

## Dance/Movement Therapy & Parkinson's Disease



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Dance/movement therapy (DMT) provides a safe and supportive psychological structure for people with Parkinson's disease to express feelings about their disease and their lives: frustrations, joys, anger and laughter. The use of movement as the primary means of communication benefits persons with Parkinson's disease doubly, as "dancing" - an expressive and rhythmic sequencing of motions to music - seems to organize movements, calm dystonia and improve gait and balance.

Psychosocially, the person with Parkinson's benefits from the opportunity within the DMT group to express emotions and connect with others experiencing similar symptoms. Physically, the rhythmic, expressive group movement seems to ameliorate the abnormal postures, spasms and twisting movements of body parts and improves balance, lessening the potential for injurious falls.

Initially acknowledged anecdotally in the research literature of the 1980s, the positive affects of dancing on the physical symptoms of Parkinson's disease have been receiving increasing attention in recent years and latest research supports the inclusion of DMT as an adjunctive therapy.

DMT with individuals with Parkinson's disease is conducted in hospitals, clinics and support groups.

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

*-American Dance Therapy Association*

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