

Dance Movement Therapy for Older Adults

Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) for older adults offers a unique experience, promoting physical activity, socialisation, individual expression, and self-acceptance, delivered in a safe and respectful environment, using the materials of movement and dance as well as music. Sessions can be provided in group or to individuals.

In general, dance movement sessions include:

- Body parts warm up and connection with the group where relevant
- Exploration of a theme
- Breathing and relaxation - often between each activity
- Regroup and closure

What do Dance Therapists offer?

Dance Movement therapists are skilled in creating a safe, non-judgemental space where self-expression and creative exploration are encouraged. Therapists accept and support individual differences and abilities, adapt their programs to fit the needs and interests of participants, and work with the whole person: the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Sessions may be run with participants seated or standing. Everyone is encouraged to participate to the best of their ability – whatever that may be.

Benefits Include:

Overall well-being, increased body awareness and movement range, improved strength and balance and vitality, mindfulness/relaxation, a sense of community and belonging, greater confidence and sense of personal choice, joyful interactions that encourage playfulness, rhythm, music and movement improve quality of life for all.



References:

McCrary J. Matt, Performing arts as a health resource? An umbrella review of the health impacts of music and dance participation. Published online 2021 Jun 10. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0252956

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Wiedenhofer, S., and Koch, S. C. (2017). Active factors in dance/movement therapy: specifying health effects of non-goal-orientation in movement. *Arts Psychother.* 52, 10–23.

Rosana Pessoa, C.M. Neves, M.E. Ferreira (2019, June) Dance Therapy in Aging: A Systematic review. *Medicine, Psychology, Journal of physical education and sport.*

Find a Therapist:

To find a therapist, consult the Register of Professional Members www.dtaa.org.au or for more information, contact our DTAA National Head Office admin@dtaa.org.au