support the target by disagreeing with the bully
- Support the target later in private
- Get help by gathering other peers in support or by getting an adult
- Call 911 if its serious
- Yell or help the target yell “FIRE!” or “Help!” etc.
- (Add own ideas)
SAFE SPACES IN THERAPY SETTINGS
EMPOWERING CLIENTS

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PROPS: Have pillows, beanbag cushions, stuffed animals and different scarves or pieces of fabric with different textures available. Clay, drawing material and other expressive props such as puppets, music, musical instruments, dolls, etc. are good to have around. Depending upon your client/s, these props may need to be out of sight so as not to be over stimulating.

SPACE: Allow client/s to experiment with where they feel most comfortable, e.g. against a wall or in the middle of the room, with a lot of space or a little space around them, with others across from them or to the side, on the ground or on a chair, etc.

Ask your client/s where you, the therapist, should be. Allow them to experiment with placing you in different places in reference to them. Have them check in with themselves to see how these different spatial relationships feel.

SAFE SPACES: Have client/s draw or imagine what a safe space would be like for them; large or small room, windows or not, doors or not, how many, and where in relation to the client. What/who would be in the space; chairs, cushions, other objects? Where would the space be; in their homes, the woods, a meadow in the mountains, etc? Where would they be in the space? You can draw or sketch under the client’s direction or the client/s can draw and then process with you.

If your client/s could make your therapy room feel safe how would they arrange things and people? Give them a chance to try doing it.

Allow client/s time to make a safe space using props in your room. They can decorate it; make it intricate with pillows or tables defining boundaries. Allow enough time for the client to experiment with different arrangements and still have time to indulge in being in their space. This can be a wonderful place to have the therapy session.

GROUP SAFE SPACE: With groups, creating a communal safe space can also be a way to create trust in the group. This activity can also provide the therapist with insight into the group dynamics. Sharing each person’s perspective on the process of making the space and how each person feels about the completed space can follow up this activity. Are there places in the space someone feels uncomfortable, most comfortable, ownership over, etc?

Developed by Rena Kornblum, Robyn Lending Halsten and Grace Valentine for Hancock Center for Dance/Movement Therapy, 16 N. Hancock St. Madison, WI 53703 www.hancockcenter.net 608-251-0908
THE FIFTH B
BREAK
CONTROLLING YOUR ANGER OR ANXIETY

BREAK THROUGH YOUR ANGER OR ANXIETY
BY

YELLING STOP to yourself inside your head

*First sign language for STOP*, which consists of extending your left hand, palm upward and sharply bringing your open right hand down to your left hand at a right angle (This is the definition from a sign dictionary). I don’t emphasize which hand (especially since I am left handed and use the opposite hands for all signs) I use the words “the side of one hand hits the palm of the other hand with a staccato motion. The children I work with have learned about staccato quality in Music class. They call it Stanley Staccato so I refer to that. The staccato action goes along with shouting STOP in their head.

TAKE A BREAK FROM WHAT IS BOtherING YOU
BY MAKING YOURSELF

TURN YOUR MIND to something PLEASANT or PEACEFUL

- The second action uses the hand gesture for meditation. Extend your fingers on each hand and then join your thumb and forefinger to make a circle. When you make this circle the other fingers curve slightly. If the children are sitting I have them put their hands on their knees, palms facing up, as one would do in meditation. If they are standing they just keep their hands close to them. This action signifies thinking about something peaceful or enjoyable. I frequently ask the children when they are in a good mood to think of a few things that they could turn their mind to when they do the fifth B.

My experience so far is that some people will do all five B’s and some will just do the fifth B when they are getting angry. Children who anger quickly find the fifth B alone to be a one-step technique for getting and staying calm. Of course this is best practiced over small things that are bothering you before you try to use it on something major.
Violence Prevention Through Movement Curriculum

I. Spatial Awareness and Self Control - Including the 4 B’s of Self-Settling

A. SPACE

1. Increase ability to maintain one’s own space without intruding on others
   - Includes in-school behavior - lining up, walking in the hallways, sitting together
   - Includes recess and free play situations
   - Includes knowledge of different types of movement needed in small contained spaces versus larger areas
2. Learn appropriate social spacing for different situations
   - With strangers
   - With authority figures such as teachers, principals, etc.
   - With friends and family
3. Learn that no one’s space should be intruded upon without permission
4. Increase awareness of and respect for other people’s spatial needs

B. SELF-SETTLING OR ENERGY MODULATION

1. Increase ability to modulate energy level
   - Develop awareness of body sensations related to calm alert energy, high-energy in-control and high-energy out-of-control
   - Increase ability to maintain calm alert energy
   - Increase ability to calm down when agitated or over-excited
2. Learn specific techniques for self-settling, practice using them when cued by an adult and then at one’s own initiation
   - Abdominal Breathing
   - The “4 B’s of Self-Settling
   - Other relaxation techniques; such imagery or self-talk
3. Learn techniques for speeding one’s self up when sluggish
4. Increase impulse-control

II. Awareness of and Response to Dangerous or Tense Situations
   Including the ABC’s of Safe Ignoring

A. EARLY WARNING SIGNS

1. Develop the ability to scan the environment
   - Increase awareness of others in order to check for safety
2. Develop awareness of one’s own Early Warning Signs that alert one to danger
3. Increase ability to evaluate situations after alerted to determine if action is needed
4. Learn to refocus on the task at hand when things are safe
5. Learn to ignore distractions and provocations that do not interfere with one’s safety.
6. Develop specific ignoring strategies using the “ABC’s of safe ignoring”.
7. Connect the ability to ignore with the ability to resist temptation
8. Increase attention span; Learn the “4 C’s of controlled Concentration”
B. EARN PRO-ACTIVE STRATEGIES FOR HANDLING CONFLICT, TEASING AND AGGRESSION

1. Learn appropriate assertion, include ability to show strength in body, voice and face
2. Learn ways to redirect aggression & handle teasing through other pro-active strategies

III. Managing Anger and Building Empathy - Including Positive Problem Solving Techniques and How to Cool Down Burning Hot Anger

A. BUILDING EMPATHY

1. Expressing and Interpreting feelings accurately
2. Moving with others to gain acceptance and connection - Sharing leadership
   - Matching intensity and rhythms - Exploring other people’s style of movement
3. How you show you care

B. POSITIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

1. Practice handling minor conflicts utilizing strategies from self-control unit
2. Learn and practice how to join a group, how to compromise, how to have some frustration & still cope, etc. (basic social skills plus self-calming & self-talk strategies)

C. MANAGING ANGER

1. Learning anger triggers and Learn body cues related to anger building
2. Develop list of anger release activities for different situations
3. Learn the 5th B
4. Learn other techniques to help settled anger before burning hot
5. Practice showing frustration and anger in safe ways

IV. Other Issues

A. RESISTING PEER PRESSURE: RESISTING TemptATION TO USE WEAPONS

1. Develop safety plan regarding guns & weapons – relate this topic to resisting temptation.
2. Increase prolonged ignoring or delayed gratification - what it feels like – how one does it
3. Explore relationship of resisting peer pressure to alienation- develop coping strategies

B. DECREASING ALIENATION

1. Increase awareness of isolation – what it feels like – empathy for those who are isolated
2. Explore what it feels like being outside a group & Learn the four steps to joining a group
3. Develop a list of positive options that can be done alone
4. Increase acceptance of others

C. DECREASING PREJUDICE

1. Explore things that make us different and things that make us the same: Increase awareness of different cultures and strengths among different groups.
2. How do you approach someone different, set boundaries, make friends, be safe?
3. Connect prejudice to isolation, anger - explore solutions – connections vs. disconnections

D. DEAL WITH OTHER ISSUES THAT COME UP SUCH AS SCHOOL BUS PROBLEMS