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# Winter issue 2024, vol 19, issue 4

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Dear Reader,

Welcome to this our winter issue and the last for 2024.

Our issue this time reflects the diversity of embodied psychotherapies and the way that they are practised. We have articles from around the world, those on particular client groups such as children, and adults with a diagnosis such as depression. The form of the articles is representative of different sorts of research, and reflections. All of us are grappling with remote clinical work and the metaverse, which has particular challenges for us. We are used to working with physically present people in a room together, as opposed to digital, pixilated representations of each other on screens or other devices. This is an area for us to explore further.

We again have three book reviews this time, representing the volume of books being published nowadays relevant to our profession. This is so different from when we first launched the journal in 2005. Our vicennial will be next year!

Our first research article from Romania is called 'Circles of Support: dance movement psychotherapy in rehabilitation and social reintegration in psychiatry: a practice evaluation' offered

by Alexandra Axintea, Alexandra Cucua, Teodora Bogasiua, Irina Georgescua and Loredana Larionescub. It charts an evaluation of eight dance movement psychotherapy (DMP) practices in inpatient and outpatient settings designed to contribute to the enrichment of empathy, understanding and self-expression as well as to lessen the stigma surrounding mental illness. Outcomes confirm existing evidence, demonstrating the power of DMP to elicit joy, self-awareness and social connection, strengthening the patients' circles of support both inside and outside the psychiatric hospital.

The second article by UK based Christina Bracegirdle is called 'A mover's practice of transition in authentic movement: an embodied non-dual lived experience'. It presents the personal, lived experiences of embodiment and describe how transition in AM has enlarged the author's perception of intersubjectivity. Transition in AM after moving offers the possibility of experiencing non-duality in which writing with metaphors and moving are brought together. There is a strong link between moving and metaphor for both emanate from the body and metaphors act as a distinct link between the physical and thinking self for they connect us to ourselves and make us whole.

Next, we have 'Exploring the implications of the metaverse: opportunities and challenges for dance movement therapy' by UK based Nina Jane Patel which explores the integration of emerging technologies, specifically the metaverse and virtual reality (VR), into the field of dance movement therapy (DMT). The metaverse is conceptualised as a unified, immersive 3D virtual environment that transcends the limitations of the physical world. The author includes vignettes illustrating the practical application of VR in therapy and relaxation as used currently and speculates about the potential future applications of multi-sensory virtual environments. The potential implications for DMT and the convergence and divergence of principles are discussed.

Following on is an article entitled 'Treatment resistant depression: a critical reflection on missing oral narratives in dance therapy literature' by Neha Christopher from India. South Asian narratives are underrepresented in dance movement psychotherapy academia. In this critical reflection the author's emerging perspectives as a member of the South Asian diaspora, a clinician trained and who has worked within the medical model and an early career researcher are integrated. Two

anecdotal themes and brief case examples relevant to contemplating the value of oral narratives within dance movement psychotherapy are presented, embodied storytelling as a way of building emotional intelligence, and intuition as a way of trusting bodily cues in individuals.

'Ritual dance, authentic movement and dance movement therapy among indigenous Wiwan females in the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta', is by Angela Santamari from Columbia. It offers results from a collaborative study with indigenous women from Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. The possibilities of intercultural dialogue between authentic movement, dance movement-therapy, rituals and communitarian Wiwa dances are discussed. The results are the mixture of fieldwork during the last four years and the intercultural authentic movement experience with Wiwa Elders and women.


Our final article is by Einat Shuper Engelhard, from Israel, entitled 'Working with unrepresented states in dance/movement therapy for children' which presents the unique contribution of dance/movement therapy for children with delayed development or sustained object loss at the pre-verbal stage. This can produce unrepresented states lacking form, language or the capacity for symbolisation. Using a clinical vignette, it shows how the therapist's invitation to movement and listening to the patient's body stories facilitate 'space' and 'time' for primal mental experiences of 'presence' and 'absence', experienced in the body. Processing them in the therapeutic relationship is the beginning of the representation of the experience in the mind.

The first book review is on 'Dance/movement therapy and sexual abuse: Assessment and intervention based on body-mind approaches' edited by Einat Shuper Engelhard. The second is on 'Dance/movement therapy for infants and young children with medical illness: Treating somatic and psychic distress' by Suzi Tortora and Miri Keren. Finally, there is a review of the book entitled 'The practice of embodying emotions, a guide for improving cognitive, emotional and behavioural outcomes' by Raja Selvam.

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**Response by Author:** "Accepted"