

World Series – Dance Therapy in Switzerland

Elisabeth Moser, Psychologist lic.pysch, Dance Therapist FPI/DGT, Psychotherapist SPV/SVG

Dance therapy has been known in Switzerland since the 1970s. Originally DMT was strongly influenced by the pioneers of German Ausdruckstanz, who developed dance therapy in the USA in the 1940s. Today it is mostly Trudi Schoop – of Swiss origin herself – who is remembered and with whom many Swiss DMTs studied.

Today there are a variety of schools for dance therapy training. The learning requirements, the nature of the school and, last but not least, the philosophy of DMT varies greatly. There are different opinions concerning which therapy theories DMT should be aligned with.

In order to achieve approval as a form of psychotherapy, the main professional associations – SBIBT (Swiss Association for Movement Therapy); TabeT (Swiss Association for Movement and Dance Therapy); DGT (German Association of Dance Therapy) – try to work out standards for common study guidelines.

DMT is offered in private institutions and is available to people from the professions of medicine, social welfare or dance. Generally it is impossible to become a dance therapist without having a formation in another profession. A well balanced study program is offered by the Fritz Perls Institute in collaboration with the DGT (the German Association of Dance Therapy). They require prior professional training and experience in the field.

DMTs work in private practice and in institutions within psychiatry, psychotherapy, rehabilitation, with children and with older adults.

Profile of a Swiss Dance Therapist

Elisabeth Moser is a psychologist, psychotherapist and dance therapist. After a few years of dancing with a group of amateur dancers in Geneva, she

started teaching dance while continuing her work as a psychologist in institutions for children and in psychiatry. Participation in some courses and training with Trudi Schoop in a psychiatric hospital showed her the possibility of combining psychology and dance. Searching for a postgraduate program, she got in touch with the Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Tanztherapie (DGT - German Association for Dance Therapy) and did her training in psychotherapy and dance therapy at the Fritz Perls Institute in Duesseldorf, Germany.

From 1988 until 2003 she worked with the DGT as a trainer for dance therapy education and training in Germany and Switzerland, and was in charge of the Swiss section of the DGT in Basel. Since 1984 Elisabeth Moser has had her own dance and gymnastics studio in Basel, which also now includes her private practice in psychotherapy. She mainly works with adult clients. However, rather by coincidence, she started working with children again in 1996, using the Tomatis method or Audio-Psycho-Phonology, which is another method of “training perception through the senses”.

Ed. Note: We hope to have more about dance therapy in Switzerland in 2004. Photograph: *Courtesy of Swiss Info www.swissworld.org*

