

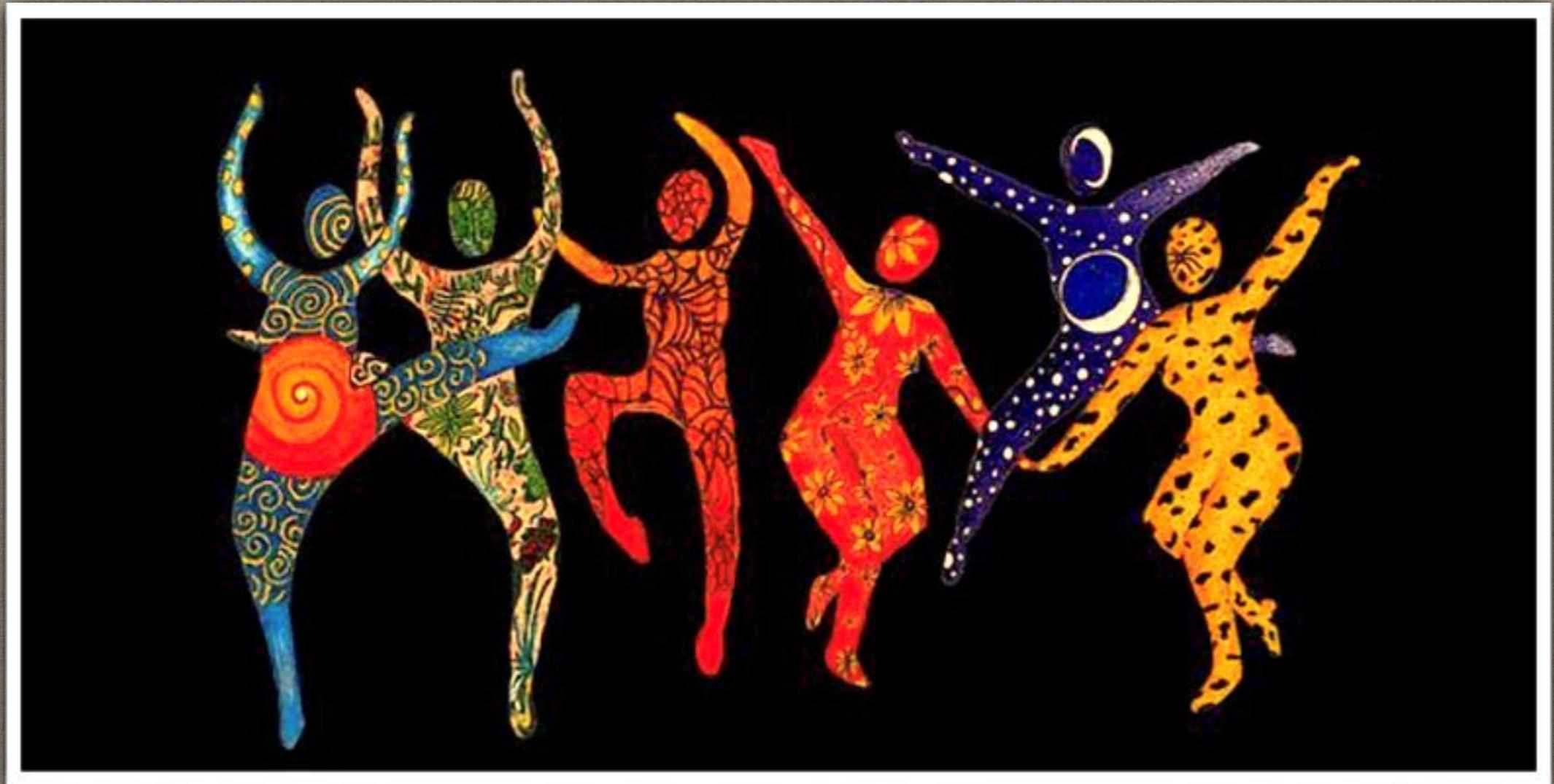
WHEN WORDS FAIL:

MOVING THROUGH EATING DISORDER RECOVERY WITH DANCE/MOVEMENT THERAPY

Concetta Troskie, LPC, R-DMT, RDT
Licensed Professional Counselor, Dance/Movement Therapist
and Drama Therapist
Dallas, Texas

WEBINAR OVERVIEW:

- What is dance/movement therapy (DMT) ?
- Eating Disorders and the Body
- Listening to the Eating Disorder's Unspoken Messages
- Moving away from Isolation and Shame
- Moving towards Wholeness and Freedom



WHAT IS DANCE/MOVEMENT THERAPY?

DANCE/MOVEMENT THERAPY:

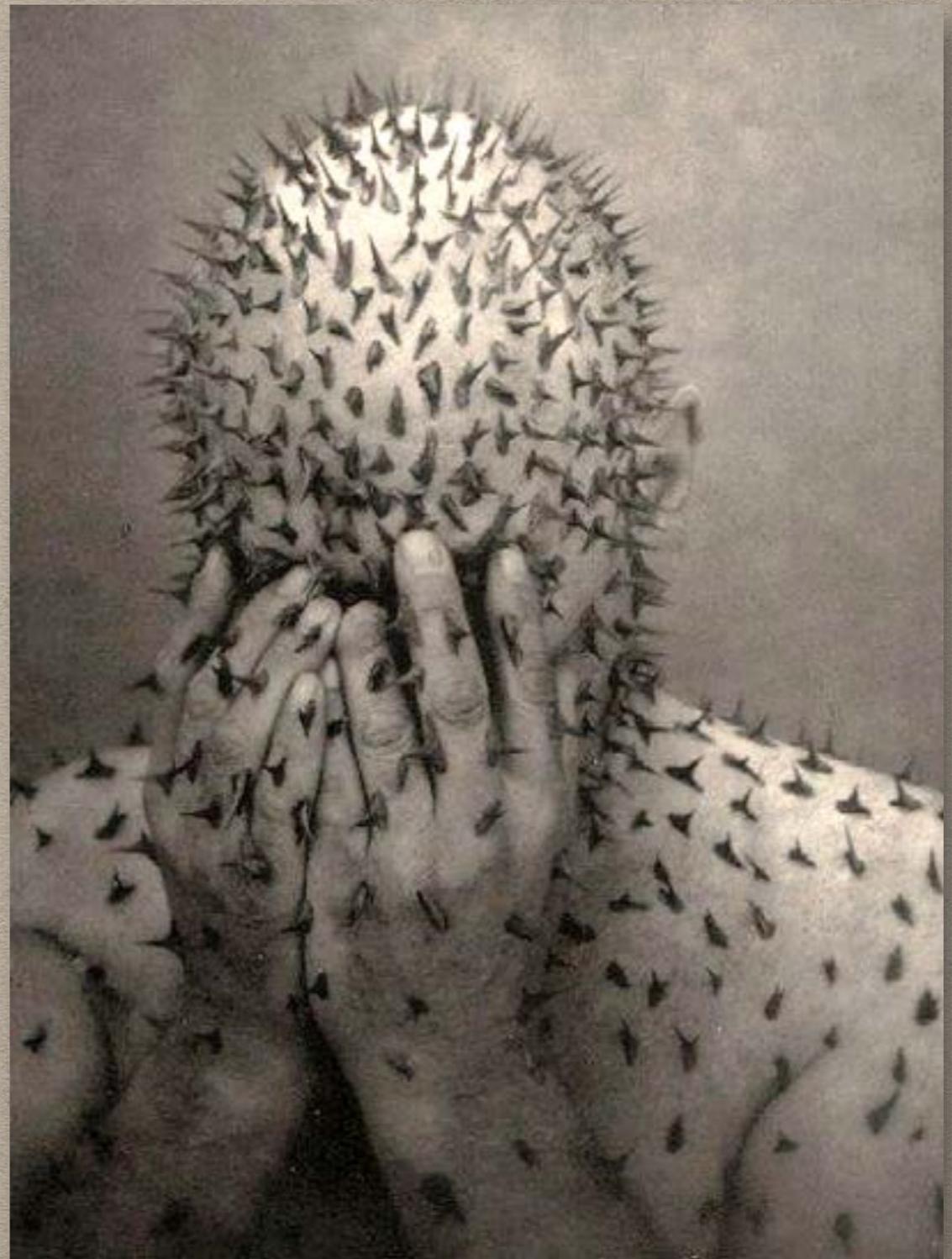
The American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA) defines dance/movement therapy as the psychotherapeutic use of movement to promote emotional, social, cognitive and physical integration of the individual.

Dance/movement therapy is:

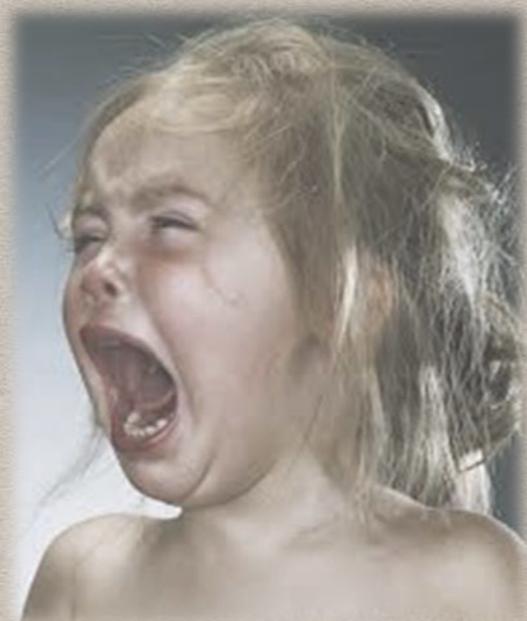
- Focused on movement behavior as it emerges in the therapeutic relationship. Expressive, communicative, and adaptive behaviors are all considered for group and individual treatment. Body movement, as the core component of dance, simultaneously provides the means of assessment and the mode of intervention for dance/movement therapy.

Retrieved from <https://adta.org/faqs/> on April 13, 2018

EATING DISORDERS AND THE BODY



Retrieved from <http://www.woodwardinstitute.com.au/i-am-a-mistake-i-am-flawed-living-with-shame/> on April 13, 2018



PHYSICAL SENSATIONS

“Women who have eating disorders are terrified of their bodies. They withhold love from and try to abandon their bodies because it is in their bodies that emotions reside. To be in contact with their bodies means to be in contact with their feelings, and this can be messy and painful. Emotions...unlike behaviors, they cannot be controlled.”

--Anita Johnston, *Eating in the Light of the Moon*

THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL SENSATIONS

- Reconnecting the body with feeling allows us to express our inner world, and to reconnect to meaning in behavior and relationships.
- Emotions communicate important messages to us through feelings played out in the body.
- Eating disorder encourage dissociation and abandoning the body to avoid feeling pain, denying our experience. We disconnect from ourselves. The connection with the body is lost in the attempt to interrupt the flow of information coming from the perceptive channels. Pain is blocked and so are all other feelings such as anger, fear and so many other affects considered to be negative or dangerous (Lowen, 1990, 1991).
- With eating disorders, emotional expression and connection to physical sensations is limited to a minimally accepted spectrum. Expanding the movement repertoire goes with expanding the range of emotions and encourages full experience of physical sensations.

LISTENING TO THE EATING DISORDER'S UNSPOKEN MESSAGES



Retrieved from <http://www.alexander.ie/audiovideo.html> on April 14, 2018

“When a woman enters the labyrinth of recovery, she follows a twisting, winding path to her center. Finding a sense of who she is as a woman, she exits with a new way of being in the world.”

Anita Johnston, Eating in the Light of the Moon

YOUR EATING DISORDER CAN TEACH YOU (IF YOU KNOW HOW TO LISTEN):

- * Which behaviors and thought patterns are not nourishing
- * Which parts of yourself you have fragmented and blocked
- * What you need to grieve and let go of
- * What is holding you back from embodying your creativity and your authentic self



Retrieved from <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/12/13/arts/dance/13baus.html> on March 1, 2017

MOVING AWAY FROM SHAME

MOVING AWAY FROM SHAME

DMT AND THE BODY:

- Eating Disorders disconnect from the body
- DMT re-connects to the body
- Eating Disorders avoid emotions and felt sensations
- DMT encourages emotions and felt sensations
- Eating Disorders move toward illusion and fragmentation
- DMT moves toward truth and wholeness
- Eating Disorders silence and isolate
- DMT expresses and listens

DMT AND SHAME REDUCTION

- Kinesthetic empathy can make it possible for our defenses to give way. Slowly, our denial and projection can start to decrease as we feel truly “seen”; our defensive intellectualization can turn into embodied wisdom, re-connected to our feelings and emotions.
- We can stop depending on ourselves and our eating disorder alone and begin trusting in human relationships, starting with the relationship to ourselves.
- Our secret shame is challenged through compassionate liberation of trapped thoughts, physical sensations and emotions.
- Our emotional access and emotional flexibility increases.



“By its very nature, an eating disorder blocks patients’ vitality by shutting down their natural life forces. The use of Dance/Movement Therapy provides a powerful medium to reclaim those life forces through both actions and words, often leading to long-lasting changes needed to sustain recovery. Inviting individuals with eating disorders to be the “choreographers” of their own lives, encourages them to discover their unique, natural movements that are so integral to the expression and embodiment of their authentic selves.”

(Kleinman, S., and Hall, T. , 2006)

MOVING TOWARDS WHOLENESS AND FREEDOM



retrieved from <https://adta.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/blog-vil1.jpg> on March 1, 2017

RECONNECTING THE BODY AND THE SELF

- Rhythmic Synchrony: dance/movement therapist's ability to attune to their clients, and also clients' ability to attune to one another.
- Kinesthetic Awareness: increased experience of and awareness of inner feelings and sensations.
- Kinesthetic Empathy: the body-felt understanding of what others are feeling, a "gut-sense."



“IF WE CAN SHARE OUR STORY WITH SOMEONE WHO RESPONDS WITH EMPATHY AND UNDERSTANDING, SHAME CAN'T SURVIVE.”

— BRENÉ BROWN, DARING GREATLY: HOW THE COURAGE TO BE VULNERABLE TRANSFORMS THE WAY WE LIVE, LOVE, PARENT, AND LEAD



*Thank you! Concetta Troskie, LPC, R-DMT, RDT
concetta0101@gmail.com*

Questions?

REFERENCES

- Berrol, C. F. (2006). Neuroscience meets dance/movement therapy: Mirror neurons, the therapeutic process and empathy. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 33(4), 302-315. doi:10.1016/j.aip. 2006.04.001
- Brown, B. (2016). *Daring Greatly: How the Courage to be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead*. London: Penguin Books Ltd.
- Gallese, V., Fadiga, L., Fogassi, L., & Rizzolatti, G. (1996). Action recognition in the premotor cortex. *Brain*, 119(2), 593-609. doi:10.1093/brain/119.2.593
- Homann, K. (2007). Mind in the body: Concepts of neuroscience in dance/movement therapy. In Proceedings of the 42nd annual ADTA conference. *dance/movement therapy: New current, new bridges*, Brooklyn, New York, Septemner (CD-ROM).
- Iacoboni, M. (2009). Imitation, Empathy, and Mirror Neurons. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60(1), 653-670. doi:10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163604
- Iacoboni, M. (2008). *Mirroring people: the science of empathy and how we connect with others* (1st ed.). New York: Ferrar Straus Giroux.
- Johnston, A. (1996). *Eating in the light of the moon*. Carlsbad, CA: Gurze Books.
- Kleinman, S., and Hall, T. (2006). *Dance/Movement Therapy: A Method for Embodying Emotions*. The Renfrew Center Foundation Healing Through Relationship Series: Contributions to Eating Disorder Theory and Treatment Volume 1: Fostering
- Krantz, A. M. (1999). *American Journal of Dance Therapy*, 21(2), 81-103. doi:10.1023/a:1022104603189
- Orgs, G., Dombrowski, J., Heil, M., & Jansen-Osmann, P. (2008). Expertise in dance modulates alphabeta event-related desynchronization during action observation. *European Journal of Neuroscience*, 27(12), 3380-3384. doi:10.1111/j.1460-9568.2008.06271.x
- Rizzolatti, G., & Arbib, M. (1998). Language within our grasp [Electronic version]. *Trends in Neuroscience*, 21, 188–194.
- Ramachandran, V. S. (2002). *Encyclopedia of the human brain*. Amsterdam: Academic Press.
- Siegel, D. J. (1999). *The Developing Mind*. New York: The Guilford Press, p.290.
- Siegel, D. J., & Hartzell, M. (2014). *Parenting from the inside out: how a deeper self-understanding can help you raise children who thrive*. Brunswick, Vic.: Scribe Publications.
- Stern, D. et al. (1998): Non-Interpretative Mechanisms in Psychoanalytical therapy. The “something more” than interpretation. *Int. J. Psycho-Anal*, 79,903