

JUNG HSU JACQUELYN WAN: DMT SNAPSHOT INTERVIEW



This is a short interview conducted in June 2016 with Jung Hsu, through a project called DMT Snapshots in which short interviews were conducted by Ezme Webb and Tess Hens to be posted on the DTAA Facebook Group to support networking and sharing of experiences between Australasian DMTs.

DTAA Professional Member Jacquelyn Wan has worked as a DMT extensively for six years in Taiwan. Since 2012 she has worked in New Zealand where alongside Anaia Treefoot, she has played a leading role in growing the DMT profession. Since the DTAA has so recently become Australasian this snapshot provides a great opportunity to get an inside view of DMT in New Zealand.

CLIENT GROUPS AND TEACHING WORK

Jacquelyn's clinical work is wide and varied including work with young children, the elderly, individuals on the Autistic Spectrum, ADHD, those living with attachment and trauma related issues, and clients with mental health issues including work in psychiatric wards. In 2013 Jacquelyn was contracted to work with the charitable trust, Dance Therapy NZ as a senior therapist and as a trainer and supervisor of DMT students and practitioners.

INFLUENCES

Jacquelyn describes two major influences in her work. The first is her mentor in Taiwan, Tsung Chin Lee who was responsible for establishing the Taiwan Dance Therapy Association in 2001.

"She has embodied dance therapy in her whole presence as an individual, and has taught me a lot about group dynamics, therapeutic presence, and the creative process in DMT."

Jacquelyn also describes the "Ways of Seeing" approach developed by Dr Suzi Tortora as being seminal to her therapeutic philosophy. Jacquelyn is a certified WOS practitioner and was one of Suzi Tortora's first graduates. Jacquelyn says this approach

"...incorporates infant mental health (IMH), developmental body movement, mindfulness practice, Laban movement analysis, Authentic Movement practice, as well as contemporary attachment theories. This specific approach greatly supports my clinical work with children

and their families in a deeper level. It serves as my theoretical background, and strongly connect with my therapeutic philosophy.”

A LOVE OF CONNECTING WITH CLIENTS AND FUTURE GOALS

‘As a dance/movement therapist, I love and feel privileged to be a part of our clients’ journey, to experience the deep emotional non-verbal connections, to support the expansion of their life and well-being, and most importantly to witness the power of movement when the clients become in touch with his/her own body.’

Jacquelyn connects this passion for the benefits of DMT with advocating for the practice “internationally and cross professionally” through writing, research, clinical practice, education and supervision. When discussing collaboration she named the NZ Ministry of Health as a potential collaborator in working towards incorporating DMT into “early childhood education, school system, community, and business/corporate” organisations.

CHALLENGES

Jacquelyn describes a number of challenges she has faced over the last two years that have led her on a “deeper self-encountering journey” professionally and personally. Developing balance between work and personal life as a new immigrant to NZ, developing skills related to working with some of the severe challenges that her clients on the Spectrum can face, and transitioning into a new role as a supervisor and trainer in NZ have provided Jacquelyn with rich learning experiences.

“Luckily living as a dance therapist provides me such a wonderful resource - my own body. Personal therapy, DMT supervision, empathetic colleagues, and mindfulness inspired movement practice had supported me through this process. It was a long and challenging process, however it allowed me to gain much deeper understanding about life and about myself, which inevitably has integrated into my current DMT practice.’

THE DMT SCENE IN NEW ZEALAND

The first word Jacquelyn uses to describe DMT in NZ is “flourishing”. She discusses developing academic and community based interest in DMT and regular referrals from other professions and health related organisations to Dance Therapy NZ. DTNZ run a range of programs across seven suburbs in the disability field, and for families needing additional support who live in low income areas.

You can find more information about the organisation’s many programs at: <http://www.dancetherapy.co.nz/> . DTNZ is also responsible for establishing a new training program providing graduates with a Dance Therapy Certificate. In 2015 there were 10 graduates completing their two-year training in DMT. Many of these graduates have gone on to utilise and develop their DMT skills with a wild range of populations. In 2016, there are 22 students currently enrolled in their first-year training, some of them travel from overseas.

A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE - DMT IN TAIWAN AND NEW ZEALAND

Having worked in Taiwan and New Zealand Jacquelyn has had to be flexible and responsive to differing views of DMT.

"I am quite aware of the different cultures in NZ and Taiwan in regards to the general openness and acknowledgment to dance therapy as a profession. In my limited experience working in NZ, I found people are more open to DMT, and more respectful for professionals. In my work in Taiwan, I often encounter challenges when we mentioned 'dance as therapy' or even the word "therapy".

As a result of these differences Jacquelyn has had to make specific adjustment and work over long periods of time to build trusting relationships with her clients in Taiwan. She learnt to use modified approaches and to incorporate *"culturally specific dance/rhyme/stories into the context of DMT."*

Jacquelyn is a fantastic representative of a thriving DMT scene in NZ, please do comment and ask questions here to connect with NZ based Dance Movement Therapy!