

NCDT Mar 23 '21
Dance/Movement
Therapy for Children

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The Moving Child Films I, II, III

Honouring the lineage

- DMT pioneers, traditional cultures and medicine peoples working with movement for millenia.
- Teachers include: Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen, Susan Aposhyan, Christine Caldwell, Ryan Kennedy, Annie Brook, Martha Eddy, Kalila Homann, Myrna Martin, Marie-Jose Dhaese, Shirley Turcotte and many others.
- Honouring diverse ways of knowing, diverse cultural experience.

Diversity and **Blindspots**

- I am a white western woman of privilege, whose views and experience may not reflect that of all cultures, subcultures, ages, sexes, gender identities & abilities.
- I wish to acknowledge that although some of my teachers have come from different cultural heritages and identities, the majority of these teachers are white heterosexual women, and so blind spots exist in this knowledge-base.
- I am happy to receive your questions in the last half hour of our time together today. You can also feel free to email me at hanakameaexpressivearts@gmail.com

Honouring the psychological researchers and theorists:

- **Development of the Embodied Self** (Core Self) Daniel Stern's Interpersonal World of the Infant (1985), Forms of Vitality (2010).
- **Development and Neural Integration, Mindfulness:** Daniel Siegel (various)
- **NonVerbal Communication:** From Darwin through present time: numerous
- **Neurobiology and efficacy of healing trauma in the body:** Peter Levine, Pat Ogden, Kekuni Minton, Christine Caldwell, Susan Aposhyan, Janine Fischer, Bessel Van Der Kolk and many other therapists in the field of Somatic Psychology, and the work of Child Psychiatrist Dr. Bruce Perry.
- **Attachment:** J. Bowlby, M. Ainsworth, B. Beebe, E. Tronick, C. Trevarthen etc
- **Dance Therapy Journals and Research:** American Journal of Dance Therapy, Body Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy, The Arts in Psychotherapy among others.

Workshop Agenda

- **Introduction** through children moving imagery: what do we notice?
- **Movement Warm-Up:** Where do we begin in our embodiment?
Imprints and Patterns shape who we become.
- **Movement Explorations:** Developmental Movement, and Being the Elements
- **Developmental Needs:** How is movement in DMT meeting developmental needs physically, emotionally, socially and mentally?
- **Film Clips/Case Studies:** The Moving Child Film clips.
- **Final Dance:** Animals....say goodbye through our animal body!
- **Question and Answer** discussion

Children moving...

What do we notice?

















Movement Warm-Up

- Where do we begin in our embodiment? **Imprints and Patterns** shape who we become.
- Always our **movement develops in relationship** with our environment, our mother and other caregivers, our siblings, family, cultures and...
- Let's begin in one **basic movement pattern** which is the **opening and closing of our body** in relationship to our breath and other internal rhythms we sense, being **moved by desire**. This can be very regulating as this pattern engages primitive reflexes. Sensing our body moving as a unit, as a whole, can also be very “organizing” neurologically.
- Moving towards and away...growing and shrinking, expanding and contracting, exerting and recuperating, we are always in a rhythmic flow and moving between **polarities as a moving body**.
- **Music cue: Caeli et Terra's BioMusique Album: song “10,000 Steps”**

Moving for Self-Regulation

- Rhythms and Rhythmic Movement
- Breath flow and new patterns
- Senses: 27 different senses in humans!
- Grounding, Centering in the body: weight, finding the floor, mid-line
- Being in relationship; activating social engagement brain – ventral Vagus Nerve pathway
- Using the voice: sounds and words
- Basic actions such as Yielding, Pushing, Reaching, Pulling/Grasping...
- Engaging mindfulness and curiosity

Movement Exploration #2

Developmental Movements (continuing our Opening and Closing of the Body using different cues and support in the body): Support our **Stability and Mobility**

We will move from our Core-Distal, Spinal, Upper-Lower, Homo-Lateral and Contra-Lateral connections in the body.



Movement Exploration #3

Dancing (becoming) the **Elements**

- Can help us to expand our expressive movement qualities, learn how to self-regulate when energies move faster, or slower, or with more intensity, and can support working with anxiety/phobias as one example of clinical app)

Rock, Water, Wind, Storm, Fire, Lightning, Earth with its growing grass, flowers or trees...Wide Sky, then you tuck yourself into a cave for some deep rest and shelter.

Adding sound is fun. Dancing with someone else is fun. Adding props is fun.

We can name or solicit imagery and story in DMT to invite more movement to emerge, more dynamic life-force energy to express.

Music cue: Lord of the Rings – **Middle Earth Music and Ambience**

Movement supports development



Developmental Needs

- How is movement used in DMT to meet developmental needs: physically, emotionally, socially and mentally ?



Needs

- “*Man moves in order to satisfy a need*” – Rudolph Laban
- Movement satisfies certain needs we have as human beings living in bodies, and needs are also expressed through our moving body.
- Take a moment to think some of the many needs we have, and especially as children?

Basic needs in children

- **Attachment/Bonding: felt sense of trust, belonging & connection**
- **Nourishment: physically and emotionally**
- **Movement itself! To process, to “motor out” after sensory input, and by moving be able to cope with the child’s environment**
- **Soothing (co and self regulation): achieving homeostasis**
- **Bio-Sexual development: Tension-Flow Rhythms of KMP**
- **Communication: nonverbal and verbal and to be understood**
- **Self-Expression, Play, Creativity**
- **Sense of Agency & Power**
- **To be Seen/Attention/Acknowledgement**
- **To develop skills: physically, emotionally, socially, mentally**

Film Clips of BC-DMTs from **The Moving Child I**

- Rena Kornblum's Disarming the Playground program (normal neurotic children, some with special needs)
- Dr. Charne Furcron and Laurie Jones (Moving in the Spirit segment)

Let us watch for **needs being met through dance/ movement therapy**, in these group DMT case studies.

Moving for Physical Development

- The integration of the **Primitive Reflexes** (and equilibrium responses and righting reactions etc) which are the “*alphabet of movement*” –Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen
- The **Developmental Movement Patterns** which provide a scaffolding for body connectivity, coordination and organization of all future movement. These patterns rely on and develop the Basic Actions of **Yield, Push, Reach, Grasp/Pull and support many qualities of movement.**
- The **Rhythms** of our bio-sexual development aged 0-6 (in the Kestenberg Movement Profile these are known as the Tension-Flow Rhythms)
- **Movement Development:** having access to a range of both functional and expressive movement elements and qualities. This goes beyond typical motor developmental stages. This is the continuum of movement repertoire that we want to expand through DMT and that a few movement analysis systems expand upon and guide us by.
- Building our **Interoception ability**, and strengthening other sense pathways through the brain and body. Strengthening afferent nerves.

The Moving Child III: Developmental Movement in the First Year of Life



Moving for Emotional Development

- **Feelings are designed to MOVE:** this is our neurobiology: so how do we support this in a way that does not overwhelm our organism, but instead feels satisfying, manageable? We engage the connection to the moving or still body.
- **Movement elicits FEELINGS** through sensorimotor feedback loops in the brain-body. Movement generates sensations, perceptions, images, memories and emotions.
- **Feelings need the container of the body for expression:** the shaping of our movement provides a container for the movement elements that feelings are composed of (relationship to Flow, Weight, Space, Time). Remember “Shape your Feeling” in the Moving Spirit film clip?

Exploring/engaging different ways of moving expands movement repertoire, which then expands our behavioral/emotional repertoire



Moving for Social Development

- This is clear in those short scenes from the film, as we see children **engage socially using movement as the connector**. **Rena's question was: How can we support each other using stretch-bands?**
- Felt sense of **boundaries** and justice as experienced through the body, important for relationship. (Rena)
- We **shape our bodies** to communicate that we are in relationship.
- We can express giving, taking, and sharing of weight/support, being in reciprocity and **interactional synchrony** through dancing as a social skill.



Moving for **Self-Expression** and **Mental** Development

To bring the inner experience to the outer world, and to be received and celebrated in that self-expression. – Hana Kamea Kemble

- Any movement can be self-expressive and movements have inherent meaning for each person.
- Props can be helpful for soliciting more self-expression, as can the level/quality of attunement, accurate reflection and embodied engagement of the therapist when with the client.
- Self-expression can be supported with words, with drawing, with music, with dance ideas or scores, with imagery, stories, and much more. It is tender and must be met with compassion.
- How we move links to how we think: cognitive capacities. We are also always engaging reflection and integration of thinking within the DMT process.



Themes with **parents**

- Dance/Movement Therapy uses many tools to support parents and better **secure attachment**. This begins with the parent connecting with/**regulating his/her/their own body-mind**. We have a case study of this in the film.
- We can coach for ways to secure bonding and the dance of attachment: body to body, eye contact, touch, massage, attuning through sound, moving in rhythmic synchrony, encouraging mirroring, expressing love through the body, self-attachment movement sequences, push-pull and basic movement actions that can help express some of the challenges of relationship (“creative opposition”).
- Teaching about **mis-matching movement qualities**: ex. Child moving in a Decelerating (Sustained) relationship to time while the parent is moving in a Accelerating (Quickening) relationship to time. This creates more understanding of clashes and needs.

Accurate Reflection

using Attunement/Mirroring

Non-Verbal

Reflecting back to child:

- Shape of body, gesture, timing, use of space, rhythm, movement patterns, use of body parts, affect/emotion, muscle tone, eye contact, energy/intensity level, touch etc.

Verbal

Reflecting back to child:

- Sounds and words spoken, content, story, questions, voice tone
- “I hear you...” “I see you....” “I feel you..”: pure description.
- Allowing your voice to be playful and truly capture child’s expression.

To end our dance party today

- **Animal Dance:** Make it your own! Music by Hana Kamea song is “I love Animals” off *Be My Mirror* CD
- The music provides a scaffold for you to follow along to if you like: it moves fairly quickly between transitions, you could always pause and slow it down. But it helps us express a little range of dynamic movements....I suggest when you hear Spider, you can come onto your feet and hands on your backside. Enjoy just moving freely during the chorus at different levels in space. At the very end, find a way to say goodbye, without waving your hands, but with your whole or a part of your animal body doing the “talking”.
- There are many animal movement dance songs out there, you can Google or Youtube search for more.

Question and Answer

- What would you like to know about the use of DMT for Children and Families?
- How are you impacted by this presentation and the film clips from The Moving Child Film #1?
- What questions do you have?

Let us dialogue! 😊

For more **information/contact:**

- www.adta.org for information on the field of DMT
- Dance Movement Therapy Association of Canada
- www.themovingchild.com/store
- www.westcoastdmt.com
- Please reach out to us at themovingchild@gmail.com

- **MERCI BEAUCOUP and THANK YOU to Anna and the NCDT! May you continue to move for WellBeing.**