

Dance Therapy as a Useful Occupational Therapy Program

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In the Japanese medical field, dance (such as Rhythmic and Bodywork-Dance) is a part of occupational therapy programs or recreational therapy programs in mental hospitals and institutions for people with dementia. Since the first Rhythmic program was introduced in a mental hospital as recreation, it has developed into an original dance therapy taking elements from traditional performing arts and culture. It has also developed into a group treatment within Occupational Therapy. This is because dance therapy gives feelings of being refreshed, happiness and it energizes. Dance therapy improves the body image and physical strength through practicing aerobics and various kinds of dance moves. Therefore dance therapy is used as a healing program to bringing wellness.

I have been practicing group dance therapy with people who have mental illness or dementia.

Overtime, I noticed how much they changed their attitude from a negative way into a more positive way. Moreover, after each session, patients freely engage in conversation with each other (which they had not done before). They are also more alert and full of life.

I'm going to introduce you to the dance therapy that I've been doing in Japan.

In this workshop you will

- 1) find out what can be developed through dance therapy.
- 2) see a demonstration of imaging and imitating in dance.
- 3) hear the hypothesis on what is happening inside the brain during dance therapy.
- 4) learn the reasons why Group Dance Therapy—especially as practiced in Japan—improves self esteem and communication abilities and
- 5) be introduced to the method of Group Dance Therapy.

This workshop is composed of

- 1) 50 minutes of dance therapy, beginning with chair exercises and progressing to dancing in the upright position and
- 2) 40 minutes lecture.

Let's move our bodies and feel the effects here in Chile!!

* Maximum number of participants is 80.