Let’s Dance: Understanding the Role of Occupational Therapy in Dance Across the Lifespan
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BACKGROUND & PURPOSE

- The mind and body attain benefits from engagement in movement (Hulteen, Morgan, Barnett, Stoddle, & Lubans, 2018; Bolton, Fix, VicDeusen, Lukas, Elway & Bokhour, 2018)
- Physical, cognitive, or psychological barriers can limit engagement in movement programs (Nichols, Bishop, Block, & McIntire, 2019)
- Healthcare professionals must evaluate the best methods to get all individuals moving and actively participating

The purpose of my project was to gain a better understanding of the role of occupational therapy in dance across the lifespan specifically for children with disabilities, older adults, and individuals with Parkinson’s disease.

METHODS

Advanced Experience
- I had advanced experience working with The Dance Ability Movement, Dance for PD programs in Canada and United States, and completed a certification for Chair Yoga Dance.

Scholarly reflection
- An evidence-based reflection that presented the barriers that may hinder individual’s participation in movement programs. The reflection also emphasized the role that occupational therapy practitioners have in dance.

Program plan
- Classes accommodate to all participants of all ages with focuses on active participation, implementation of cognitive strategies, and social interaction

RESULTS / CONCLUSIONS

Surveys and interviews:
- Average Age: 86; All female (n=11)
- Variety of diagnoses

Education and Advocacy:
- Educated on the importance of movement for all individuals
- Advocated for the benefits of dance for individuals with Parkinson’s disease

Sustainability of program:
- Increased number of participants
- Continuation of class at Dow Rummel Village
- Dance has physiological and psychological benefits
- Occupational therapy practitioners have the designated skill set to provide supports for all individuals to participate in dance

IMPLICATIONS FOR OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Implications:
- Dance demonstrates benefits physically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially
- Further development of dance programs would be beneficial to individuals across the lifespan
- Continue to research the impact of art and creative interventions for all individuals

Recommendations:
- Inclusive dance programs for individuals of all ages
- Occupational therapy practitioners to be a presence in dance studios
- Implementation of dance class for children with all abilities and a Dance for PD class in South Dakota

Revisions to theory:

PEO
- Naturally convey and incorporate into every class
- Adheres to all individuals in all dance classes

Motor Learning Frame of Reference
- Dance expands beyond the three stages
- Personalization component

Psychodynamic Frame of Reference
- Condensing the number of total ego functions
- Enhance carryover into clinical practice

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

Person Environment Occupation (PEO)
- Provides a top down approach to maximize skills and overall participation (McGill, Houston & Lec., 2014)
- Individualized focus (Law et al., 1996)
- PEO encourages health promotion, social inclusion, and improving quality of life

Motor Learning (Philippe Riviere et al., 2018)
- Focuses on the restoration of functional movement
- 3 stages:
  - Cognitive: utilize strategies to learn sequence of movement
  - Associative: knowing what movement to perform
  - Autonomous: movement pattern is mastered

Psychodynamic
- Supports the use for creative media in OT interventions (Muellersdorf, & Iverson, 2012)
- Dance provides a satisfaction of emotional needs through social interaction (Cole & Tufano, 2008a)
- Creative outlets can positively impact health and well-being by breaking social isolation, sparking creativity, and establishing joy (Alban, 2016; Dance for PD, 2017; Earhart, 2009; Muellersdorf & Iverson, 2012)

REFERENCES