

Readers' Digest-
What's New?



What's on the calendar?
Upcoming Events



Tête-à-Tête
Interview



Fun-da-mental
Fun Section

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Links for articles
& podcasts



From the Editorial Desk

...WITH LOVE BY MAANASA BHARATH
DANCE/MOVEMENT THERAPIST



Walking down memory lane to the announcement of the first lockdown, many of us may have experienced confusion, chaos, and despair. However, this sudden shift in our lives may have brought flexibility, adaptability and interesting ways to reach out to the community. The barriers of physical isolation were bridged by technology, and thus this major transition from the real world to the reel world metamorphosed. Dance/Movement Therapy (DMT), which is all about human physical presence, the sense of space, touch, using properties and indulging in physical interactions, had to move to a less explored space of confinement to a rectangular screen, patchy wifi networks and intrusion of private space in therapy. This transition into a virtual space brought with it challenges, but also, renewed opportunities.

People who wished to explore creative arts therapy, but felt restricted due to distance or unavailability in regions they lived in, could now participate in these sessions. In times when movement was limited to the space they were living in, they had renewed opportunities that technology provided, to explore body, mind and movement. Technology aided therapists to reach out far and wide, and connect communities across the country and the globe. Braving challenges, therapists across the world rose to the challenge of tending to the fragile human

"This newsletter explores and hopes to bring forth experiences of creative arts therapists, who bravely brought traditional, safe therapy spaces onto virtual spaces."

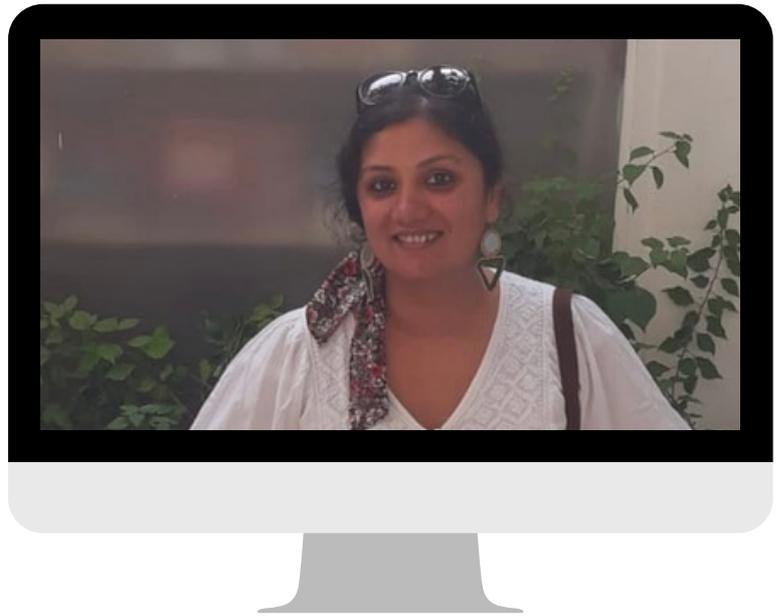
minds, when the physical body was being attacked ruthlessly by the pandemic. One of the major challenges faced by dance/movement therapists was the lack of touch. Rising to the occasion, they set out to explore interventions suitable for their clients, according to the individual's availability of space. A few themes that were explored by dance/movement therapists in the virtual space were identifying properties present in the house and building a healthy relationship with it, exploring, synthesizing and establishing a positive attunement to the physical space they were in, experiencing increased body awareness by using breakout rooms, and navigating with respect to their orientation to the camera, to name a few. This newsletter explores and hopes to bring forth experiences of creative arts therapists, who bravely brought traditional, safe therapy spaces onto virtual spaces. It also intends to highlight the current experience of transitioning back to in-person spaces, with the country slowly and steadily moving towards being open to physical interactions, once again. This newsletter celebrates creative arts therapy's journey into and through the real and digital spaces.



Readers' Digest- What's New?

Therapeutic Space in A Hybrid World

By **Nishtha Agarwal**,
Expressive Arts Therapist;
Co-founder, CMTAI



As you read this article, take a moment to pause and look around your physical space. Does it feel like your space? I often wondered why sitting by the window of my bedroom offered me a different sense of peace than any other corner of my house. If you have a space that you connect with similarly, I would invite you to go there and notice for yourself, what about that space makes it special for you? It could be anything ranging from the lighting, colors or the furniture in that space to just the energy that you bring with yourself every time you go there.

“Creating a warm, inviting, grounded space begins with a trust of the space itself, a 'felt sense' for the energy in the space,” (Moskowitz-Corris, n.d.). Therapeutic space, in this sense, could be defined as any space that has been crafted with an intention and purpose, offering a supportive and holding atmosphere to those in it. In the pre-pandemic times, it usually referred to a physical space utilized only for the purpose of therapy and simply walking into a therapist’s office could offer this sense of safety to clients.

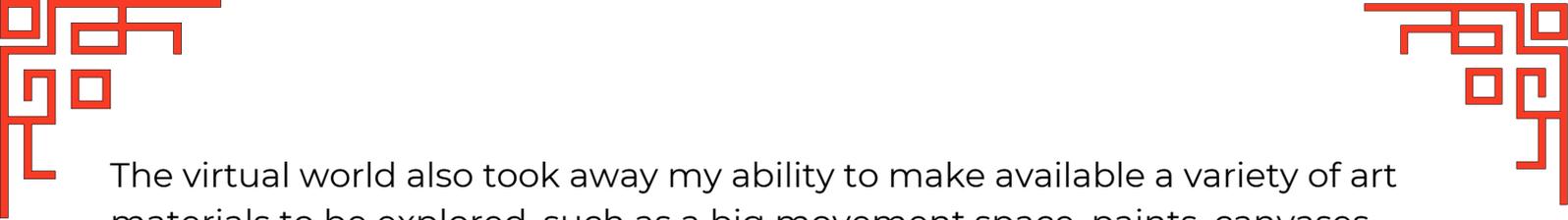
However, the pandemic brought with it many changes including the setting in which therapists interacted with clients, bringing with it the challenge to transport this “felt sense” to our new settings. I remember receiving an email from my Clinical Director, as the world began to go into lockdown, requesting all clinicians to collect any items from our offices that we might need as we transitioned into the then unknown world of tele-therapy. “It probably will be about two weeks,” we all chatted as we saw each other that day at the clinic, collecting our belongings.

Who knew then that it would change the course of therapy across the world forever. One of the biggest challenges I faced while transitioning into an online space was being able to offer this “felt sense” of safety to my clients. Would therapy still work if they now attended sessions from their bedrooms instead of my office? Do they have a room where they can attend therapy for 50 minutes without being overheard or interrupted? Do they feel safe in the space they are attending the sessions from? These were just a few of the many questions that crowded the minds of mental health practitioners across the world.

Every therapist who has worked through this pandemic can probably share stories about being taken to spaces in their clients' homes that no ethics class could have ever prepared us for. My clients were now in my living room, and I was in theirs. I sometimes became their cleaning companion as they wiped their kitchen counters, was left under a diaper in a baby's cot and even taken to the bathroom that one time. As we crossed the “two weeks” mark that we had originally imagined this would last for, it became more and more important to navigate the virtual space in a way so it can be differentiated from just a catch-up video call that became a huge part of our lives back then.

"One of the biggest challenges I faced while transitioning into an online space was being able to offer this "felt sense" of safety to my clients."





The virtual world also took away my ability to make available a variety of art materials to be explored, such as a big movement space, paints, canvases, drums, paper, etc. In the absence of this, my clients and I started going on “treasure hunts” in their homes and finding innovative ways to use simple household items for their creative expression. We played drums on the desk, doodled instead of painting and shared computer screens to mirror each other’s movements. Somehow it worked and we all ended up creating a world of virtual therapy which survives even as we transition back to being able to offer in-person therapy again.

Returning to my office after a little over a year of only online therapy, at first brought about a sense of nervousness. Did I still remember how to do this? Being in person came with its own set of challenges. I had to wear real pants again and I could not just sit in any random position on my chair as I did at my home office. But it worked, over time it all fell into place as smoothly as though we had never left it.

While online therapy began with many hiccups, it has made a space for itself and does not seem to be going anywhere. Rather, it has opened up doors to therapy for many who could not earlier access it due to inflexibility of in-person services.

"It is now up to us to continually keep evolving our practice as we move between the two platforms and the world moves into a hybrid space."

References:

Moskowitz-Corris, L. (n.d.). Tufts Workshop: The Value of Therapeutic Space Planning. Childrensroom.Org. <https://childrensroom.org/tufts-workshop-the-value-of-therapeutic-space-planning/>

Tête-à-Tête

with Shayori Mitra

By Aparna Ramkrishnan

(Dance/Movement Therapist and CMTAI Core Team Member)

If you were to describe yourself in three words, what would they be?

Energetic, kind, and emotional.

How would you describe the work you do?

The work I do makes me happy. I work mostly with children so there's never a dull day. My work is challenging, physically exhausting but so fulfilling!

Describe your relation to your work with an image?

My work is my source of motivation. You know those quick charging power banks that give your phone a boost of power and it starts working faster and better? My work is something like that. It gives me a sudden boost of energy and motivation.



Keeping that image in mind, describe your process of transition from offline work to the virtual space.

Well, you know I was very skeptical initially with online work. But I must say I did slowly come to terms with it. It was quite a challenge because I am a very tactile person. I felt a huge disconnect in online sessions, but I think slowly I took to it. I honestly have to thank the community I'm a part of, called Cusp who made me conduct an online workshop on mindfulness. That kind of made me overcome the mental block against online sessions. So yes, the transition was quite challenging but I'm glad I made it!

What were some of the challenges you faced in the online space?

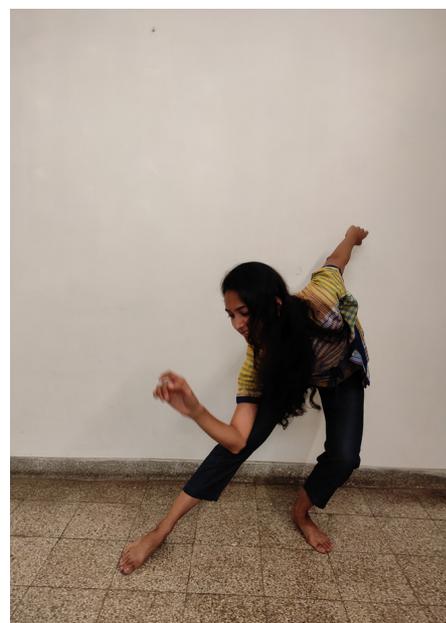
The usual internet issues, lags etc. But what I felt most was a disconnect. With most adults, adolescents I found it very difficult to connect during sessions. The beauty of movement sessions is the picking up on movements as the participants move. There is so much that comes up in a physical space that often is missing in the virtual space. You discover so much when you see people moving in front of you rather than on tiny boxes on the screen. There were so many people who refused to put on their cameras. Taking sessions with children with special needs was such a challenge!

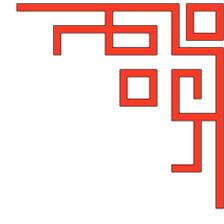
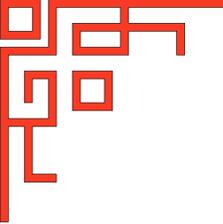
Describe how you set up your workspace at home?

My workspace had to be changed in many ways. The first being removing my bed and getting a sofa bed to make space for me to move. Since my room was my workspace I had to also re-do the paint on my walls. I made sure I had the privacy I needed. It was quite difficult because my room is quite small but I learned to move in the limited space. I learned to adjust.

When you look back, did you learn anything new about yourself?

There is so much that the pandemic taught me! The first being learning to love my own company. I learnt to put myself, my mental health and my happiness before that of others. I learnt that although space can be limiting, movement never is. I learnt how amazing it feels when you do things for yourself and not to please others. I also learnt that I am actually a pretty good facilitator. I love working with children but I also learned that I actually enjoy working with adolescents and young adults as well.





What does it mean to you to be a part of the CMTAI Chapters?

Chapters for me is a community of people who believe in a similar ideology as me. I used to feel quite lonely as an arts-based therapist not having too many people to discuss my problems or ideas with. I've found a community where I can do that. I have a space to learn, to experience, to discuss and I feel a sense of belonging. The sessions are also a welcome change for me from being a facilitator to being facilitated. It's like mini therapy sessions, I think, all practitioners need at some point.

What would you like to convey to the community using two movement gestures?

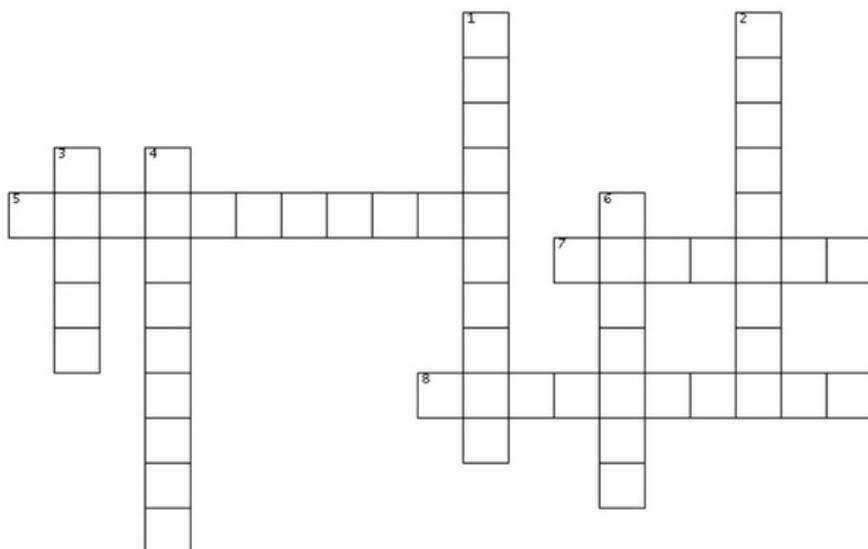
To the community, I would like to convey my gratitude for making me feel so accepted. I feel a sense of oneness and togetherness being a part of the community. But I would also like to say that while this need for belonging is important, it is also important to have faith in yourself and belief in yourself. Love yourself more and more. Be who you are, unapologetically!



About Shayori Mitra:

Shayori Mitra is a special educator, dance movement therapy practitioner and psychologist who works mostly with children with special needs and sometimes with adolescents and young adults.

Fun-da-mental



DMT CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 5. _____ is one of the founders of modern dance therapy and the first president of ADTA, 1966-1968.
- 7. The ability to recognize and relate to other people's emotions and thoughts.
- 8. Birthing/Surging and Swaying rhythms are types of _____ movement profile rhythms

DOWN

- 1. _____ is your overall opinion of yourself, how you feel about your abilities and limitations.
- 2. _____ behavioral therapy is a type of therapy, which aims at identifying and changing destructive or disturbing thought patterns that have a negative influence on behavior and emotions.
- 3. _____ / Bartenieff movement analysis.
- 4. _____ involves imitation by the therapist of movements, emotions, or intentions.
- 6. _____ is a practice that uses metaphorical pictures and imagination to help stimulate movement in the body.

Send your answers to newsletter.cmtai@gmail.com and win a lucky draw to feature in the newsletter as the winner of the Crossword and Wordsearch

WORDSEARCH

Breath Cope Depression
 Emotion Movement Recovery
 Safespace Trigger

T	R	I	G	G	E	R	E	T	E
J	H	N	H	J	T	Q	N	Q	K
E	T	T	F	X	V	E	M	X	T
M	E	Z	A	X	M	N	K	N	F
O	S	A	F	E	S	P	A	C	E
T	K	B	V	Q	R	Q	H	B	P
I	O	O	Y	O	B	B	W	C	O
O	M	L	X	T	K	X	Q	O	C
N	O	I	S	S	E	R	P	E	D
Y	R	E	V	O	C	E	R	T	A

Clickoscope

Click on the article titles below to read the articles or listen to the podcast.

Articles:

*Yariv, A., Shalem-Zafari, Y., Wengrower, H., Shahaf, N., & Zylbertal, D. (2020). Reflections on individual webcam dance/movement therapy (DMT) for adults. *Body, Movement and Dance in Psychotherapy*, 16(1), 56–63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17432979.2020.1860131>*

*Feniger-Schaal, R., Hart, Y., Lotan, N., Koren-Karie, N., & Noy, L. (2018). The body speaks: using the mirror game to link attachment and non-verbal behavior. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01560>*

*Koch, S. (2020). Indications and contraindications in dance movement therapy: learning from practitioners' experience. *GSM Journal of Arts Therapies*, 2(2), 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.3205/jat000006>*

Podcast:

Harman, G. (Host). (2021, July 1). Transforming grief with dance therapy (No. 86) [Audio podcast episode]. In Podtail. <https://podtail.com/en/podcast/mind-your-body/86-transforming-grief-with-dance-therapy-grace-har/>

What's on the calendar?

- *Therapeutic Dance in Education (Hybrid Short-term Program)* June 18-August 13
- *Certificate Course in D/MT Registrations* August 18
- *PanIndia Event by West Zone (Webinar/ Virtual Workshop)* July
- *Zonal Member Connect Meets* June & August
- *Applications opening for Conference 2022 presentations/ sessions* To be announced soon

Share your e-motion

*express/ draw /move
to your emotion*

#cmtainewsletter

How do you feel about the newsletter?

Express yourself through artwork/ movement/ words with #cmtainewsletter and tag our instagram page, @move_with_cmtai.

We will feature you on our instagram stories

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