



Dance/Movement Therapy and PD

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Dance/movement therapy, a creative art therapy, is rooted in the expressive nature of dance itself. Dance is the most fundamental of the arts, involving a direct expression and experience of oneself through the body. Dance Movement therapy is defined by the American Dance Therapy Association as "the psychotherapeutic use of



Giving Salsa a shot - Borivli Support Group

movement as a process that furthers the emotional, cognitive, social and physical integration of the individual."

Interventions, such as traditional exercises tailored specifically for seniors and/or individuals with PD, have addressed balance and gait difficulties in an attempt to reduce fall rates with mixed,

undocumented results. Argentine tango dancing has recently emerged as a promising non-traditional approach to ameliorating balance and gait problems among elderly individuals. The goal of the study by Hackney, Kantorovich, Earhart (2007) was to determine whether the functional mobility benefits noted in elders following a tango dancing program might also extend to older individuals with PD. They compared the effects of tango to those of traditional exercise on functional mobility in individuals with and without PD.

The results were that all groups showed gains in certain measures, only the Parkinson Tango group improved on all measures of balance, falls and gait. Moreover, upon terminating the program the Parkinson Tango group was more confident about balance than the Parkinson Exercise group. In psychosocial terms, both groups largely enjoyed their experiences because the classes fostered community involvement and became a source of social support for the members. Their results

suggest that Argentine tango is an appropriate, enjoyable, and beneficial activity for the healthy elderly and those with PD and that tango may convey benefits not obtained with a more traditional exercise program.

Results from other similar studies have showed that exercise combined with dance therapy yields better results than when either is administered alone.

An alternative therapy like dance, which gets patients "engaged, moving, socializing, feeling their bodies, gets them out," has tremendous value.



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