

HISTORY OF MOVEMENT THERAPIES

EXAMINATION PREPARATION NOTES, 2004

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MARION CHASE

“Grand Dame” of Dance Therapy (1896-1970)

- Pioneer and innovator in dance therapy
- Background as a dancer, performer and choreographer
- Worked with patients in mental hospitals
- Influenced by psychotherapist H. S. Sullivan in the belief that all mentally ill people were unique individuals worthy of respect and empathy.
- Special abilities:
 - She could enter the world of patients she was working with.
 - She developed “kinesthetic empathy”, which was an ability to mirror the meaning a patient’s movement. She found a way to do this with deep respect so it did not mimic patient, but allowed them to see what she saw.
 - Chase was aware of her own proprioceptive responses and used this awareness to initiate movement responses with her patients.
 - She could use many tools to help her patients: role play, mime, movement, music, rhythm
- Much of her work was in groups, but she also worked with individuals
- Four Principles she used:
 - First Principle: Body Action—(a)distortion of body and function are responses to conflict and pain (b) dance relates to emotion and reintegration of emotions(c) close relationship between integration of postural changes and shift of psychic attitudes
Results of attending to Body Action:
 - *create realistic body image
 - *activate and integrate body parts
 - *reconstruct postural pattern
 - *awareness of inner sensations
 - *mobilize energy
 - *mastery and control of movements
 - *expand expressive range
 - Second Principle: Symbolism or non-verbal expression
Results of attending to this principle:
 - *integrate words, experience and action
 - * externalize inner thoughts and feelings
 - * expand symbolic responses
 - *resolve conflict through action
 - *gain insights
 - Third Principle: Therapeutic Relationship-mirror what is seen with empathy.
Results of attending to this principle:
 - *establish own identity
 - *develop trust
 - *foster independence

- *recreate social awareness
- *develop and maintain integrity while accepting some social influences
- Fourth Principle: Rhythmic Group Activity
 - *Rhythm is therapeutic tool for communication and body awareness
 - *Group using rhythm helps with feeling of solidarity, support and connection with others.

Marion Chase was one of the first Americans to offer dance as a treatment form in the back wards of mental hospitals. She taught what she learned and so influenced many students. She helped found the American Dance Therapy Association. and became its first president.

She believed that "Dance is communication and this fulfills a basic human need".

TRUDI SCHOOP

1903-1999

- World famous dancer and pantomime artist
- Dance therapy is based on the assumption that mind and body are in constant interaction
- Worked with Mental hospitals with people diagnosed with schizophrenia
- Helped to get patients to become conscious of their bodies and help them extend their range of movement possibilities
- Believed memories and emotion are reflected in posture
- Fostered congruency between intention and action
- Emphasized to students that a therapist must know why they do therapy; this decision must come from self knowledge
- Helped patients baring awareness to the emotional conflict that is stored in musculature
- Was interested in the relationship between body, imagination and emotion

Summary of Schoop's goals:

1. To identify for each person the specific parts of his body that have been un- used or misused, and to direct his actions in to functional patterns
2. To establish the unifying interactive relationship between mind and body, between fantasy and reality
3. To bring subjective emotional conflict into an objective physical form, where it can be perceived and dealt with constructively
4. To use every aspect of movement that will increase the individual's ability to adapt adequately to his environment and to experience himself as a whole, functioning human being.

MARY STARKS WHITEHOUSE
1911-1979

- She developed the dance / movement practice of “authentic movement” originally called “movement in depth.” Drawing on Jung’s concept of active imagination, she saw symbolic meaning in physical action. “Authentic movement can be defined as a completely self-directed form in which individuals may discover a movement pathway that offers a bridge between the conscious and unconscious.” (quote from website of AUTHENTIC MOVEMENT INSTITUTE , Oakland Calif.)
- Authentic movement is active imagination in movement. Awareness of the body leads to self-knowledge. Feeling comes directly from movement and gestures- the body does not lie. She spoke of the Tao of the Body – movement is the great law of life; everything moves; movement can become direct, subjective experience and certain kinds of self-knowledge are available through it. Physical movement was seen as a source of revelation; as a show of the inner thing.
- Adults – no longer allow spontaneous creative expression in physical movement- repression of all emotion. Her practice was designed to bring consciousness to the body – asked her students to listen to what the movement feels like from inside. She looked at the psychic attitude displayed by the physical movement
- A major tenet was becoming aware of movement as a kind of non-verbal language; finding out how you are speaking through movement and dance has many surprises.
- Her movement/dance teaching practice was not intended to fix the body or the soul, but to introduce people to the fact that movement is a way to get in touch with oneself- the invisible part.
- Perhaps her greatest contribution to understanding body movement as a form of active imagination was her ability to differentiate between “letting it happen” in contrast to “doing it.”
- Specific themes explored in movement: exploring polarities and finding the relationship between a pair of opposites (open/closed; up/down; push/pull).
- She realized she did not teach dance; rather she taught people.
- Authentic movement was seen as a way to open up the individual’s sense of self and taught that persons are humanly valuable to one another.

“In the deepest sense, movement is the flow of energy that belongs to all livingness. We move 24 hours a day and, because we do, because it is natural for us to move, we can discover a great deal about ourselves. We can explore sensations and feeling that we did not know we had. We can extend the range and freedom of our physical gestures. We can learn to trust and express our own spontaneous reactions. We can allow our movement to be creative.” (Mary Starks Whitehouse).

RUDOLF LABAN(1879-1958)

- Founder of Laban Movement Analysis
- Background in theatre, performance and dance theory
- Studied dance in Paris
- Started many schools of dance all over Europe
- Interest in architecture assisted his interest in form and content
- Developed a system of notation which described what body parts move, when and where. This was called KINETOGRAPHY LABAN or LABANOTATION
- In England during World War Two, he studied movement in terms of EFFORT. His notation system described all possible ways we move in terms of effort
- Later a student of his, Warren Lamb added SHAPE as another factor. Thus EFFORT-SHAPE became factors to study and note together.
- With EFFORT, Laban describes movement in terms of four motion factors: SPACE, WEIGHT, TIME and FLOW. Each movement as two opposing possibilities, called “elements”. An individual can make use of space by being either direct or indirect; use of weight by being either strong or light, Flow can either be bound or free.
- This system is now called LABAN MOVEMENT ANALYSIS. It is still used today as a way of describing and noting all possible ways a body can move. It is used in dance and sport
- Laban was interested in psychological aspects of movement.
- SHADOW MOVEMENT: Laban noticed that movement could be intentional or unintentional. The unintentional movement was fleeting, small, but this small, almost invisible movement could surround and frame the larger intentional movements. his unintentional act or movement he call SHADOW MOVEMENT. He saw some of the failure of western civilization as a result of not paying attention to shadow movements.
- LABAN MOVEMENT ANALYSIS has been added to over time, but the rudiments provided the first system for writing down how the body moves.

Wilhelm Reich, (1897-1957)

- Basic Premise: Our energy gets blocked by armoring. If we can get the energy released, health will be restored
- Orgone Energy: This is life energy, also known as "chi" or "prana". This energy is found throughout the universe and, of course, in ourselves. It fascinated Reich and he studied it for years.
- He was a student of Freud
- He was one of the first therapists to introduce body work into psychology
- He developed theory of personality types based on a person's body type
- Reich believed that trauma and neuroses are stored in the body
- Sexual repression is due to blocked energy.
- As armoring lessens, behavior changes, became more spontaneous and free.
- Reich's therapeutic mode was very "hands on."
- Basic Paradigm: People develop character armor because of childhood trauma. This armor protects us from feeling pain. It also prevents feelings of pleasure. This armor goes right into the body and can be found from the face to the pelvis.
- Social Aspect: Reich believed that the structure of society is reflected in character structure of its individual members. A simplified example is the dull routine of assembly line work which produces a dulling of the energy and life in those who work on it.
- Goals of Reich's therapy: Dissolve rigidities of character and in musculature.
 - Elicit strong emotions and energy (streaming).
 - Work through anxiety connected with pleasurable sensations.
 - Establish orgasmic potency in sexual intercourse

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Wilhelm Reich

- Methods:
 - Patient lies on floor
 - Focus is put on breathing
 - Touch: therapist presses where there is armoring with thumb or palm to elicit emotions

- What happens in therapy:

Therapeutic battle between streaming (free flow)of energy and armoring (clenching and rigidity).

- Results of therapy:
 - Dissolution of armor segments
 - Full respiration through the body
 - Sensations of pleasure
 - Wave of spontaneous and voluntary movement.

Alexander Lowen
Born 1910

- Student of Reich
- Founder of Bioenergetics, which is “a therapeutic technique to help a person get back together with his body and to help him enjoy to the fullest degree possible the life of the body”

- Interest: Like Reich, he was interested in energy; how it is gets blocked and the benefits of unblocking the flow of energy.

- Methods:
 - Developed a series of exercises to encourage breathing, feeling, self- expression
 - Hands on

- Goals:
 - Free blocked energy
 - Develop insight into root cause of blocking
 - Regain one’s primary nature which is the condition of being free, the state of being graceful, and quality of being beautiful
 - Experience the flow of energy in movement and the manifestation of inner harmony such flow engenders.
 - Become more open to life and love rather than being guarded, armored, distrustful and closed.

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(file: Dance-movement therapy report July 04)