

Dance therapy



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In the world of therapy, there are many routes that can be taken by college graduates to lead successful lives. There are the “ norms” such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, and recreational therapy. There are also the therapy types that have not been exposed quite as much as the aforementioned and should be because they are definitely exciting and should be explored. Among these is the lucrative field of dance therapy. Dance therapy is one of, if not the, most interesting career available to graduates of college today.

Sometimes called dance movement therapy, dance therapy requires not only using your body to assist your client. This concentration of therapy relies on your body and your mind. “ Based on the principle that movement reflects an individual's patterns of thinking and feeling, the therapist acknowledges and supports clients' movements, encouraging the development of new movement patterns and the emotional experiences that may accompany these changes (www. prospects. ac. uk). As a dance therapist, your job would consist of “ using movement and dance to enable personal, emotional, cognitive, spiritual, physical and social integration and development (www. prospects. ac. uk). ” That being said, with the systematical care and guide of a dance therapist, someone’s life is enhanced greatly. However, systematical means there are more things to this job than just its description. For instance, as a dance therapist you would need resources to assist you in enhancing your client’s life. Let’s take a look at that. When thinking of dance therapy, the main word to focus on is dance.

There is not much needed to dance except for the human body. It is because of this that dance therapist are able to work with multiple populations of

people. " Dance movement therapists support a broad range of individuals, including those with: •emotional or mentalhealthneeds; •physical disabilities; •Personal development needs (www. prospects. ac. uk). " For people who love people, the field of dance therapy can be very rewarding. Other resources a dance therapist may need are a stereo and compact disks, or tapes. Dance therapy is a very mobile profession.

Because sometimes patients are not able to drive to their own appointments, it would be in the best interest of dance therapists to drive to the patient's home or healthcare facility. " Dance therapy is practiced with both individuals and groups in health, educationand social service settings, as well as in private practice (www. prospects. ac. uk). " Although a dance therapist may have a private practice, they may still opt to have some sort of transportation for their patients who are unable to drive on their own whether it is a personal vehicle or a company vehicle.

Students who wish to enter the field of dance therapy should be capable and experienced drivers. " Travel is a likely aspect of everyday working life and most therapists will need to be able to drive (www. prospects. ac. uk). " As a dance therapist there is no certain " place" to work, because you may just be all over the place! Although the rewards are great, the road to becoming a dance therapist is not an easy one. Because dance therapy is not only concentrating on a person's body, but their mind, one must be well prepared before entering this profession.

There are no undergraduate programs for dance therapy meaning before you can become a dance therapist, you must have agraduate degree. Although some graduate programs do not have a specific requirement for

what your undergraduate degree should be, it is important to center it on dance therapy as much as possible. " Get your bachelor's degree in the performing or liberal arts. Take as many psychology courses as you can fit into your schedule because graduate schools will expect you to know the basics (www. prospects. ac. uk). It is also important to research the graduate school that you wish to attend thoroughly so that you know that the dance therapy program is accredited. " Relevant degree subjects include those in arts and humanities or those in life and medical sciences. In particular, the following subjects may increase your chances:

- performing arts;
- dance;
- human movement;
- psychology;
- medicine;
- Nursing.

(www. prospects. ac. uk). " Although the dance therapy courses may be available to everyone attending the university, training in specific kinds of dance may be required to be admitted to the dance therapy program. This may vary with each school. The job outlook of the dance therapy profession is one of the best that there is considering the downsizing of jobs that the United States has recently experienced. " Faster than average job growth is expected due to anticipated expansions in long-term care, physical and psychiatric rehabilitation, and services for the disabled (keep2. sjfc. edu). " As a dance therapist, there is also the opportunity for advancement in the profession. Just as other professions offer the opportunity to become

registered, so does dance therapy. Graduates from an " approved" dance/movement therapy program are eligible for the DTR (Dance Therapist Registered) credential (www. adta. org). " Earning this credential would definitely provide an increase in the already lucrative pay that dance therapists receive. So, just how much would a dance therapist make on an average paycheck? How does \$20 sound to you? That may sound too good to be true, it has been reported that the average earnings of a dance therapist with a mere 1 to 4 years experience is \$20 (See figure 1). Figure 1 Median Hourly Rate by Years Experience - Job: Dance Therapist (United States)

Currency: USD | Updated: 6/8/2008 | Individuals reporting: 8 Although the world of dance therapy is an exciting one, there are some likes and dislikes that all students should explore before deciding if this is the right career for them. Some likes of this field would be the opportunity to develop relationships with all types of clients. From the very young to the very old, you will be making a difference in someone's life. Another like would be the satisfaction that you would get from making someone's life a whole lot better, thus, making your life a whole lot better.

Some dislikes may be the paperwork that you would have to have from the observance of your clients to the point of their discharge from your services. Something else that some dance therapists may not like is the amount of driving that would have to be done for some clients. Looking at the good and the bad, if you have a heart for this profession, it is easy to see that the good definitely outweighs the bad. Dance therapy is something that I had never

heard of before this class. As I skimmed through the textbook to see what I would enjoy I came across dance therapy.

The word that grabbed my attention was not therapy, but DANCE. Dancing is something that is a part of my culture and has been a part of my life forever. I danced as a child, as an adolescent, and I still dance now. I dance in my car, I dance in my home, and I dance at church. The thought of being able to dance to help someone was absolutely beautiful to me! As I researched the subject of dance therapy a little more, I discovered that this career is much needed and is very rewarding. Dance therapy not only assists patients with physical ailments but emotional issues as well.

Imagine dancing with a teenage girl who has an eating disorder and watching her change for the better as you help her dance her way to a healthier new person. Wow! A profession like this is not only a fun one, but one that will touch anyone's soul.

Bibliography

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