



Stepping Stones In Life  
Therapy Service

"Helping you grow"

## DANCE AND MOVEMENT THERAPY

Dance has been a fundamental part to human life and culture since the time of our earliest ancestors; a form of self-expression, communication and celebration of life and community. However, by the turn of the 20th century, the potential for dance to promote healthy growth and change was also recognised. This recognition came with the development of more expressive and improvisational forms of dance popular at that time, as well as the acceptance of the integral relationship between mind and body.



Dance/movement therapy, or dance therapy is the psychotherapeutic use of movement and dance for emotional, cognitive, social, behavioral and physical conditions. As a form of expressive therapy, it is founded on the basis that movement and emotion are directly related. The ultimate purpose of this form of therapy is to find a healthy balance and sense of wholeness.

Dance/Movement therapy combines the creative process and the study of human movement. This holistic approach draws upon the elements inherent in dance, to restore balance and integration in the areas of physical function, feelings and cognition.

It can release emotional and physical tension and stress and bring healing, a sense of freedom and self-empowerment. Dance/Movement therapy can be used simply to enjoy one's creativity and self-expression and can be quite artistic. Participants can experience the joy of discovering oneself in a new way and the freedom to move with new life, energy and vitality. It is effectively used with many client groups and population. For example:



- With those who are keen to explore their expressiveness
- With elderly populations
- With people with multi-cultural backgrounds
- With people with mental and emotional health issues
- With people with developmental disabilities
- With people with sensory disabilities

Benefits and outcomes of Dance/Movement therapy vary depending on needs and desires of the client. General benefits are self-empowerment, body-mind integration, improved communication and expressive skills, increased sense of well-being and connectedness and physical fitness.

Information from:

Dance Movement Therapy Association of Australia available at <http://www.dtaa.org.au/therapy.htm>,

Life Wellness Network, available at [http://www.wellnessnetwork.com.au/dance\\_therapy](http://www.wellnessnetwork.com.au/dance_therapy)

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