

**The lived experience
of
Creative/therapeutic dance**

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Contents

Contents.....	i
Attestation of Authorship	iv
Acknowledgements.....	v
Abstract	vi
Introduction	1
Reasons for choosing this topic	1
Dance as therapeutic	2
Dance as creative	2
Dance as art	2
Dance as sacred spirituality / shamanic	3
Dance as phenomenology.....	3
Dance as self expression	3
Dance Movement Therapy (DMT)	4
CTD: an allied approach to DMT	5
Current context of CTD in Aotearoa/New Zealand	6
Gabrielle Roth's 5Rhythms®	6
Dreambody dance: process orientated movement	7
Pre-understandings.....	8
Structure of this study	10
Literature Review	12
DMT and CTD literature / research	12
Lived experience of DMT	13
Lived experience of CTD	14
Process orientated movement research	14
5Rhythms® research.....	15
Summary	17
Methodology.....	18
Philosophical underpinnings	18
Phenomenology.....	18
Being-in-the-world	18
Phenomenology, psychology and the arts	19
Existential lifeworld reflection	20
Hermeneutic interpretation	20
Method	23
Ethical considerations	23
Treaty of Waitangi	23

Ethical approval	23
Protection of participants.....	24
Choosing the participants	25
Data collection - the conversational interview	25
Data analysis	27
Rigour.....	30
Credibility	31
Transferability / fittingness.....	32
Dependability / auditability	32
Researcher reflexivity	32
Findings.....	35
The first time	35
Arriving / transitioning.....	38
Being in body – becoming embodied	39
Being and moving mood	41
Being in creative freedom	44
Embodied relating / communality.....	44
Embodied time.....	49
Embodied space	50
Embodied spirituality – a deeper place	52
Embodied meaning – potentiality and transformation.....	53
Summary	55
Discussion	57
Potentiality.....	57
Play.....	57
Play of body - mind – embodiment:.....	58
Play of mood - implicit/explicit – expression – meaning:.....	58
Play of self - other – relation-ality:	59
Play of home - adventure – creativity:	59
Play of descentance - transcendence – immanence:.....	59
Play of space - time – consciousness:	59
Play of situated - open – communion:.....	60
How is this research related to other studies?.....	60
Limitations.....	61
Implications for practice and education and research.....	61
Health care practice / education.....	62
CTD and DMT practice / education.....	62
Ongoing research	63

Has the question been answered?	64
References	65
Appendices	73
Appendix A	74
Appendix B.....	75

Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this is my own work and that to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person or material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgement is made in the acknowledgements.

Signed: _____

Dated: _____

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Abstract

This phenomenological study explores the lived experience of group creative/therapeutic dance (CTD). Key concepts informing the phenomenon are outlined: the historical role of expressive arts and healing, alliance to dance/movement therapy (DMT), phenomenology, arts, creativity, and spirituality. There was a paucity of research available related to this study. A review of this research showed positive experiences of CTD activities.

A purposive sample of four participants took part in guided in-depth interviews, drawing on their experiences and meaning of two forms of CTD: 5Rhythms® and dreambody dance. Interpretive and existential lifeworld reflection was used in a thematic analysis of the data (van Manen, 1997). Significant themes emerging were: the first time, arriving/transitioning, 'being' in body, mood, relationality/communality, time, space, creative freedom, embodied spirituality and becoming/transformation.

The discussion confirms the 'play' in these interweaving themes and the therapeutic potentiality within the experience. As an evolving health focused activity, implications for practice, education and research coincide. I argue that there is potential for CTD as a therapeutic medium for understanding the self. I recommend further applied phenomenological studies to deepen understanding, evaluation and application of the therapeutic potential of CTD.

Introduction

This chapter outlines the reasons for choosing this topic and key concepts and influences of creative/therapeutic dance (CTD) related to my dissertation. These include the roots and connection of CTD to: creativity, therapy, art, philosophical inquiry, spirituality, self-expression and the dance/movement therapy profession (DMT).

I specifically address some of the practice and professional aspects of both, CTD and DMT, highlighting connections, theory, literature, and current contextual issues globally and in Aotearoa/New Zealand related to my dissertation. The two forms of CTD participants discuss, 5rhythms® and dreambody dance: process orientated movement practice, are introduced and described. My pre-understandings are considered, especially regarding the term therapeutic, and the meanings this may hold.

Reasons for choosing this topic

Ever since I participated in my first ‘creative dance’ class at eight years old I have been interested in this form of expression. Over the last 20 years I have been involved in a variety of dance/movement practices that I consider to be both creative and therapeutic. I have participated in dreambody dance for nearly 20 years. More recently I have begun training to facilitate these classes. Over the last 10 years I have been a participant of 5Rhythms® dance. I have studied creative arts and expressive movement therapies as part of my Masters degree and I have incorporated creative arts therapies in my work with clients as a mental health nurse.

I have been curious about the variety of experiences and meanings for myself and others in the creative/therapeutic movement process. However in the general community classes of CTD, that I attended, people’s lived experience remained somewhat of a mystery to me; there was not a lot of discussion during or after classes. From this sense of curiosity I became interested in exploring this phenomenon in research.

I started ‘hovering around’ after classes listening to casual conversations and asking people what inspired them to come? What did they get out of the experience? What I heard were rich and fascinating pieces of information and reasons, ranging from the pragmatic to the transcendental: “I come to connect”, “It’s cheap therapy”, “I hear myself on the dance floor”, “It’s a spiritual experience”, “It’s a shamanistic experience”, “I come to have fun”. From these brief insights I had a sense of a wealth of hidden treasure, stories waiting to be discovered, and meaning to be made. I wanted to

understand more of people's in-depth lived experience of these forms of dance and so I started to form the question "what is this experience really like for people and what does it mean?" To answer this question, I started looking for a methodology, from the ones I was learning about in my research methodologies paper. Phenomenology, the methodology underpinning my dissertation, seemed the best fit as it strives to return to the experience 'as lived' to reveal meaning (van Manen, 1997).

Dance as therapeutic

Dance and therapy are historically linked. In early civilizations dancing, religion, music and medicine were interconnected (Halprin, 2003; Hanna, 1995, 2006). The word therapy comes from the ancient Greek word 'therapeia' which means to nurse or cure through the expressive arts: dance, song, poem and drama (O'Hare, 2007). Dance has been therapeutically used in this way across human history, through rituals of healing, to maintain well being and as part of shamanic traditions, rites of passage, and worship of nature and the divine (Block & Kissell, 2001; El Guindy & Schmais, 1994; Fraleigh, 2004; Goodman, 1990; Hanna, 2006; Knill, Levine, & Levine, 2005; McNiff, 1981; Serlin, 1993).

Dance as creative

The type of creativity referred to in CTD is process orientated; an end unto itself rather than a means to an end, as in choreography for performance dance (Press & Warburton, 2007). Creative process in dance involves improvisation and discovering 'something' new about being in the world. This something new pertains to the dancer/mover's sense of self, others, environment, to time and space and, in a therapeutic sense, the potential for expressive embodied understanding and integration (Chaiklin & Wengrower, 2009; Halprin, 2003; Hanna, 1995). In Press and Washburn's (2007) review of literature and research on creativity in dance, they conclude that creativity is developed and distributed in three major domains: relationally/socially (new relationships form) symbolically (new meanings/understandings develop through symbolization) and bodily/physically (new neuronal connections are created or a new felt sense of freedom in body and mind is discovered).

Dance as art

Within a phenomenological view, the arts provide a key means of showing and understanding meaning in human existence (Knill et al., 2005). Philosophically communal dance making may be an important way of re-asserting the energetic basis of

culture in life (Hanna, 2006; Knill et al., 2005). CTD has also been called a movement arts practice, a tool for creative regeneration and spiritual transformation (Davison, 2009).

Dance as sacred spirituality / shamanic

Spiritual or dance meditation are other terms used in the literature (Haylock, 2010; Roth, 1989, 1997) related to the types of CTD the participants discussed in my dissertation. A variety of dance/movement literature; practice based, phenomenological, and theory and research, explores the encounter with the sacred through dance (Fraleigh, 2004; Hanna, 2006; Haylock, 2010; Jahner, 2001). CTD often utilizes repetitive musical rhythms that may induce altered states of consciousness; changing the usual perceptions and boundaries of space/time, for therapeutic/spiritual purposes. These are features of what is known as shamanic dance or trance dance. Shamanic dance draws on the ancient spiritual and medical tradition of shamanism, practiced in native cultures around the world; with the aim of healing and transcendence (Hanna, 1995; Roth, 1989). In traditional shamanism this is used to promote healing for the ill or for the community as a whole (Hanna, 1995, 2006).

Dance as phenomenology

Dance writers have explored modern and post modern dance links to phenomenology and existentialism (Block, 2001; Fraleigh, 1987; Leventhal, 2008; McHose, 2006; Parvia, 2008; Parviainen, 1998; Rouhiainen, 2008). Fraleigh (1987) describes how early modern dancer, Mary Wigman, saw dance as philosophical, the question “who am I?” being at the core of dance. Dance can be seen as self discovery, not only in revealing but also creating the self; dance as being and ‘becoming’, through expressive movement (Fraleigh, 1987). Dance can be considered a manifestation of intersubjectivity; subject and object engaged as one, “when I dance I am the dance, and the dance exists as my dancing, i.e., the dancing of the dancer” (Mitscherling, 1992, p. 67). Through dance improvisation the unconscious, existential questions and themes of ‘being’ may arise, revealing the light and shadows of existence: home, belonging, uncertainty, intimacy, freedom and responsibility (Fraleigh, 1987).

Dance as self expression

The roots of CTD and DMT originate from the development of ‘modern dance’ in the 1930s, combined with developing knowledge in the field of psychology (Chodorow, 1997; Hanna, 2006; Juhan, 2003; Leventhal, 2008; Levy, Fried, & Leventhal, 1995;

Payne, 2006; Stanton-Jones, 1992). Modern dance pioneers rejected the classical techniques and explored the creative/improvisational, expressive, communicative aspects of dance. This stemmed from a desire for freedom of self expression and self development and growth as a human being through dance (Fraleigh, 1987). The American dancer Isadora Duncan, considered to be the mother of modern dance, was also influenced by the ancient Greek tradition of arts as healing (Berger, 1992). Duncan's approach was to represent her emotional response to the music in abstract dance, there was little choreography as most of her performances were improvised dance (Schmais & White, 1986).

Dance Movement Therapy (DMT)

DMT was pioneered by modern dancers such as Marian Chace in the 1940s, considered to be the founder of the profession in the United States (Schmais & White, 1986). Chace saw dance as a communal physical activity that expressed emotion creatively. She believed that dance could be a potent means of working through emotions, relating to others and support integration of self in the world. She developed ways of organizing and structuring dance/movement experiences to support this process and started her practice in psychiatric hospitals (Payne, 2006). Her interpersonal approach drew on the work of Harry Stack-Sullivan's interpersonal psychoanalytic theory and Carl Rogers humanistic client centred approach which has influenced the theory base of DMT. Other founding psychoanalytic influences of DMT (Chyle, 2000) have been Carl Jung (the collective unconscious, archetypes, symbols, dream work) and Wilhelm Reich (the importance of the body in therapy).

The USA and the UK led the way in establishing DMT and dance/movement psychotherapy (DMP) respectively, as registered professions and as a practice. The profession/practice integrates both the art and science of dance/movement and psychotherapy, with the aim of furthering emotional, mental, social, and physical development, for the purpose of integration and well being (Chaiklin & Wengrower, 2009; Meekums, 2002; Payne, 2006). DMT continues to evolve and expand its theory and practice base into more areas of psychological health (Young, 2008). In countries where DMT is a registered profession, practitioners generally hold a Masters level education in DMT and there are professional regulatory bodies and associations. For example in the UK, the titles of DMT, movement psychotherapy, and dance therapy are

protected titles (Payne 2006). These associations also produce scholarly journals, research and provide support for practitioners.

The profession has developed world wide. A study on the global development of the DMT profession (Dulicai & Berger, 2005), reports that professional development has occurred in accordance with in-country education and pioneers with training and an entrepreneurial spirit. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, DMT as a profession is emerging but it is not yet established as an accredited profession; it does not have a separate training programme or association. However, dance and movement is included within an integrative Masters of Arts Therapies programme, at Whitecliffe Collage of Art and Design in Auckland. This programme incorporates training in the therapeutic use of drama, creative writing, dance and movement, visual arts, and Maori and Pacific traditional arts (Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design, 2009). Additionally, Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, offer postgraduate papers within the Health Science programme, in creative/expressive therapies including dance and movement (Auckland University of Technology, 2010).

CTD: an allied approach to DMT

DMT literature discusses the term creative/therapeutic dance, as an approach allied to DMT. CTD is considered to draw on a central principle of DMT, that improvised creative dance/movement is inherently therapeutic (Meekums, 2002; Stanton-Jones, 1992). Further, CTD may use similar techniques to DMT such as, creative improvised responses to music, relaxation, breath and body awareness techniques, and opportunities to explore ways to extend movement range and interact with others (Payne, 2006; Von Rossberg-Gempton, Dickinson, & Poole, 1999).

According to DMT literature, CTD activities are beneficial and therapeutic but not therapy; unless, a qualified dance movement therapist is facilitating the class and a formal client/relationship is entered into contractually where the usual conditions and boundaries of psychotherapy apply (Meekums, 2002; Payne, 2006). Therefore CTD has, in general, developed outside of the DMT profession and has a different type of training and scope than DMT. The focus in CTD is on broadly focused therapeutic goals, such as sensory awareness, improvisation, creativity, mind/body/spirit connection. There may be less focus on the therapeutic relationship and/or targeting to specific client populations, needs and goals. Teachers of CTD are usually trained and skilled in a specific form of CTD, which may include training in psychology, that enhances their

therapeutic understanding and facilitation skills (Meekums, 2002). Research shows that CTD practices around the world are growing and developing alongside of DMT and the two can be mutually supportive of each other (Brown, Downey, Berrol, Hervey, & Cruz, 2008; Dulicai & Berger, 2005). This literature discusses how forms of CTD positively contribute to the evolution of DMT profession, providing opportunities for people to experience a variety of therapeutic dance activities.

Current context of CTD in Aotearoa/New Zealand

As stated above, due to the emerging nature of the DMT profession in this country, the term CTD was chosen to more accurately reflect the current context and approach to CTD improvisation in Aotearoa/New Zealand. This term is also linked to arts as therapy or arts access philosophy/approach. This includes support for the utility and general promotion of the arts, including dance, for broadly therapeutic goals of general self expression and development, in a wide community context. Participation in the arts is thought to be beneficial for all (Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design, 2009). There seems to be a growing number of CTD/movement practices in the local community of Auckland, Aotearoa/New Zealand, that support these goals including: somatic movement studies, contact improvisation, Halprin life/art process, 5Rhythms®, authentic movement and dreambody dance: process orientated movement. Some of these modalities have their own registered training and accreditation programme; otherwise, they have developed from individual teachers' skills, philosophy, dance/therapeutic background and culture. Participants in my dissertation were invited to discuss their experience of any CTD they regularly attended. Three participants talked about 5Rhythms® and one discussed dreambody dance: process orientated movement. I will now introduce both these forms, highlighting central concepts and their relationship to each other, literature and research.

Gabrielle Roth's 5Rhythms®

5Rhythms® is a creative, therapeutic movement practice. It is structured through a series of improvisational movement rhythms or themes, often found in traditional dance forms from around the world (Davison, 2009). 5Rhythms® is framed in spiritual and shamanic terms; movement meditation and ecstatic dance, by its founder Gabrielle Roth who describes herself as an urban shaman (Roth, 1989). The music selected is designed to stimulate a certain type of movement for the movers to explore. The five rhythms are "flowing, chaos, staccato, lyrical and stillness" (Roth, 1997, p. 12), and are described as

providing a general framework for the class, often termed a 'wave'. Within this structure creative/therapeutic/spiritual experiences may take place, including; creative improvisation, self-discovery, emotional release, self awareness, insight and experience of a greater unity (Brennan, 1999). Roth was influenced by Gestalt and Jungian therapy principles, and she describes the 5Rhythms® as metaphors for universal archetypes (Roth, 1997).

Until recently 5Rhythms® has been positioned outside of DMT literature and research. More recently, it has been included in DMT literature; described as a mix of improvised dance, movement meditation, creative expression and relationship, seeming to function as a spiritual practice and psychotherapeutic process (Payne, 2006). Currently 5Rhythms® is being developed as a form of DMT, led by psychotherapists who are teachers of 5Rhythms® (Juhan, 2003).

Dreambody dance: process orientated movement

Dreambody dance has been designed and facilitated by founder Lizzie Haylock, in Auckland, New Zealand. It originates from her training and experience in both dance and process orientated psychology. She calls her practice "a dance awareness practice" (Haylock, 2010) and uses principles of process-oriented movement psychology, developed by Arnold and Amy Mindell (Mindell, 1995; Mindell & Mindell, 1992). This work originates in part from the dream work of Jung (Fallis, 2002). Movement is seen as representing different levels of awareness, 'primary' 'secondary', 'sentient' and the 'edges' between them, all of which are explored in the dreambody dance process (Haylock, 2010). Haylock describes the process as: focusing - moment to moment on sensory awareness, exploring - in movement the feelings and tendencies within and around us, opening - the doors of perception, often elusive to normal waking consciousness and, finding - new levels of awareness (Haylock, 2010). A variety of musical rhythms support this exploration. In process orientated movement, all movements, no matter how strange or unusual, can be seen as a kind of 'dreaming unfolding' revealing meaning and significance. The aim is to not to discount ordinary consciousness/awareness but to embrace a larger or deeper experience of being in the world (Jobe, 2004). The experiences of process orientated movement have been described as deeply felt, meaningful, psychological, creative and spiritually integrating (Jobe, 2004). Currently Haylock is the founding and main teacher of dreambody dance in Aotearoa/New Zealand.

I believe there are some similar conceptual and structural elements to both 5Rhythms® dance and dreambody dance. They can both be framed as creative/therapeutic and spiritual practices. Both use predominantly ‘world’ type music (basically non-Western music of all genres) in similar ways, through a wave or cycle from low to higher intensity, peaking then slowing again, to support unfolding movement improvisation and exploration of levels of awareness. This cycle or wave could also be considered to follow human beings natural bio-energetic cycle of the nervous system; moving from low excitation, charge, discharge, plateau, relaxation and still point (Brown, 2010).

There are some differences between the practices, for example dreambody dance does not use partner dance and does not delineate the rhythms in the same way as the 5Rhythms® structure does. However for the purpose of my dissertation I am considering these forms in a general framework of creative improvised dance/movement in a group setting, in a general community context, with the broadly therapeutic goal of bio-psycho-spiritual integration.

Pre-understandings

I chose the term CTD for several reasons. First, as an umbrella term, so the inquiry could cover a range of different practices, depending on the participants experience and choice. Second, because I view various dance/movement practices through a creative and therapeutic framework; based on my personal experience, studies and practice of creative arts therapies in my work as a mental health nurse, and in facilitation of various dance/movement practices. Third, as previously described, this term is supported by and known to DMT theory and practice (Meekums, 2002; Payne, 2006). This knowledge has informed the comparisons I have given and the general introduction to the phenomenon.

However, I did encounter a tension within myself regarding the words ‘therapy’ and ‘therapeutic’ that I needed to question and explore, to maintain a reflexive approach. I became aware that I was assuming a therapeutic lens from my personal and professional background. Through review of literature, research, discussion with key people, participants and dance movement therapists, I came to believe that what I was enquiring into, while it could be called therapeutic, should be differentiated from the formal practice and profession of DMT, which I have done, in this chapter.

I discussed the term with participants. Some felt the experience should be differentiated from ‘therapy’ and ‘therapeutic’ for various reasons. For example, one participant felt that it was more of a dance ‘session’ or ‘jam’ held in an informal co-operative way by a facilitator or teacher, rather than a more formally run therapy group with a therapist. The term ‘therapeutic’ can infer pathology and treatment and as they did not consider themselves as unwell, or in need of ‘treatment’, the term therapeutic may be less acceptable to participants in a general community context of CTD.

I remained ethically responsive to this situation in various ways. For example in discussing the consent form (refer to Appendix A) with participants, I explained that I was currently using the term ‘creative/therapeutic dance’ but was interested to explore this term and asked them if they would prefer to call it something else that would fit better with their experience, and if so what might that term be. Terms such as creative dance, dance improvisation, dance meditation, dance medicine, ecstatic dance, and dance as an awareness practice were explored with participants. Other terms such as expressive movement, shamanic healing, somatic dance, and intuitive/organic movement have all been explored and considered. Through participants’ stories, conversations with key interested people, personal journaling, reflection and reviewing of the literature seen through a phenomenological lens, my understanding continued to grow and develop. However the conclusion of this enquiry was that the participants were all agreeable that the term ‘CTD’ was broadly representative of their experience. However I remain mindful of the tension of the term ‘therapeutic’, and of the general community and wellness focus in these classes. I continued to explore the experience and meaning of the term therapeutic in relation to creativity in dance and movement. This has been an important part of the journey for me, to investigate the ‘play’ of meanings of these concepts in the context of hermeneutic and phenomenological inquiry, moving back and forth between the terms and concepts, within a context of the whole experience in order to move toward acquiring an in-depth understanding.

My desire to discover more about the therapeutic aspect of this type of dance/movement was also stirred in the course of my career in mental health nursing. In my nursing work I have practiced creative therapies with clients. However, at other times this has not been possible due to a variety of factors, including a lack of understanding and acceptance of a creative therapies approach. I remember a typically frustrating interchange in the staff room of a mental health facility, when the topic of CTD and DMT was introduced by another colleague and overheard by a psychiatrist who joined

the conversation briefly, only to dismiss the activity and the notion that CTD could have any relevance in the mental health context. I remember this person having an incredulous, extremely sceptical attitude. I wanted to ‘speak up’ in defence of dance and movement as a therapeutic tool but was too self-conscious to say anything. I longed to talk about my experience of CTD; of how deeply meaningful and helpful it has been in my life. Time and time again, dance and movement classes have rejuvenated and resourced me, helping me to inhabit and enjoy my body more fully, work through emotional issues, enjoy my creativity, connect deeply with myself and others. Dance has given me a sense of integration and belonging in the world and been a source of spiritual sustenance, fulfilment and positivity that has strengthened my well being. I felt that it was not ‘safe’ to say any of this but wondered if it was possible to show inside the experience of CTD, whilst inquiring into its role in supporting mental health and general wellbeing.

Structure of this study

Chapter One: In this chapter I have introduced my research question and stated what drew me to the study. I have defined, from selected literature, the background, influences, core concepts and related aspects to my understanding of this phenomenon I call CTD. I have briefly introduced the chosen methodology, phenomenology. I have outlined the two forms of CTD that participants discuss and I have shown some of my pre-understandings and bias of CTD as a positive personal experience and a generally therapeutic practice.

Chapter Two: In the literature review, I highlight similar phenomenological studies, both DMT and CTD related, with different populations. I show the context and findings of this related research to reveal more fully the meaning and significance of my dissertation’s focus.

Chapter Three: In this chapter the philosophical approach is explored, to show the fit between the research question, phenomenon and methodology.

Chapter Four: In this chapter I outline the method and the steps taken in this research. Also addressed are the ethical/rigour issues and the productive management of these.

Chapter Five: The findings chapter shows the participants stories, my interpretation and philosophical reflection. I seek to show meaning and significance of the experience.

Chapter Six: The discussion brings the meanings into ‘play’, within the hermeneutic circle, between the themes and the essential nature of participants’ experience. The chapter considers the implications from my dissertation in the realms of practice education and research.

Literature Review

A literature review is part of the hermeneutic/ interpretive circle of inquiry which is always ongoing and incomplete, the dialectical tension between the parts and the whole (Herda, 1999). In this literature review I will discuss related research, phenomenological studies of DMT and CTD including 5Rhythms® dance and dreambody dance. I will consider the key findings, similarities and differences, in relation to my dissertation.

DMT and CTD literature / research

There is a general need for research into DMT and CTD as evolving practices, related to health and well being. In current DMT research there exhibits a tension between positivist and interpretive means of understanding (Higgins, 2001). Historically quantitative studies, describing interventions and examining effectiveness have been popular; the clinical case study has been a frequent DMT research method (Stanton-Jones, 1992). Other research has focused on investigating the potential of movement-based assessment tools unique to DMT, for diagnostic and treatment purposes (Ritter & Low, 1996). There has been continued encouragement to produce more quantitative research, particularly using designs such as randomised controlled trials to show experimental evidence of effectiveness. This is seen to respond to the need to provide quantitative evidence to help legitimise DMT as a developing profession and secure funding from governing health care bodies (Cruz & Berrol, 2004; Dulicai & Berger, 2005).

However, other DMT literature supports the use of qualitative/interpretive research methodologies (Brown et al., 2008; Horton-Raleigh & Hanstein, 1999; Koch & Bräuninger, 2006; Mullane, 2003). There exists an epistemological inconsistency between the intersubjective nature of the practice of DMT, with its phenomenological, artistic and embodied origins, and the positivist research methodologies (Berrol, 2000; Brown et al., 2008; Higgins, 2001; Linesch, 1994). As Mullane (2003) points out, it is often the client's voice that is left out, as many studies are based on therapists' descriptions rather than the clients/participants' opinions of how they experienced the phenomenon (Davison, 2009). Therefore, phenomenological studies are a vital source of knowledge, providing insights and feedback to enhance therapeutic understanding, evaluation, safety, growth and improvement (Koch & Bräuninger, 2006).

Regarding CTD, a less formal practice outside the clinical realm of DMT, there is less formal scholarly literature and research available. It includes many established and

evolving practices that would benefit from further investigation. I will now review related research that used a phenomenological or interpretive paradigm to explore the lived experience of DMT and CTD, as a background and comparison to my dissertation.

Lived experience of DMT

Mullane's (2003) phenomenological study focused on the lived experience of DMT in a group setting for women survivors of sexual assault. The thematic descriptions and understandings highlighted the lived experience of embodiment. This major theme of bodily awareness included both bodily disaffection and bodily enjoyment. Other themes were memories and associations, transformation, freedom, and group relationships. The women all considered the DMT experience meaningful and therapeutic. Also the sense of healing was enhanced through talking about their experiences, in the course of the study.

Hammond-Meirs (1992) clinically applied phenomenological study, on the lived experience of DMT for two women with depressive symptoms, similarly highlighted themes of the importance and meaning of connection to a bodily felt sense of self. The essential themes involved: (1) a sense of felt freedom to move through wide range of movement, (2) an enhanced experience of the immediacy of bodily-felt movement, (3) connecting movement experiences to functioning in the lived-world, (4) acknowledgement of their body's wisdom and kinaesthetic understanding, (5) creatively connecting the meaning of these understandings to their life situations, (6) an awareness of self-evolution through movement, (7) more care for their body-selves, (8) an appreciation of their spiritual growth as connected to bodily-felt self, and (9) an enhanced kinaesthetic sense of self-in-the-world.

Mills and Daniluck's (2002) phenomenological study explores the lived experience of DMT for six women who were survivors of childhood sexual abuse. Findings highlighted the therapeutic nature of dance/movement; how it enhances healing and change in participants' lives. Themes arising were embodiment, playfulness, struggle, spontaneity, intimate connection and freedom. The discussion highlighted the importance of understanding the language of the body and its role of healing.

De Leon's (2007) phenomenological hermeneutic research explored the experience of stillness in the practice of dance performance and in relation to dance psychotherapy. Themes of chaos, stillness, relationality, time, authenticity, symbolism, awareness,

focus, and release were found. The symbolic language of dance was found to arise from stillness. The embodied experience of stillness within the dance was seen to have the capacity to hold and express the sense of ‘being’ in both dancer and watcher in dance performance. Stillness became a symbolic and therapeutic container in which healing has the potential to take place for both witness and dancer.

Lived experience of CTD

Tina Stromsted’s (2000) doctoral dissertation explored the process and nature of spiritually transformative experiences occurring during a therapeutic and meditative practice called ‘Authentic Movement’ (AM), developed by Mary Whitehouse and Janet Adler. Stromsted started from her own experience with the premise that AM is ‘transformative’. She wanted to reveal the ‘how’ and the meaning of transformation through AM. Stromsted focused on her own and four co-researchers’ stories of their lived experience, from many years of this practice, using an organic research methodology. This methodology combined a heuristic and feminist approach described as letting the data interpretation reveal itself through various creative methods, such as dreams, intuitive movement practices, dancing, drawings, free association writing, bodily felt sensing, creative dialogue. Themes emerged of healing, integration, bodily experience, awakening the conscious feminine principle, mystical experience, cross-cultural experience, finding authenticity and relationship between body and earth. The essence of the transformation was “descent and return” (p. 227). Similar to archetypal myth and legends this metaphor symbolizes a slow process of deep psychological and spiritual journeying and development over many years. The conclusion being that A.M provided a sacred, embodied source of knowing, connection, and healing for these participants.

5Rhythms® practice and process orientated movement have been included in a small number of qualitative studies. I will discuss three of these studies in relation to this current dissertation

Process orientated movement research

In a phenomenological study involving process orientated movement, Fallis (2002) explored the nature and meaning of spiritual experiences that occur during CTD/movement. In her study six participants were invited to describe in detail their experience of three practices: process-oriented movement AM, and Marion Woodman’s image in the body process. All three of these practices are described as coming from

Jungian psychology and involving spontaneous movement following inner impulses, in the presence of a witness or witnesses. The study revealed the practices had the ability to explore, contain, and in brief moments, resolve, many of the stresses and personal issues felt in life. Participants called this “momentary dissolving of duality” (Fallis, 2002, p. 4), involving a felt revelation of something new and profound settling in the body and mind. Insights appeared that are similar to those found throughout mystical literature. Participants struggled to find words to articulate these sometimes ineffable experiences. They described the experience of having their experiences heard and received in a positive and respectful manner, as affirming and transformative, helping with the challenge of integrating the meaning of the experiences into everyday life.

5Rhythms® research

Davison (2009) conducted an applied hermeneutic phenomenological study into 12 women’s experiences in five expressive movement practices including, yogadance®, authentic movement, 5Rhythms®, contact improvisation and African dance. Similar to my dissertation, Davison highlights the fact that although there is a relationship to psychology, these practices occur within a community dance framework and focus on the inherent experience and worth of expressive movement rather than a formal DMT perspective. Core themes that emerged were: conscious connection, embodiment, play and relationship. Her research affirms a role for CTD in prevention, resiliency and well being, embedded in a community context.

Similarly Cook et al.’s (2004) study of 5Rhythms®, highlights the general community dance context. This study interviewed 18 women regarding their lived experience of 5Rhythms®. Participants were recruited from the general public to participate in four 5Rhythms® dance workshops to explore its role in general and mental health. Over half of the participants recruited had been regularly attending 5Rhythms® for between one and 10 years. A qualitative participatory approach involved survey, interviews, diaries and focus groups to explore the women’s’ experience. Analysis showed themes of: safe space, freedom of expression, structure, powerful music and group connections. In regard to mental well being, participants described their experience as transformative, helping them ‘let go’ from feeling ‘stuck’, releasing powerful feelings and integrating parts of themselves. The longer term dancers reported using regular dancing as part of their resources for dealing with emotional crises and to maintain emotional well being. The dance was considered to be a powerful emotional and therapeutic experience and

seems to act in a way that helps maintain psychic well being for a community of people. The authors affirm that 5Rhythms® dance is not a formal therapy and participants need to be able to take responsibility for their emotional well being. However recommendations conclude that this dance should be well promoted and accessible to more people, as a general therapeutic tool to support well being.

Juhan's (2004) doctoral study is a phenomenological study of 5Rhythms® and 'open floor', which is a practice Juhan developed that combines 5Rhythms® with gestalt and integrative body psychotherapy methods. 27 long time participants were interviewed following a workshop on 5Rhythms® and open floor. The themes of the 5Rhythms® process was: moving, awareness, and acceptance, relationship and positive vibrations. The themes of experiencing the 5Rhythms® practice was: an embodied sense of awareness, spirituality, acceptance, aliveness and enjoyment of themselves and others. The spiritual dimensions of the practice were prioritized, especially valued was the theme of "disappearing in the dance" (p. 91) welcoming dissolution of usual identity, cultivating altered states (of consciousness, time and space) accessing healing vibrations, and a meditative one-ness consciousness. The themes from the open floor process were: embodiment, being seen/fear of being seen, emergence of personal patterns and issues, universality, witnessing and support. Both practices were seen as filling a fundamental role for community in which to celebrate and honour life.

5Rhythms® was perceived to share common ground with the DMT focus on movement as form of expression and communication promoting healing; however, differences were highlighted. 5Rhythms® focuses not only on healing personal issues but people experience benefits of a creative community that formed around the 5Rhythms® practice. Juhan mentions the fact that more men attend 5Rhythms® than other forms of CTD creating a "different kind of intimacy challenge" (p. 274). Conclusions were drawn in regard to 5Rhythms® being a "versatile vehicle for the embodiment of psychological growth processes, healing and community development" (p. 278) and confirmed potential for further development of these practices. The two main recommendations from this study were: (1) training and support for health professionals to understand CTD as a way of heightening awareness, sensitivity and compassion toward the lived body, and (2) further research to investigate these practices as creative healing tools, rituals and philosophies, particularly regarding their spiritual role in healing.

Summary

The literature search revealed a limited number of qualitative studies related to CTD. I reviewed research that was phenomenological in nature and investigated DMT and CTD practices that bear close relation with my dissertation, in terms of methodology, phenomenon and sample. All of the reviewed studies had a positive message regarding the overall experience of CTD. There were some differences, in comparison to my dissertation, in terms of the methodological structure and methods used. Some of the studies involved experiential sessions of CTD facilitated by the researchers, some of whom who were DMT therapists or (non DMT) psychotherapists (Davison, 2009; Juhan, 2003; Mullane, 2003). Other applied studies, involved movement sessions that were facilitated, but not by the researcher (Cook et al., 2004; Fallis, 2002). Stromsted's (1999) study was similar to my dissertation in that it was reflective and heuristic rather than applied and focused on her own and four other co-researchers' lived experience of AM practice. My dissertation is non-clinical, while still exploring the therapeutic experience and meaning for participants. Further, this research is not applied; it does not involve the researcher in the teaching/facilitation role.

This review suggests that phenomenological inquiry into CTD is a valuable means of gathering deep and integrated understandings. My dissertation builds on this review of related literature, presenting an opportunity to explore the lived experience of two forms of group CTD, within a general community context. It is intended to grow understanding of the evolving nature of both DMT and CTD within Aotearoa/New Zealand.

Chapter Three presents the methodology, philosophical underpinnings and Chapter Four, presents the methods used in my dissertation.

Methodology

Philosophical underpinnings

My understandings of the philosophical underpinnings of this study are now offered for consideration. Phenomenology and its approach/relationship to psychology, arts, existential inquiry and hermeneutics will be discussed in this chapter.

Phenomenology

My research question was framed in the context of my beginner's knowledge of phenomenology, as a methodology that addresses the nature of experience from an ontological and situational perspective. This methodology was in harmony with the research question: to investigate the lived experience of CTD from the participants' point of view, and from my own interest in deeply understanding the phenomenon. This is consistent with van Manen's (1997) assertion that phenomenology as a chosen methodology should be driven by a certain dialectic between the research question and the researcher's own interest in the field of study and the methodology. There is also a good fit between the methodology and the understanding of CTD's underpinnings; as a phenomenological, existential, psychological, artistic way of being in the world (Fraleigh, 2004; Halprin, 2003).

Being-in-the-world

Phenomenology is both a philosophy and research method, encompassing a certain attitude and practice of attentive awareness to the things of the world as we live them; rather than, as we conceptualize or theorize (Owen, 1994; van Manen, 1997). It seeks to articulate experience as actually had (Gendlin, 1997). In this way phenomenology explores deeply what it means to be human (van Manen, 1997). This philosophical approach supports my aim to reveal clarity, depth of understanding and meaning of being in CTD, through interpretation starting from the participant's subjective experience. van Manen's (1997) interpretive phenomenology was chosen because it enabled the possibility of rich existential and ontological insights into the experience.

The phenomenological method was first developed by Edmund Husserl [1859-1938]. Husserl came from a positivist perspective and used a mathematical reductive process and bracketing (setting aside pre-assumptions) to move toward understanding the essences of consciousness (Koch, 1996; Owen, 1994). van Manen's work is drawn from Martin Heidegger [1889-1976] and his study of the ontology of essences, the origins

and dimensions of existence in the human-world (Crotty, 1998). Heidegger developed an interpretive approach to phenomenology and re-directed the orientation from consciousness (metaphysics) to existence (ontology) of 'Being'. He called this 'being-in-the-world', existence that is embedded in a meaningful world of particular relationships, practices, language and culture (Leonard, 1989). He drew a distinction between consciousness as Being, and the ability to understand our being-in-the-world. He called this 'Dasein' (being there); the being that becomes present to us, through our perception and interpretation of the realities in our world (Crotty, 1998). Dasein is both personal and mysterious, as it also recognizes aspects of one's existence that lie on the periphery of sentient awareness (consciousness). Heidegger talks of a 'thrown-ness' to being-in-the-world; finding oneself 'thrown' into situations and making intuitive interpretations, depending on our own meaning structure or 'pre-understandings' (Heidegger, 1962/1995; Svenaeus, 2001).

Phenomenology, psychology and the arts

Heidegger's philosophy about human reality changed classical ideas about the self and psychology. This kind of interpretive perspective seeks to illuminate the nature of experience through understanding how the person themselves subjectively experiences something, rather than referring a person's experience to a pre-established theoretical framework (Owen, 1994). Heidegger asserted that arts and deep phenomenological thinking can unite the subject/object divide, bringing greater insight into what it means to be in the world than what is achieved through objective scientific knowledge (Heidegger, 1962/1995; Todres, 2007).

Heidegger understood the arts as occupying a central role in the analysis of human existence; he used the term 'poiesis' to refer to the aesthetic/creative potential at the centre of being (Heidegger, 1962/1995; Levine, 1997; Svenaeus, 2001). This phenomenological approach has influenced inquiry into the nature of expressive arts practice, including CTD (Halprin, 2003; Knill et al., 2005). Theory and practice of expressive arts as therapeutic also draws on phenomenological perspectives (Fraleigh, 2004; Knill et al., 2005; Linesch, 1994). The roots of CTD come from phenomenological concern for human experience as lived, through uncovering and creating meaning in movement (Halprin, 2003; Knill et al., 2005). In this way the research focus has a good fit with the methodology. Bringing an awareness of Heidegger's philosophical approach of 'poiesis', to this study, helps me to 'hold the

door ajar' for creative/artistic understandings of the phenomenon, to the challenge and the possibility of creative discovery beyond my pre-understandings.

Existential lifeworld reflection

Heidegger claims human reality can be revealed in potentiality or 'clearing', a site where an existential Being-ness is revealed through investigation of being-in-the-world (Crotty, 1998). In this way phenomenological interpretation aims to make explicit what is implicit in the experience, moving toward the meaning of 'Being' in both a situated and essential way (Crotty, 1998; Gendlin, 1969; Safranski, 1999; Todres, 2007). This line of phenomenological enquiry focuses on every day experience in order to reflect and explicate our relationship to fundamental implicit existential structures essential to being-in-the-world.

Existential domains of being form structures of humans "lifeworld", (van Manen, 1997, p. 90). Each domain reveals particular situated aspects and, because each domain anticipates the others, this reflection moves toward an understanding of the essence of whole (van Manen, 1997). van Manen (1997) utilises four of these domains as guides for a reflective research process. These are "lived space (spatiality), lived body (corporeality), lived time (temporality), and lived human relation (relationality or communality)" (p. 101). Heidegger was also concerned with mood or feeling as an existential structure, due to its organising and pervasive influence on experience (Todres & Wheeler, 2001).

The terms 'lived' experience and 'lifeworld' focuses on the non dualistic, uniting the subject/object divide, this characterises the phenomenological intersubjective approach (Fraleigh, 1991; van Manen, 1997). For example dance is not experienced as a static thing; it exists as bodily expression in motion, through time and space. There may also be an essence, an essential quality that characterises a particular dance experience (Fraleigh, 1991). Dialoguing with these domains of being is a starting point that allows me to focus on and honour the particular experiences participants described while also exploring them in a fundamentally existential way.

Hermeneutic interpretation

Hermeneutics was originally concerned with the interpretation of sacred texts, and later became a philosophical position on interpretation (Lavery, 2003). Hermeneutic interpretation is based on the notion of inter-subjectivity; the assumption that human

beings share a common world and that this world can be interpreted through examining language, culture and tradition (Crotty, 1998). According to Heidegger, interpretation is a pre-existing given to being in the world, we are never not interpreting (Heidegger, 1962/1995). The researcher brings their own idiosyncratic understandings to a hermeneutic circle of inquiry (van Manen, 1997). The circle revolves around the fore-structure (pre-understandings), 'lifeworld' (existential domains of meaning), ontology (essential existence), and Dasein (embedded situated meaning) (Crotty, 1998; Laverty, 2003). A quality of hermeneutics is the ability to be responsive to emerging themes and relationships with this hermeneutic circle of interpretation.

Phenomenology philosopher Hans Gadamer [1900-2002] also explored hermeneutical interpretation. He uses the term 'horizon' of understanding; the range of vision seen from one's particular vantage point, based on one's historically and culturally embedded pre-understandings (Gadamer, 1975). We are historical beings, 'standing in' or embedded as part of the life that we are trying to understand, imbued with personal texture and structure (Todres, 2007). Similarly there is no detached reader; the reader is participating in the finding, through their historical consciousness meeting the text (Finlay, 2008; van Manen, 1998). The event of understanding, hermeneutically described, is one in which a person's horizons are challenged and expanded to include new information. Gadamer (1975) calls this a "fusing of horizons" (p. 269).

I involved myself in the hermeneutic circle by reflecting on my own horizons. For example, I became aware of how I have prioritized a positivist pathway of inquiry; leading to the valuing the 'gold standard' of evidence based practice. I understand this as being related to my related to my anxiety as a beginning practitioner in creative arts therapy, wanting to understand and 'prove' the worth of CTD and my conditioning to value the objective science perspective in 'evidence based' nursing practice. When I become aware of these pre-understandings through reflection, I can open my horizon and broaden my horizons within the hermeneutic circle, consistent with a self reflexive process. Reflecting on participants' lived experience in this way, sheds light on different qualities, explores deeper meanings and reveals a different kind of worth or truth in my ongoing analysis. The researcher and reader will be responsive to the text in their own ways, from their particular 'horizon' of consciousness (Herda, 1999).

In conclusion the philosophical underpinnings that inform my dissertation are the interpretive approach to being-in-the-world, an intersubjective psychology, an artistic

approach of poiesis, existential lifeworld reflection and the hermeneutic circle of inquiry. The next chapter outlines the methodological steps of the inquiry.

Method

This section will delineate the ethical considerations, methodological structure, steps, and rigour involved in the research. The ethical considerations include: the Treaty of Waitangi, protecting participants and minimizing risk. I will discuss the participant selection, sample and rationale. The procedure for data management and analysis will be outlined. The data analysis method is detailed. I will also discuss the strategies I used to ensure rigour, credibility transferability, dependability and reflexivity.

Ethical considerations

I reviewed basic ethical values in regard to this research, voluntary and informed consent, and minimisation of risk (Burns & Grove, 1995). Also essential to ethical research processes in Aotearoa/New Zealand is social and cultural sensitivity including commitment to Treaty of Waitangi principles of participation, protection and partnership.

Treaty of Waitangi

Central to health research in Aotearoa/New Zealand is adherence to the principles of partnership, protection and participation outlined in the Treaty of Waitangi. I reviewed literature related to Maori concepts of health, healing and creative arts in order to expand my horizons of understandings and interpretations (Martin, 2005). I consulted Creative Arts Therapies Association Aotearoa (CTAA) as a key organisational stakeholder, of which I am a member, for input into my proposed research in terms of cultural sensitivity. Atitara Ah Yek, the Maori and Pacifica advisor on the committee of CTAA was aware of my research and was available for consultation regarding aspects of culture in participants' stories. I sought to become aware of participant's cultural values and their importance in participants' descriptions of lived experience. I reflected on these issues and questions that I needed to consider in order to incorporate Maori perspectives, honour the Treaty principles and provide cultural safety and sensitivity for participants and their stories.

Ethical approval

I applied to Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEK) for ethical approval, completing the self assessment and application forms. I identified my research was of low ethical risk due to it being educational and non clinical in nature. I was granted ethical approval from AUTEK on the 15th June 2009.

Protection of participants

Issues pertaining to protection of participants are intertwined with the Treaty of Waitangi principles of partnership, participation and protection; including, voluntary participation, informed consent excluding/minimising risk, and confidentiality. There was no coercion to participate in this research. The research process occurred in partnership between the participants and me as researcher. I invited people known to me, who had indicated their interest to take part in the study, to read the Participant Information Sheet (refer to Appendix B), which was written in plain clear language appropriate to the potential participants. There was open discussion and disclosure with prospective participants regarding the proposed study. This included transparency and negotiation regarding the processes of the research they would be asked to agree to participate in: reflection on their usual CTD participation in an audio taped interview, reading/review of their transcript and follow up interview/conversation if they wished. Potential participants were informed if they decided not to respond to the invitation to participate that decision would be respected, as well as the right and respect to stop participating in the research at any point.

I approached people who had regular and recent experience of the phenomenon. I recognised that revealing personal experiences could be an intense experience and possible distress or discomfort could be triggered in the interview. I planned to manage this risk, in the event this occurred, in two steps. First, I would ask the participant what they needed, for example time out or stopping the interview. Second, a dance/movement therapist, known to me, offered to provide a confidential dance/movement therapy session for no cost to the participant if this may be helpful to work through any uncomfortable material evoked. Three free counselling sessions, for research participants, was also available through AUT Health and Counselling. Effort was made to preserve participants' anonymity; participants chose pseudonyms and any other identifying details were changed. All information from participants was treated as confidential, unless participants indicated otherwise. All tapes transcripts and stories were held in a locked filing cabinet in a secure location at AUT. These will be destroyed after six years. I decided not to use a transcriptionist partly in order to enhance protection for the participants, and also to allow me to hear again the participants' stories and become more familiar with the data.

Choosing the participants

I have chosen a purposive sampling strategy (Grbich, 1998). In phenomenological research, purposive sampling provides a good fit with the research question as it involves deliberately selecting participants that can best provide the information needed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

The sample was guided by my interest and knowledge of the topic, literature and research, potential participants' level of experience, and by the current context of CTD in the local community. For the purposes of the study, participants who chose to take part were required to have recent engagement in group CTD, with a facilitator who has training and experience in their modality of CTD. The size of the research project meant that focusing on in-depth lived experience of four people proved to be sufficient to draw rich data for analysis. The participants selected had a passion for the study, a wealth of experience in group CTD and met the criteria above. The participants chosen, who gave their consent prior to interview, were three women and one male, ranging in age from 30-50 years, with 5-25 years experience in CTD. Two were of English ethnicity, one was Israeli, and one identified as Pakeha, born in New Zealand.

Data collection - the conversational interview

The interview was designed to encourage reflection on the dance/movement experience and meaning, drawing out specific qualities of experience that make it uniquely what it is to the participants (van Manen 1990). The hermeneutic interview has a conversational structure and is oriented to making sense and interpreting meanings as well as gathering the stories of experience (van Manen, 1997). Therefore the discussion was jointly guided by my own interest and experience, phenomenological questions and the participants experience and interest. As the stories emerge, the conversation is led in various interpretive directions (Herda, 1999; Koch 1996).

I discussed this conversational style of interview with participants and acknowledged our shared knowledge and experience of CTD. In doing so, I hoped to modify the traditional power relationships between researcher and researched (Barbour, 2006). The interviews were largely unstructured to allow participants to reflect on their own experience. However, I had some general questions to provide parameters for themes of analysis consistent with the hermeneutical process. It is important participants know they play the major part in explicating the knowledge and understanding (Herda 1999); therefore, participants were encouraged to discuss, as they wished, all relevant ideas to

their lived experience. I contributed to the conversation from my own experience. I framed some of the questions from my own CTD experience, using self-disclosure as a way of encouraging open conversation and engaging in a shared interpreting process. I consider this enhanced the data collection. It seemed to encourage a flow of conversation during the interview and a continuing dialogue with the participants. They were also interested in follow up conversations and the process of clarifying and developing shared understandings continued between us beyond the initial interview.

The interviews were timed to be within a week of their most recent CTD class so participants could draw from recent experience, if they wished. I aimed to provide a supportive and non-judgemental environment for them to feel safe in sharing their thoughts and emotions regarding their experiences. The interviews took place at the participants' chosen location; two participants chose their own home, one a secluded café corner and one chose to come to my home. This person is someone with whom I have a long standing relationship so I considered this appropriate to the situation. As part of a collaborative partnership I was open to shared discoveries in the interview process. One participant suggested we take time to get 'grounded', and so we did some relaxation and breathing techniques together. I focused on empathetic reflection in the interviewing to elicit feelings and meanings (Mills & Daniluk, 2002). I also used kinaesthetic attunement/empathy in the interview, similar to the facilitator's state in CTD practice (Knill et al., 2005).

The few basic questions I decided to use were intended to elicit the kind of detail and meaning aimed for in phenomenology (Herda, 1999). These were as follows. Tell me about an early experience of CTD/movement? Can you talk about a time it helped you through something? What is your experience of space, time, body, relationship, mood in CTD? I engaged through listening, reflection, questioning and clarifying until we came to a place we agreed the topic had been penetrated with rich detail, for the time being. During the interview and transcribing I noted emerging themes, words and topics that could be used as possible prompts in the subsequent interviews.

The conversations were recorded and transcribed as whole. The transcript then becomes the text (van Manen, 1997). I did the transcribing myself, in order to maintain my close orientation to the lived experience, and to hear again and reflect on the conversations from a different perspective, as I transcribed them (Herda, 1999). The transcript was given to the participants for them to review and reflect upon, make any changes to what

they said, and discuss further with me if they wish. In particular I requested participants to check that I have not changed the meaning of ideas and that they were happy for these to be used as data. Participants were informed if they wished to withdraw participation or any part of their conversation that would be respected. In this process I continued to record my own thoughts/feelings and observations in personal log/journal.

Data analysis

Bearing in mind that phenomenological inquiry cannot be forced into a series of technical procedures, a variety of approaches that follow a frame work for data analysis can be helpful for the beginning researcher (van Manen, 1997). I followed van Manen's (1997) methodical structure for the hermeneutic (interpretative) phenomenological inquiry into CTD. Within this structure, van Manen describes six inter-related activities which I have used to guide my thematic analysis. Next, I reflect on how I followed these six activities and what this means for my dissertation. van Manen (1997) asserts that this structure "is more a carefully cultivated thoughtfulness than a technique" (van Manen, 1997, p. 130).

1. "Turning to a phenomenon which seriously interests us and commits us to the world" (van Manen, 1997, p. 130).

I have a deep interest and commitment to CTD practice. A phenomenological orientation provided me with the opportunity to explore the experience and meaning of this activity as lived, in an in-depth thinking way that fits with my orientation toward CTD as a profoundly existential activity.

2. "Investigating experience as we live it rather than as we conceptualise it" (van Manen, 1997, p. 130).

Research that focuses on investigation of lived experience provides a different orientation, the opportunity to explore the content of particular situations, contexts and experiences 'as lived' by participants in my dissertation.

3. "Reflecting on the essential themes which characterise the phenomenon" (van Manen, 1997, p. 130).

Through dialogue and reflection with the participants' transcripts, resonances around central phrases begin to appear. Through sustained reflection on these units of meaningful text, thematic definitions may form. van Manen likens themes as "knots in

the web around which lived experiences are spun and lived as a meaningful whole” (van Manen, 1997, p. 90).

4. “Describing the phenomenon through the art of writing and rewriting” (van Manen, 1997, p. 130)

I attempted to look and listen ever more closely at the participant’s authentic experiential accounts, being sensitive to the senses evoked, bodily feeling understandings, creative thinking and interpretations as they showed themselves by writing and re-writing. In working with the text deeply on the horizon of my understanding, writing and re-writing, this step provides the opportunity and challenge to engage in a continuous cycle of thinking and writing.

5. “Maintaining a strong and oriented pedagogical relation to the phenomenon” (van Manen, 1997, p. 130).

I stay engaged and animated by the phenomena through this writing, dialogue, reading, and my own participation and facilitation of CTD and somatic practices. I kept coming back to the lived experience of CTD, through my own experience, the participants’ stories, their voices and words, and putting aside theory for the time being.

6. “Balancing the research context by considering parts and whole” (van Manen, 1997, p. 130).

I maintained a sustained and critical inquiry, working the hermeneutic circle, keeping open to possibilities that reveal more of the meaning and understanding of the whole and essences of the CTD experience. Using a phenomenological orientation provided a new opportunity for me, to re-examine my own philosophical assumptions, uncover, reflect and clarify some pre-understandings. I learnt more deeply the value of becoming conscious of the horizons of pre-understandings, tradition and culture, phenomenological understanding and the mystery of ‘being’ and being-in-the-world of CTD.

I also used van Manen’s holistic, selective and detailed approaches to inform my thematic analysis. I worked with each transcript individually and followed these approaches step wise as suggested (van Manen, 1997).

First I used the holistic approach. This involved reviewing the transcript in its entirety to develop an overview; I made notes about my impressions of this in my journal log. Using the selective approach, I read and re-read the transcript several times in-depth, taking time to dwell with the material, to reflect and feel into what I sensed what were the most 'alive' and resonant phrases and stories that were within the experience of CTD. Significant phrases and stories were extracted and crafted into thematic stories. I noted some of these stories appeared and were lifted virtually unchanged as stand-alone extractions. Other data required more crafting into story in order to reveal their essential thematic content.

Working with these stories I used the detailed line by line approach looking at each sentence highlighting significant statements, noting selected phrases and words that may reveal essential dimensions of the experience, the question being "What does this phrase or sentence seem to reveal about the meaning of this phenomenon?" (van Manen, 1997, p. 90).

I reviewed a range of phenomenological writing to explore aspects of meaning (Koch, 1999; van Manen, 1997). For example Todres (2007) work in phenomenological aspects of research, psychotherapy and spirituality provided inspiration and highlighted the importance of the hermeneutic circle. Moving between the texture of the specifically situated descriptions and reflecting on essential meaning structures furthers thinking and interpretation. In my interpretation, the lifeworld domains provided an essentially supportive structure and became part of the main themes. I explored CTD as an existential experience that reveals essential meanings of 'being' while also considering specific situated meanings. This becomes a 'play', back and forth in the hermeneutic circle.

While there is a system to interpretive phenomenology the analysis is also a creative imaginative act (Todres, 2007; van Manen, 1997, 2002). The process is one of continuous writing and re-writing to achieve a deepening level of analysis. Each new act of investigation taking into account everything that had been learned so far. It is a complex process of insight, invention, comparison, contrast, discovery and disclosure (Herda, 1999). Themes and insights remained 'in play' through continually examining, articulating, re-interpreting, omitting, adding, reformulating. In conversation with participants, and my supervisor, colleagues, and friends with a strong interest in the phenomenon, we discussed the text, the emerging perspectives, themes, insights and

interpretations. I recorded or journalled these and they became part of the ongoing analysis.

I aimed for creativity to also inform this process and to be responsive to the embodied non-verbal nature of CTD and the poetic, metaphorical and symbolic language of the participants and the phenomenon. Themes reveal themselves in creative, exploratory and tentative ways, in moments of understanding and insight (Levine, 1997). In my analysis I used Gendlin's (1969) 'focusing' technique to find the bodily 'felt sense' of the data, sensing into what was most 'alive' in the transcript to help reveal the 'presence' of phenomena in more holistic way (Gendlin, 1969; Todres, 2007). I listened to audio excerpts of Sondra Perl's work on "writing with the body" (Perl, 2004, p. 2), to encourage creativity in my writing. For example when reading, thinking and writing, I aimed to open my awareness to body feelings or images to find words at the 'horizon' of my thoughts (Perl, 2004). I also committed to participating weekly in CTD classes, to stay closely related to the phenomena. I sometimes read aloud or experimented with movement and art as part of reflecting and interpreting, 'dancing the data' to highlight its evocative dimensions, provide different 'channels' for the material to be reflected upon and explore new perspectives of the phenomena (Horton-Raleigh & Hanstein, 1999; Knill et al., 2005).

Rigour

There has been much debate regarding what constitutes rigour in qualitative research (Kitto, Chesters, & Grbich, 2008; Koch, 1996, 1999). Koch (1996; 1999) prefers the term trustworthiness as a more expanded concept of rigour. Smith (1999) points out that procedural rigour, that is the methodology of rigour, must be considered in the broader context, together with the theoretical, interpretive, evaluative, ethical and political dimensions of rigour. As Koch describes (1996) the procedure we follow also reflects our own perspective and values. Therefore, the following considerations are what I believe to be most pertinent to rigour in this interpretive phenomenological study. They reflect my current horizon of understanding and my situated perspective which is also based on my values. These considerations are: paradigmatic, methodological and interpretive awareness regarding the research question, credibility or truth value, transferability or fittingness, dependability or auditability and researcher reflexivity. I believe they address concerns of rigour important to my dissertation. I note that some of

the activities within these categories above overlap and pertain to each other, for example reflexivity is part of every aspect of rigour (Beck, 1993; Sharts-Hopko, 2002).

Firstly, central to rigour is the awareness of the various philosophical positions and the way in which they inform the research process. The whole inquiry process needs to be informed by an understanding and justified relationship between research question, methodology, theoretical perspective, epistemology and ontology (Crotty, 1998; Koch, 1996; Laverty, 2003). As described, I have strived to understand or 'stand in' van Manen's interpretive phenomenology process in relation to the research question, consistent with the methods phenomenological, ontological and epistemological foundations. Balancing this expanded perspective regarding rigour is the need to follow procedural or methodological rigour, transparently explicating the way the research is conducted (Kitto et al., 2008).

Credibility

Credibility is promoted when the researcher considers their own relation to the phenomenon, stays close to the experience through prolonged engagement, engages in peer review and describes and interprets their experience as researchers (Beck, 1993; Finlay, 2006; Koch, 1996). Self-awareness of the researcher is essential. One way I increased my self-awareness was to keep a journal in which the content and the process of interactions were noted, including reactions to various events such as supervision, and ongoing reflections from reading and writing. I also stayed close to the phenomenon through my own regular practice of CTD. Another method I employed was using detailed rich and vivid excerpts of transcript. This reduces the likelihood of misrepresentation. I also searched for examples of variety not conformity between participants' stories in order to minimize bias of only showing the data in a particular light (Finlay, 2006).

I had a prolonged engagement and a cyclical approach to the collection and analysis whereby they formed an integrated activity. For example I kept in contact with the participants and other peers involved in CTD, engaged in discussing the transcript and emerging interpretations derived from analysis with participants. Three of the participants chose to have follow up conversations to discuss insights and further thoughts on their experience that had emerged and these were integrated into the ongoing thinking and data analysis. These participants discussed how they particularly valued reading their transcript and how it had helped them reflect, provided insight and

helped integrate some experiences of CTD. I also read widely and consulted with others who were meaningfully engaged in CTD, including experienced leaders and practitioners of CTD and DMT. These activities increase the credibility of the study (Kitto et al., 2008).

Transferability / fittingness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) use the term transferability instead of applicability (used more in quantitative analysis) to discuss the importance of providing sufficient contextual information that allows similar interpretations to be possible by others. Also related is showing the fittingness of the research question to the context so that the readers can decide how useful the findings might be in different contexts. The themes that emerged are situated and specific to the context detailed however through providing this detail understanding of the general phenomena can be enhanced.

Dependability / auditability

One of the ways in which a research study may be shown to be dependable is by showing an audit trail. This includes documentation and rationale regarding methodological decisions, for example sampling, data collection and analysis (Kitto et al., 2008). The process should be traceable and available for interested parties to follow from beginning to end. I have described in some detail, the background context and literature, methodology and methods including participant selection, interviewing and the method of analysis in my dissertation, showing this to be an auditable process of inquiry.

Researcher reflexivity

Reflexivity involves the researcher critically reflecting on themselves, for example, my own prejudices and pre-understandings (Laverty, 2003). The researcher examines what they already know about a subject and how this may colour their interpretation, their biases and assumptions (Kitto et al., 2008). In the process of my dissertation I have engaged in critical reflection through thinking, conversations, writing and reading, to examine my own lived experience and constructed meanings of the phenomena of CTD and related research issues (Koch, 1996; Smith, 1999). I was interviewed by a researcher to elucidate my understandings and positioning in regard to my experience of the phenomenon. I became more aware of my multiple situated selves, social/cultural/historical; for example, a white woman of European descent and middle

class background, a CTD participant, a creative arts therapies student, a mental health nurse (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Other biases have been discussed, such as my long positive association with CTD.

I continued to reflect throughout the course of the research on my own identity, ontology, epistemology and world views, documenting and deconstructing, my reactions, suppositions and theories as part of the rigour in my dissertation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Herda, 1999). For example, my bias showed itself when my supervisor instructed me to “just write”, without reference to theoretical literature on the topic. As discussed in the methodology section, I was surprised to discover I still held an unconscious bias towards quantitative methods, due to an anxiety to accumulate more concrete and technical knowledge that I can justify and apply to practice, to bolster my confidence as a beginning creative arts therapist.

I aimed to have a balance between thinking, reading and writing activities. I explored DMT theory and research, philosophical phenomenological thinking (based on van Manen, Heideggerian and Gadamerian perspectives) and reflected on arts/dance based phenomenological research and literature to support my enquiry (De Leon, 2007; Fraleigh, 2004; Hammond-Meiers, 1992; Knill et al., 2005; Levine, 1997; Mills & Daniluk, 2002; Press & Warburton, 2007; Rouhiainen, 2008; Stromsted, 1999; Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1993).

Another question I asked myself was “Would it enhance the study to work with the data in a somatic, embodied or artistic way?” as other studies have done (Davison, 2009; Jahner, 2001; Stromsted, 1999). Through my own practice I have discovered somatic sensitivity/body awareness as a reflexive tool and I brought this to my exploration. This supported my intention of maintaining a creative holistic orientation in harmony with the nature of CTD. I also used other somatic tools and practices to generally stay ‘embodied’ during this research process, for example using breathing and body work techniques. Ironically though, it was a huge challenge for me to stay aware of my body when working at the computer for up to 10 hours per day in the post graduate room of the library, which I ‘sensed’ as an arid, square, sharp edged impersonal space that maintains a culture of disembodied abstracted-ness. This tension remained and became part of my ongoing inquiry into researcher reflexivity.

Through this ongoing hermeneutic dialogue of reading, writing and reflecting, I was able to elucidate and be more responsive to the fore-structures in my understanding. I came to understand and agree with the perspective that through articulating and engaging with my pre-understandings a different kind of clarity and justification becomes possible (Gadamer, 1975). I find when I am authentically questioning, opening and trusting a 'clearing' in my thinking can appear, new insights can and do arise, forming new understandings that I can articulate in the research. These are never final constructions, but part of an ongoing dialogue with possibility (Herda, 1999; Koch, 1999; van Manen, 1997).

In conclusion this chapter has described the methodological steps taken and the important ethical considerations of my dissertation. The next chapter will introduce the data and the findings.

Findings

A phenomenological analysis addresses the question of ontology, the nature of being, in both a situational and existential way, the way of 'being-in-the-world', embedded in a meaningful world of relationships, practices, language and culture (Leonard, 1989). The data from participants was analysed by exploring the specifically situated personal experiences of being in a world of creative dance, reflected through shared lifeworld domains, while staying open to existential meanings. In this way, the analysis aims to uncover more of the experiential sense and existential meanings of the phenomena of CTD.

The lifeworld of a person is complex and functions as an intertwining of being that cannot be separated (Gendlin, 1997). However universal domains of being in the human experience have been identified and differentiated as themes common to most people's lives (Todres, 2007; van Manen, 1997). These are the lifeworld domains of the lived body (corporeality), lived time (temporality), lived space (spatiality) and lived human relation (relationality or communality) (van Manen 1997). These domains were helpful frames of reference within the study, both in the interviews and as emerging themes in participants experience and meanings. Additional existential themes of mood, spirituality, creativity and transformation emerged from the data analysis, compatible with the lifeworld themes explored in this analysis.

As the experience of CTD is experienced primarily as bodily felt understanding, in a sense it is the body that holds the experience which is so pervasive yet beyond words in some ways. It is a challenge to describe and interpret such an experience. The experience will always be more than the words. It is "the said pointing to the unsaid" (Todres, 2007, p. 19). It is felt in the 'being' of the experience. There was another existential thread, present in the way the participants expressed their experience; the care they took to be true to their own authentic experience, searching for the right words to convey the specific detail and their desire to share the essence of their experience. The analysis is hermeneutic and as an exploration of being, can never be complete.

The first time

In a phenomenological understanding nothing is encountered without reference to our background understanding and cultural traditions (Leonard, 1989). The 'first time' emerged as an important theme, contextualising participants experience and showing evocative and meaningful experiences. Some of these participants referred to childhood

experiences while others referred to their first adult experience when asked about their first experience of CTD.

Sunny recalls an early memory of creative dance:

My earliest experience of creative dance was at primary school, I was about 4 or 5 years old. The teacher put some music on and encouraged us to dance freely. We ran around amok, listening to the music and expressing ourselves spontaneously. I had this sense of expansion and euphoria, it was ecstatic. I had this epiphany, of oh my god, yes, this is fabulous, this is it, this is what life is about, this is the meaning of life! I can still feel it in my bones now. (Sunny)

From a seemingly ordinary, everyday school class context, the extra ordinary arises. A space apart is created and sanctioned, through the teacher's encouragement, to experience dancing spontaneously in class. For Sunny this creative licence and agency seems to open a doorway into a kind of magical world full of bodily felt freedom, expressiveness and joy. There is a sense of great discovery and expansion in this new way of 'be-ing' and moving in the world. There is also a sense of 'belonging' in this experience in a profound way, making what is given, now belong to her (Todres, 2007). So the experience seems to be both fundamental and new, a sense of at-home-ness and the adventure or discovery (Todres, 2007). The expansion of being is felt bodily, as a 'quickenning' or 'coming to life', and an implicit knowing, of meaning and purpose for her very being-in-the-world is felt. There is a sense of 'magic' being bestowed, at a young age, still felt and alive now. It seems the experience made some kind of claim on her as it pours forth evocatively as she speaks of the 'first time' experience.

Jane recounts her early experience of dancing creatively:

I've always danced. I remember from about 8 or 9 years old, making up dances at home, listening to favourite songs and making up dances. We had a playroom and I would push the furniture aside and dance and jump on the furniture, maybe pretend I was my favourite singer. It transported me into another space, it had this daydreaming quality. It was pleasurable role play, imagining myself as other people. It was an outlet for me because it wasn't easy at home; it was quite a stressful environment. (Jane)

For Jane, being in a world of creative dance and play there is/was a sense of at home-ness. In her home world (her household environment), she creates a different world, a space apart, using the tools/resources ready-to-hand; the space, music, privacy, and perhaps some kind of acceptance or allowance from her parents/caregivers. She is both 'transported' and at-home in her imaginative world that is both within and apart from her 'home' environment. It seems creating a play world, was a way of claiming space

and relieving a certain felt tension, in her environment. A temporary outlet to a creative world, set apart from the adult world, a touch stone to which she can return.

The play between familiar/home and adventure/open-ness is further explored in Fay's description of her first 5Rhythms® class as an adult:

I don't have memories of dancing as a child apart from being dragged along to ballet as a child. I was not a girly girl and I hated it and after a while I dropped out and then dancing was never ever my thing. So being a non-dancer type, I was surprised that I felt this big pull to go along to this class. My first five rhythms class I was really nervous when I got there, feeling self-conscious and stiff as a log. Everyone seemed to know each other and all be hugging each other and I was like oh god help, so I went and hid in the corner. The teacher was funky, playful as she started guiding us into movement. Many people seemed to have this incredible freedom in their bodies, moving with such fluidity, trust and openness and I wanted that. Part way through, this really enigmatic guy spotted me and danced with me, in a very intimate way but he wasn't trying to get anything, it was a taste of freedom for me. I was a little bit confused but there was part of me that was just going with it. I guess there was something in me that was looking for that opening or freedom. It was like oh my god, wow, here is this amazing freedom to be able to just explore with movement with another person and that was the very first time I went along. (Fay)

This sense of 'amazing freedom' seems to answer some kind of call in Fay; although initially entering into her first 5Rhythms® class is quite daunting. She is conscious of herself as a "non-dancer type" and feels out of place, unsettled, not-at-home in this setting. She sees in others in the class, in their bodily expression and qualities of movement, a kind of trust and open-ness that she desires; a kind of freedom. This seems to be felt as an existential call to her being-ness that she is becoming aware of; it stirs a longing and a possibility, another way of being in the world. When she is partnered by a seemingly confident male dancer she feels herself responding to this call, becoming immersed, swept into the exchange, engaged in the challenge/risk of the adventure. She 'goes along' in this participative dance, amidst her confusion, there is the play, of exploring and revealing, calling and responding, searching and finding an open-ness or clearing felt as a 'taste' of this freedom. Through being in the experience, there is a becoming more at home within the adventure, more bodily there, less self conscious or inhibited, curious and appreciative of this exploration in movement expression and exchange with another.

For Jane there is the creative challenge of exploring a new way of being in dance, as she participates in her first 5Rhythms® class as an adult:

I was used to dancing gracefully and looking good. So when I first went to a 5Rhythms class it was amazing for me to find the way to move out of that and into moving what I was feeling as it was arising. I discovered a type of process where I could consciously drop out of my head, of observing myself, and just let go and let movement arise spontaneously. It was during a time in my life where I'd been in quite a lot of academic study and it was a really nice shift to do something creative. It was purely for me and introduced a therapeutic element; I was using movement to process on an emotional level. (Jane)

When Jane goes to her first 5Rhythms® class she encounters a style of dance that seems to be in contrast to her habitual way of being-in-dance, “dancing gracefully and looking good”. Parviainen (1998) explains the cultural contexts of the worlds we dwell in also dwell in us, shaping how we interpret and value experiences. The conventional way of being in dance (Parviainen, 1998) is to value the technical aesthetic of gracefulness over the bodily felt sense. This has been perhaps Jane’s usual way of being in dance, appraising herself from this view point, possibly in a somewhat objectifying way. There also seems to be a distinction between an intellectual and a creative way of being that may include a more bodily and artistic sense of self. Intellectual study may be creative but tends to be more abstract, not usually involving using the body in a creative way.

Turning to a feeling, sensing awareness of her body and letting that move, seems to change her experience from ‘being’ “in her head” to feeling more of an alive awareness of her body moving and being moved, rather than making movement happen in certain way. This is also experienced as a therapeutic effect, a kind of healing through feeling (Baker, 2007). Through moving, bodily sensations, feelings or emotions seem to be shifted, “processed”, perhaps integrated, or come to terms with in a new way. It seems that by allowing or letting go, ‘more’ seems to be revealed, including a caring attunement to self, more spontaneity, creativity and integration of emotions.

Arriving / transitioning

In the following stories, the participants talk about the transitions between worlds, coming to their regular weekly class, what it is like arriving, coming from their day or week, and making transitions between modes of being-in-the-world.

Rex talks about this transition:

I go to a Friday evening class. When I'm coming in from my world, if it's been a hard day or a hard week I like to not talk too much when I arrive. I like to start with some stretches and if it's a little bit dark that it helps me get into it. The first rhythm is usually slow peaceful music and lets me slowly do the switch in my head of getting into it, into feeling my body, the music, the sensations,

moods. I look forward to it, it's exciting, every time is different, and I never know what's gonna happen. I like the open structure, the possibility to explore to try things, see what happens and how I might connect and dance with others.
(Rex)

In a phenomenological view, the world is defined, not by the world at large but, by our relationship to practices situated in our daily life (Dreyfus 1991). This creates our meaningful world. As Rex says he is coming in from his world, where it might have been a hard day or week, into another world, the world of the creative dance class. He brings his mood from his day or week and his expectations/preferences for the class; it helps if the environment is low stimulus with quiet, soft lighting. He seems to be able to shift down a gear almost, into a more sensitive awareness of self, feeling and responding to qualities of mood, sensation and the music. He looks forward to engaging in the creative play of spontaneity, in particular the possibility of connection with others in the group. While his pre-understandings and familiar ways of being in the class frame his horizon of expectations there is also an eagerness to go beyond this and explore or test new possibilities in relation with others. Perhaps the “open structure” is helpful for him to ‘open’ to encountering others on his horizon in a new way, the kind of to-and-fro of improvisational play in the relational dance.

Sunny also describes a shifting between modes of being in the world, from an external focus in everyday way of social relations to an internal felt body sense of experience.

The first thing is I walk in the room and I have a look around to see is who is there. There is usually a lot of chat in the room to begin with and so when we do actually begin the first thing I notice is oh god the relief of not having to communicate with anybody! I close my eyes I feel myself arriving in my body.
(Sunny)

Sunny enters a social space, the familiar social ritual of people arriving for a weekly event together. She enters into the ‘chatting’, a noisy space perhaps. It seems to take some mental strain off when she does not have to verbally converse. She is happy to move in to a different mode of being in the world. Although she is still with the same people, the experience is changed dramatically; by closing her eyes, an internal, bodily feeling world arises. She relaxes into this mode of being, that seems to feel at-home-like for her.

Being in body – becoming embodied

Sunny continues, describing her experience of ‘arriving’ in her body in dreambody dance:

I'm usually an intensely head centred person; I have this internal mental chatter going on most of the time, a great commentary happening inside my head. It's such a relief in the dance class to feel that transition to feeling ahh I'm arriving in my body. It starts by noticing and following my breathing, and then I start to feel into all the sensations in my body. It's like suddenly I'm in my body and I'm listening, I feel my weight, going down into the ground and I have a sense of the ground bouncing me back up, the earth responding and sending energy back up through my feet into all of my body. The music helps, especially a measured, symmetrical sort of pattern in the rhythm that can help centre and ground me. Somehow, all my cells communicate with each other; they somehow unite with the beat. I'm suddenly not filtering the experience through the strain of thinking. I'm having a body experience and a direct perception of the moment. It can be an intensely sensuous experience. (Sunny)

Sunny describes the shift from being preoccupied in a mental realm, a world of discursive thinking. This way of being can preclude awareness of sensations of a bodily felt way of being. A felt shift occurs as she turns to her sensory awareness. She has her own unique way of doing this, a process of notice-ing (her breathing), listen-ing, and follow-ing her attention that is drawn down and inward, following a flow of gravity. She is drawn into sensing her relationship with earth, which is felt to be energising and supporting her, felt as a current of energy, circulating around her body, giving a felt sense of vitality and unity to her lived body and bringing a flow to the experience. She is aware of herself as a listening, perceiving body. This experience of 'grounding' and 'centre-ing' seems like a coming home to her body, as ground of being, a primary self (Parviainen, 1998). There is the intimacy and pure sensual enjoyment of being 'in' her body. A sense of embodied presence that is both open and at-home.

Fay describes a journey over time of her lived body experience in dance:

When I first started coming to 5Rhythms classes I was very disassociated from my body through various trauma and sexual abuse but I wasn't conscious of how un-embodied I was. I'd been living from the neck up. The dance kind of showed me, like this big mirror of, oh wow, you're not even in there, and when I was in there I felt like a log in my body. I had a lifetime of unexpressed stories and sensations in every part of my body and beginning to feel and release through this practice was huge for me. In the first few years of this dance, I felt the intense aliveness and also the messiness that goes with remembering the body. Luckily my body is a wise teacher. I began to trust it usually knew how much I could deal with at a certain time. I remember a point when I began to dance this same dance every time, of this is my body, these elbows are mine, these feet are mine, this is my body, this is mine. It was a real reclaiming, of a boundary that I wasn't even aware of before. This body is a boundary for me now. Sometimes I still go there; to this place of this is my body. So the dance has been the journey of re-embodiment literally getting out of my head and into my body. (Fay)

We are historical lived bodies (Parviainen, 1998). Fay's experience of sexual abuse, affected her sense being able to 'inhabit' her body in a felt sensing way, as a safe or homelike place to be. Fay reflects on how her sense of awareness of herself as a felt sensing body was restricted and experienced as inert, a log, 'thing' like. In creative dance she finds her body awareness is awakening. She describes a journey of reclaiming her sense of body as a sense of mine-ness. Much research and theory has been dedicated to showing how trauma can be disassociated from, but somehow the memory or connection is stored in the body. This mechanism of disassociating from bodily felt sense is thought to protect the sense of self from traumatic or overwhelming memories and feelings experienced during and since the time of abuse (Rothschild, 2000). This mechanism is perhaps what has been happening for Fay and it is now being transformed through relating directly to her lived body experience in dance. She starts to feel and recognize through dancing when she is 'in there', her subjective felt sensing body and when she is 'not there'. In this context of dance, her bodily felt sense is awakened through a messy and alive process of making connections. Fay has a changed relationship to her lived body connected to her participation in creative dance over a number of years. Her body is her wise teacher, revealing and patient. Her body consciousness has moved from un-home-like-ness, to body-becoming-mine, a conscious embodiment and more solid sense of 'being here'.

Embodying and moving mood

Awareness of mood brings awareness of being in the world (Todres, 2007). Sunny describes her relationship being and moving in mood and its meaning for her in the dreambody dance experience:

As I started moving I noticed my energy levels, my mood, I had a feeling of what kind of dance might come up from my immediate mood after what kind of day I'd had. I asked myself what is my mood and I explored that. I found myself doing these really forceful movements. This image of an axe wielding maniac came up! So I became that energy really hammering my way across the room, exploring these chopping, chopping, movements with my body, noticing the energy, the emotions of that. Then it changed and became these more direct, short sharp assertive movement, I did that over and over and it became smaller and smaller until I felt the essential quality of the movement, even before it occurred of, an effortless force, a directness with dignity and grace. After a while a sense of its meaning floated into me. It wasn't about needing to be really forceful but it was about becoming more clear and direct, in situations in my life. I felt I'm getting to know and express that quality in dance, that definite part of me that can be clear and direct. (Sunny)

As Sunny perceives, through her bodily felt sensations in movement, she senses the qualities in the intertwining emotional, sensational, energetic information. Being in the world is established existentially by attunement to our state of mind, our mood, although it is often felt as a tacit vague background feeling to being in the world (Ratcliffe, 2002). Sunny is curious and turns toward this sensing of her mood, opening to letting mood arise and guide her. She seems to trust this opening, following the implicit mood as it is revealed to her in body movement. It seems by attunement to her implicit mood, the felt sense or an image of mood, that which is primordial in a sense, pre-reflective, always already there, becomes 'unconcealed' and revealed (Heidegger, 1962/1995). This happens in diverse creative ways in the dance through metaphor, imagery and gestures that reveal personal meaning and insight. Sunny embodies these emotions and images, following and expressing the moods as they arise through imagery and movement improvisation. The image that comes, of an axe murderer, is perhaps like a bridge to help her express mood more explicitly, as the mood/ image is revealed and physically embodied it becomes a creative play. The significance of following her moving imagination is revealed to her as insight, showing an embodied way of learning to express forthrightness with dignity in her life situations. The movement process illuminates and provides understanding that can possibly be translated from the dance class into another context. It seems mood 'matters' in the dance, it can be creatively apprehended, attuned to, grounded and expressed in bodily movement, for personal interpretation and insight.

Jane also discusses how powerful feelings arise in movement:

For quite awhile I wouldn't call what I was doing in these classes dancing. It was quite raw, a lot of repetitive movements, obviously some impulse, not pretty or in a dance form. I spent a lot of time in 'dance' lying on my back; I couldn't find a way to get up off the floor. It was after my marriage broke up and it was the end of a quest to have a child, the end of a partnership, the end of a marriage. It was a series of blows one after the other. I really felt like the rug was pulled out from underneath me. I just kept losing ground. I kept being knocked over and that's what my body just did when I went into dance. I remember a really strong experience from a 5Rhythms workshop I did around that time; my body was lying there completely collapsed and my legs pushing into the wall. I forced myself to standing and I found myself pushing with outstretched arms, really pushing back against the wall. For ages I was bashing and pushing away. There was a lot of grief and fear and dread in my belly. Then there was a point at which something seemed to shake loose, I seemed to have bashed or shaken it loose. I went outside then and I just sat, I sat on the earth with my hands in grass. There was emptiness, a clearing, like something had dislodged and moved. (Jane)

For Jane there seems to be an addressing of an emotional wound through bodily expression, this is what seems to need to happen as it shows up again and again, revealing her lifeworld in movement. Phenomenology reminds us that we find ourselves 'thrown' into the world, into moods, making sense of it depending on our own meaning structure (Svenaesus, 2001). The body movement reveals more of the changing affect and the primal mood that is already there as described by her life situation. Through movement expression the grief seems to be touched and experienced in its primordial form. The process seems to be both painful, affirming and relieving, her body expression marking the shape and sense of those losses in life, in the 'being' knocked down time and again, and the pushing back and finally the loosening, the releasing. The process is like an encounter that builds to a confrontation with existence, expressing complexity of 'being' in mood. Then there is some kind of opening, a 'clearing' that comes. She is drawn to move outdoors, where there is perhaps the space to meet and match her experience of the clearing that is arising. She sits on the earth with hands in the grass. Something has changed. She is emotionally emptied out, an empty vessel and now in the be-ing of this clearing. Perhaps it is the existential vulnerability of being that is present and felt as she sits on the earth. The process matters and yet there is a mystery to it. It cannot be pinned down to a tidy therapeutic process.

Sunny similarly talks about a powerful emotional process in movement:

There was a time when I was going through a rough patch, my relationship had finished and I was in such acute emotional pain, the only way I got any relief was in dance, by expressing the gnawing pain in the pit of my stomach. There was lots of contracting and writhing and tightening. That was so relieving. I could then manage to survive and carry on the week. Expressing my emotional pain in dance was the only way in fact I could find to carry on. (Sunny)

In this tumultuous time, Sunny was able to find a way through using creative movement to turn toward, confront, express and relieve some of the pain. The emotional pain seems to be clarified and confronted again in a raw primal way, through the body expression, giving form to the mood. The experience is in the body and there is an opening, an allowing of this to be revealed. Inherent in life is complexity, the epic, tragic, lyric, agony, ecstasy and the vulnerability. Sunny encounters and identifies the feelings that surge in times of crisis. The acute emotional pain of grief is visceral; a raw wound. Sunny express the emotions with the whole body involved, letting the body have a say in the matter. The emotional pain is felt in the pit of her stomach and given expression. She takes this opportunity in dance for primal release, where she can honour

and respond to the felt sense of suffering, in the body's own language, contracting and writhing. She allows this releasing, suspending trying to make sense, moving down a different pathway of understanding and coming to terms with. She feels a sense of restoration and containment that she can continue on to engage in the world.

Being in creative freedom

Creativity emerged as a theme through participants' discussion of the improvisational aspect of the dance; the dramatic play, the symbolic, was felt as creative and free-ing. Rex describes this:

It's sort of therapy of the imagination. It's sort of like acting, there is a freedom, its releasing, there isn't a structure having certain steps here you can do anything pretty much, which feels healing in a way. (Rex)

There is a quality of play in a non-ordinary realm. Rex seems to take the opportunity to release barriers to self expression and play. The freedom to play is healing, freeing and releasing, perhaps from the ties that bind us into our culture and traditions that seem to want to fix us in place.

Fay talks about her sense of creative freedom:

What I love in the exploration is the creativity and the freedom, that any possible movement is acceptable. When I see an inspiring quality in someone else's movement I can take that on and experiment with in my own way, and feeling oh wow that's something I've never done before, it opens up possibilities. That's a neat thing about dancing in the group, the inspiration to draw on. There is a freedom to do something new. (Fay)

For Fay there is a creative game, a play with others; she 'copies' and tries on others movements with a curiosity and an empathy. It is a freedom, where she is not directed or conforming but choosing her own play. Other people's movements inspire and open her sense of possibility. It seems she is perhaps 'given' freedom too, by others permission and joining the play.

Being in relation-ality

Other is experienced in the lived inter-relation-ality, the feeling, knowing, understanding within intersubjective shared space (van Manen, 1997). The following extracts show how relation-ality may be experienced in this dance; in the approach, the felt impression, the bodily sense of, and as relationships develop, the shifts and changes in the interpersonal exchange between participants and in relationship with the whole

group. The relation-ality with the facilitator and meanings these experiences hold are explored. Relationality is existential in that it is fundamental to being-in-the-world and to the ongoing search for meaning in life.

Sunny talks about her experience of the group in dreambody dance:

My focus isn't really on connecting with other people, on the level of personality in dance, I'm more interested in connecting with myself. I often have my eyes closed but I have an energetic sense of everyone in the room, I kind of know what's happening at a deeper level than personalities. I sense people's energies, moods, movement qualities. If it's a bunch of us who have danced together a lot, we can have quite similar movements emerging. I open my eyes periodically and oh wow it's pretty amazing that we are all doing a similar thing. There is a feeling that we take each other into a more intensified meditation state together than we could experience on our own. (Sunny)

Connecting with herself, being embodied in dance, seems to also connect Sunny to others at a deeper level in the relational space. The attunement is not only to herself, but a sensing into the relational atmosphere. Having her eyes closed, she somehow still 'sees' everyone, perhaps other senses come more to the fore-ground. Sunny finds herself experiencing a highly sensitive reading of what's happening in the intersubjective space. She finds herself in a felt sense of shared presence-ing, a kind of relational 'dwelling with' presence that arises and is felt as a deepening of a meditative state. There is an 'other worldly' quality to this refined perception, an opening to the unknown, beyond words. A shared movement pattern may arise in this deep meeting of shared be-ing in creative movement. There is a sense of a shared journey, travellers exploring new terrain. Each may have a different horizon and there seems to be fusion, a dwelling together in other realms or subtle senses generally not accessible in an everyday way of being. Perhaps the experience opens a deeper or existential sense of being in the world beyond or different to that which usual social relations and conventions might experience.

Fay talks about a personal relational dance with another participant:

In the dance I felt drawn to someone, she was sitting with there, with her head hung and hands dropped on the ground. She looked deflated and sad and I had this desire, of wanting to help her to move again. I could see there was something really honest about where she was at and I wanted to join her for a minute and see how that feels, there was some kind of realisation that could help me in some way. So I went and sat in front of her in the same posture and we just kind of shared that space together. I slowly started moving my fingers and she started to move hers and we started having a gentle dance with our hands, seeing how our hands wanted to connect. It was an intimate connecting dance

and it seemed to kind of shift something in a gentle way for both of us. I felt myself come down into a more authentic reconnection with myself, a sensing and knowing of myself on a deep level and she started moving more again, and at some point it was over, the dance had been shared. (Fay)

Intersubjectivity comes when we undergo acts of empathy (Todres, 2007). Fay seems to feel a calling in her being that draws her toward this person, a bodily felt sense of empathy and caring arises or is evoked in seeing the other who appears to be suffering. She is moved by this feeling and acts, moves toward the other, drawn into this intersubjective relation, to join and feel-with. She trusts this calling, intuiting relational exchange will help open and reveal ‘more’ of what is possible between people and - potentially healing.

This empathy seems to have an existential quality of relating in some ways, a caring in the be-ing with, resonant of the ‘I-Thou’ relationality described by phenomenological philosopher Martin Buber (Buber, 2000). Heidegger expounds ‘care’ as central to human Dasein (Heidegger, 1962/1995). Buber’s work delineates two different modes of relating, an I-It relating and I-Thou relating. I-It relating involves objectifying, seeing others, as different and apart from one’s self. In the, I-Thou relation, the individual enters into the relationship with the other with his or her whole being. This relationship becomes an open intimate meeting between two people. “Persons appear by entering into relation to other persons” (Buber, 2000, p. 51). It may be that there is a context that also supports this connecting in the dance, a caring milieu.

It seems that Fay is offering her whole felt sensing of I to Thou, to the person she encounters in the space. The intersubjective, felt sensing movement dialogue is possible through this empathy of feeling and being-with. This intimate dance of relating may only last a few minutes but it seems a world of understanding is revealed, that could not happen in a usual conventional sense of getting to know someone through conversation. There is a sense of being raw and real with this person, open and trusting co-operative enquiry. There is a sense of nourishment in this relationality, the I-Thou reciprocity and the play between the self and other, the experience that cares for one’s self and other, and creates a shared felt understanding and experience in dance. This example of relating in dance seems to show how a reciprocal embodied empathic dance of understanding can unfold in the relational domain of being. There is a sense that through the embodied relational dance there has been a transformation, into a deeper dwelling, really ‘being there’ with the other.

Jane discusses her experience of relationality in 5Rhythms® dance:

There are certain people that I like to dance near to. Not necessarily people that I particularly know well personally but there is something about the way they move that I find either reassuring or gives me energy. There is a level of intimacy and intensity about moving in a larger group. I sometimes feel ambivalent about contact with others on the dance floor. I'm not naturally comfortable with it. I find that the most challenging aspect and the discipline of coming to the class. When we are asked to take a partner or get into groups and stay with it. I can see the potential of richness in relating to others in movement because you are experimenting, practicing and living relationship through the dance. I do worry if I'm dancing sensually that that could be interpreted as an invitation by some of the men, that I'm sexually interested in them, which I'm not. I wonder about their sincerity and feel they could be taking advantage. I know that's about my issues of being hurt. But then I've had two close and intimate dances with men in the last few months and I patted myself on the back for staying with it because I felt the grief of wanting to have a real intimate connection with a man. Also I recently danced with a man who I find has a very unthreatening yet masculine presence in a lead and follow exercise, and I really enjoyed being led by him. And there wasn't anything sexual in it. I think it is quite brave, you do go into stuff, emotionally as well as the creative artistic expression. (Jane)

Jane's account shows the complexity of the inter-subjective domain. Being with a group in dance adds intensity to the felt experience of moving, creativity, exchange.

Connecting with others in the space also expands the sense of self. In dancing with or near others, the known horizon expands to include an awareness of her felt sense in relation to others. Awareness of other energies can permeate through her and perforate the separate sense of self connecting her to a relational mode of being. While it is still her personal individual experience, there is a kind of merging into a less defined felt boundary around herself, and a turning towards others who feel good to be around. A sensitive tuning into bodily felt experience around different people, perhaps utilizes other senses commonly overridden in verbal exchange. This attuning and sharing of energy in dance, may intuitively regulate emotions (Baker, 2007).

The relational dance is potentially rich and rewarding but also complex, dense with personal history, emotions, creativity, concerns and anxieties – it 'brings up stuff'. Jane reflects on the challenge and complexity at times, of the experience of the relational dance with men; the emotions and thoughts about intimacy and relationships. She reflects on her ongoing understanding of herself, how her history and her interpretations have shaped her thoughts and experiences in dance. Sometimes the experience of dancing with men is threatening, she feels that she may be being objectified. At other times the exchange may be enjoyable; a trusting exploration which may help heal or

abate some painful emotions. It can also be felt as intimate but tinged with the sadness and grief of the temporary nature of the connection, when what she may really want is a committed ongoing relationship. Possibly too there is also an existential angst the longing for security in a temporary world (Dienske, 1985). A sense of 'being', personal horizons and being-in-the-world, seem to shift and change in relation to the interpersonal experience in dance.

Sunny describes the influence of the facilitator in dreambody dance:

I feel safe with the facilitator. She is witnessing what is happening. She helps me get really into in my own experience, to believe in it and trust that something enriching can happen. She encourages me to follow my moment to moment sensory experience, notice and explore the pleasurable sensations, to focus on what feels really good, that's so enriching for me. She makes suggestions to help us explore the movement, experimenting, making it smaller or bigger, or finding an image or a sound and following that story. (Sunny)

Sunny seems to have a trust with the facilitator that is like a foundation for exploration, that supports her home base so she can adventure. The facilitator seems to care about Sunny's experience and respects her creative movement play, creating a free and protected space that empowers her creative expression (Chodorow, 1997). The trusting relationship with the facilitator, seems to embody an essentially therapeutic way of being-with; attentive, invitational and focusing (Todres, 2007). Sunny experiences being 'witnessed', from the attentive being-with presence of the facilitator. This seems to support her to dwell-with, her own enjoyment of the sensory experience of movement and help validate and sanctify this experience for herself. There is also the invitational being-with quality to the facilitator's suggestions that invites 'more', to be found in the experience. Further, the facilitator encourages Sunny to 'focus' in particular ways, to find/create the story in her movement. This focus supports Sunny's home/adventure play, moving her imagination, experimenting with the size and shape of movements, trying out new movements.

Expanding her movement range is perhaps like expanding her home-horizons (Todres, 2007). The facilitator also encourages Sunny in switching between different sensing systems; kinaesthetic to auditory. Picking up on information/stimulus from these systems, perhaps sensitizes awareness and play between the senses. According to Gibson (1966) our sense systems are naturally orientated toward awareness and exploration and the sense perceptions unite observer and observed as inseparable parts of being in the world.

Jane describes her experience of the facilitation, in her regular 5Rhythms® class:

The facilitator usually starts with some kind of guided warm up, then she might give some suggestions, to move with the qualities of the music, then backs off lets people do their own process. She holds the space and plays great music that creates the structure, the order of the rhythms. There is a familiarity and a safety for me in that. So it's facilitated and therapeutic but it's not therapy, it's very much self guided and you are left to process and reflect on it in private.
(Jane)

Jane relates to the facilitation as supporting and helpful. The facilitator provides the music, the structure which is re-assuring to Jane. The facilitator 'holds' a type of 'space', perhaps with her presence, her guidance and choice of music, a type of atmosphere; the feeling of 'being held' in a spacious way by the structure and the facilitation which allows a sense of the free and protected space for people to explore in that encourages expressive movement (Chodorow, 1997). Jane identifies this context as distinct from therapy or DMT, where possibly there would be a more in-depth exploration including facilitated dialogue and movement exchange (Payne, 2006).

Being in time

In phenomenology, time is discussed as temporality, the mode of being in time (Parviainen, 1998). Jane reflects on her experience and meaning of being in time in creative dance:

There is definitely a different sense of time. Sometimes I go to class and I'm thinking ok I've got to apportion my energy. I've got to have this much in reserve because I've got to go for two hours. But when there is an immersion, time and energy take on a different quality. The intensity can be great and yet I can dance for hours. When I am moving in a flow, I'm not aware of chronological time. I don't know if I've been dancing for ten minutes or two minutes. I feel I could endlessly move, it's lovely because it requires no effort, I have boundless energy and I expend no energy, I'm not waiting for anything. I find that in chaos, the fastest rhythm, usually trance music, my body can be moving quite frenetically and intensely and yet I have a sense of central stillness, presence and an image of a still white or gold flame. Maybe its embodiment of energy, I'm being in the moment as opposed to thinking about time which I love the experience of. But sometimes the experience is quite bound in chronological time, the idea of having to apportion energy to the time, so it's quite good to break that. (Jane)

Jane may arrive at class thinking about how to apportion energy to 'the time', which is seen as a 'chunk' of time, in a series of external, objective and discrete things or events (Leonard, 1989). Through 'dwelling' in the movement experience, she discovers a sense of a 'flow' of time, that is not linear and directly proportionate to energy. The sense of

time is stretched out, slows or is absorbed and may disappear. A sense of being in the moment arises, the 'eternal present' may arise, in which energy is not bound by time (Fraleigh, 2004). In the experience of being in a rhythmic trance in dance, Jane's time perception is altered and accompanied by a metaphoric image of a 'still flame' a symbol of absorption and energy. Parviainen (1998) states that time is not a series of external events but instead "chain of interlocking fields of presence" (p. 41). When Jane is 'in' the dance, it is her experience of "Being" at this time.

Being in space

Fay talks about her sense of space in dance:

When I feel safe in my body then I feel safe in the space and safe to relate to the other people with my body. When the facilitator is holding the space, listening to the group space with her heart, playing music that meets the space it feels like she is in tune with the whole group. That makes me feel I can drop into my dance because I'm held here and you can feel everyone drop into the space and then everyone is holding each other, feeling a mutual empathy. (Fay)

Existence is spatial, so lived space is an existential theme or domain of being-in-the-world (Parviainen, 1998). Fay's experiences her sense of space as concerned with the physical, emotional and relational world. The sense of being at-home in her lived body, creates a home 'space' a felt sense of safety to play and move in relational space. There is not a readymade safe space or relational space, it is made in the ongoing complex intertwining of being-in-the-world. By living and moving, a certain type of space is experienced. It seems a feeling of a free and open space is supported when the facilitator is attuned, listening to the whispers within the space of the human hearts in the room and be-ing there, responding with the right music to meet that calling. This also seems to create a caring space for authentic be-ing, a kind of shared soulful space that Fay can perhaps 'let go' into, when this safe space is present.

The experience of the space in dance is varied and depends on my mood, the time of day, and who else is in the space, as to how I feel in the space. I like to dance within a defined space, it's a safety container but I don't like it when it's a crowded space, lots of bodies in the space because I like to use a lot of space. If I want to make a big movement it can feel big in a defined space. I can't do that outside, because I always feel insignificant in nature. (Jane)

From a phenomenological view, space is not just an external object or an internal experience, but a space sensate awareness that refers us to the world in which we find ourselves (van Manen, 1997). Jane relates to certain types of spaces as more at-home and this supports and influences her use of space in particular ways. A sense of a

boundaried space is important. Having enough room to make a claim in space helps her movements feel significant. Perhaps there is a ‘play’ between at-home space as safe container and adventure. Making big movements in space expands her spatial horizons gives her a sense of satisfaction of ‘being’ in space in dance. Expanding movement range gives a sense of re-creating ourselves and space (McHose, 2006). Jane’s sense of lived space is very different in nature, the opposite polarity of being-in-the-world is unconcealed, the vulnerability of being that is usually covered over, the temporary nature, the indifference of earth and nature, that makes us feel our own insignificance of being-in-the-world (Morris, 2004). Jane shows how our sense of space shifts with our changing emotional, social, temporal relation to the world (Morris, 2004).

Sunny describes her experience of space in dreambody dance:

It’s like a dreaming space opens up and I go into the world of that and express the dream that wants to happen. I closed my eyes and I felt this pull that was pulling me down and in, like going deep sea diving, I’m going deeper and deeper. My dance became subtle tiny movements, meditative, Zen. I felt the air passing over my skin and I had an intimate relationship with the molecules of air. I also had a sense of dissolving, my body unfolding, unzipping, and merging with my environment. It’s like I’m not a person living inside a bubble of space, the bubble had popped. I had an expanded sense of the space around me. I opened my eyes, I saw the moon outside and I had a sense of I am the moon, I’m the night sky. (Sunny)

It seems a sense of expanded space occurs through Sunny becoming acutely sensitive to sensate kinaesthetic experience, which opens a “dreaming space”. The sense of somatic awareness takes her into a more internal, meditative state, where the smallest of kinaesthetic cues is acutely felt, brings movements that are subtle and highly intuitive, which seems to open up a refined sense of space that is also vast and expansive. There is an acute focus on the minute body awareness but also a sense of vast spaciousness. Her body is a conduit for a dreaming reverie, a space. It is like a lucid dream, familiar boundaries in space are suspended and an altered sense of space opens a sense of an archetypal realm, one with nature, which is somehow embodied and expressed through her. There is a sense of a highly personal yet expansive mystical dimension that is enjoyed and embraced as a creative enlivening experience. She seems at home in this experience where the usual boundaries of space are felt as much more permeable, or perceived not to exist as she becomes more in tune with the feel of the space, more permeable in the experience of receiving, merging and becoming the space while also witnessing the experience. Her creative movement journey takes her further into a

mystical experience. Unlike Jane, Sunny's journey seems to embrace a sense of moving in the world of nature, brings freedom and communion. She is filled with the sense of the moon and sky. Perhaps this expanded sense of space moves her toward a sense of the 'clearing', the free and open, of spatiality. In this state there is a feeling of connection to all, no separation between herself and objects in space, in a way a feeling of no space and all space, she becomes space, in the experience of the "participation mystique," (Todres, 2007, p. 185) or perhaps what quantum physics call a 'convergence' a meeting of all possibilities (Barbour, 2002).

These three participants, Fay, Jane and Sunny, show how the experience of the dance-space is not a pre-existing neutral container, a 'given' but intrinsic to the interweaving of our ongoing relationality of being-in-the-world. Space is emotionally and culturally experienced, part of our changing perceptions and our personal story of being in the world (Lefebvre, 1991). The participants reveal how moving, interacting and inhabiting the dance-space in different modes, with mood, body, relationally (interwoven with fore-understandings, cultural and historical situations) lived space is revealed. Exploring through shapes, sizes and distances, moving with eyes closed or open, more is revealed about lived space. McHose (2006) suggests creative movements can help us re sense and create space in a new ways by moving in unusual ways, expanding a sense of freedom in movement. When we 'dwell' in our sense perceptions in space, relationships are formed, with the geographical space (McHose, 2006).

Embodied spirituality – a deeper place

Within all this, participants talk of a 'deeper' place:

The way I use movement and dance is to cultivate an enlightenment experience, dissolution of the ego. I get so bored with my ordinary identity, being an individual, on my own and separate to the world out there. I've had many experiences of deeply belonging in dance. It's like touching a deep aware consciousness, a much greater part of me than I normally experience and I can feel the presence of something much bigger than me. That sense of completely dissolving in communion with everything, whether you call it God or whatever. It's what's meaningful for me. I don't get that sort of religious experience from church, I get it from dance. (Sunny)

This dance seems to answer a call. Sunny's being is called by, and belongs with, this deeper place. She moves and is moved. A process of 'letting go' in dance, seems to move her consciousness from a particular personal perspective, into an expanded sense of 'being with' and 'belonging to' a larger perspective or awareness. Somehow, this

bigger perspective has been nurtured, through her process. Perhaps through the deeply dwelling with, moving and being moved, she journeys now beyond ordinary self, into a sense of immanence, dwelling with the divine, an expanded home-world, a clearing and a greater sense of belonging. A church for Being. The ineffable that words cannot really show or touch but point to a deeper place.

Fay similarly discusses this deeper sense of 'being' in dance:

After the peak of fast music in chaos, a simple repetition of movement in lyrical, there is a naturally letting go into a deeper place, a deeply trance state like meditation. Its dropping away of the ego state, I lose that fixed identity of I'm me, this little person who likes this and doesn't like that, I lose those definitions, and I feel this absolute spaciousness, absolute openness of being undefined and feel a clarity about being, it connects me with a deeper sense of reality, I need to know that and be reminded of it from time to time. It's a feeling that reminds me that that reality is always there. It comes and goes, sometimes I'm left with it for a day or so. (Fay)

After the peak of the wave, Fay 'let's go' even more, into a sense of absolute freedom, becoming 'one with' the music, the meditative rhythm, this opens something. A space, of 'being' in a different way. An absolute sense of 'I am'. 'I am existence' or 'I am spaciousness'; non separation, no duality.

Being-with and becoming/transformation

Sunny describes her sense of the therapeutic meaning of the whole experience:

If I stay in the level of just exploring movements and moods it's not as much use unless I can really get that understanding, a sense of knowing what the story and the energy is about and start to apply it. I have to approach it in the right way though, just let the experience be and trust instead of trying to make meaning out of it too soon. Recently I had an experience where I was sitting in a café with someone and I started to feel uncomfortable. Then I had this memory, sensations and images from my movements in that recent dance, about definition and clarity. I realized oh I've had enough, I need to go now and I was able to say that to my friend in the café and be definite and clear instead of staying building up resentment. Now I know the dance experience is filtering out into my life. (Sunny)

Sunny's dance creates meanings that reverberate beyond the class. Her dance experience is connected to personal insight and growth. In the class she maintains an observing presence or witnessing, to what is occurring. She trusts that there is a meaning that may be revealed, if she approaches this potentiality in the right way, as a dialogue, with respect, listening, trust, a 'being-with' quality. A sense of spaciousness comes that seems to allow a 'clearing' for a new horizon. Perhaps through dancing in

this way many times, as a practice, there is increasing levels of trust that meaning comes. Described psychologically, the meaning is possibly that of increased self insight and integration of aspects of self, allowing more ability to make self affirming, transformative choices in life.

Jane describes her sense of the meaning:

Keeping coming back and doing it, doing it, doing it, is how the meaning forms for me. It's better to do it more than once then it becomes a practice and a path that you watch yourself on, like meditating. I've seen how much I've been in chaos at times and not connected to the other rhythms because my life was in chaos. It currently has a different quality. I like the structure, the sequence of things you do and watching myself on the path. And I like the freedom, each time is a pure experience. Part of me has a need to understand and make more sense of it, maybe through some sort of verbal processing but I'm also looking for ways to bypass my mind, to experience the truth that comes free and clear without with my contriving. (Jane)

Understanding and meaning is from 'being-there', Dasein (Heidegger, 1962/1995), experiencing, time and again. Each time is uniquely situated, 'pure' or authentic. While it is pure it is also embedded in the complexity that constitutes 'being there', the interconnected lifeworld domains and the structure, the sequence of the rhythms, provides containment, context, and safety. Jane seems to express the play of both the 'now' being immersed in the experience and an awareness of observing herself over time in a process, which forms more meaning. Experiencing is embedded in the context of life, constituted by past and future (Leonard, 1989). Meaning is understood through this having been, 'be-ing with' and be-coming. Her dance reflects the having been; life in chaos, which shapes/influences the 'being with' now; being on a path, enjoying the structure and the freedom of dance, this is also influenced by future, the horizon; looking for ways to by-pass the mind, transformation. There is also the play between wanting to talk about her experiences to process, integrate or understand more and wanting to have it as a pure, absolute experience.

Fay describes her sense of therapeutic meaning and the whole:

It's meditative but also deeply therapeutic, for me it's definitely self therapy. Stuff comes up, whether I want it to or not. Sometimes I go in with something I want to work with, something I want to get deeply in touch with, or through the sensory awareness, scanning through the body, something will arise. A big part of it is engagement, keeping a presence or focus, my intention is how can I be with this, then sometimes a deeper meaning to the issue will arise. It can be a deeply healing place, a medicine and a meditation. I guess it depends where I want to take it and how conscious I can be with it. This dance is my healer, it

gives me a practice to explore and understand my life and a way to keep myself moving and growing. (Fay)

For Fay this dance provides a therapeutic practice and path of awareness, to which she brings her own unique intentions, process and way of being, that guides her through a healing journey. Her focus is in both engaging with the process, allowing herself to get deeply involved, 'being with' what is being revealed, while also keeping an open-ness, a spacious awareness into which insight or deeper meaning may arise.

Summary

I honour these beautiful and authentic stories from the participants. The honesty, openness and care to share their truth and details of their experience, putting words to personal experiences that are deeply but often implicitly felt, in describing the nature of CTD/movement. A journey through the themes that emerged is summarised below.

The initial theme is the 'first time'. This is significant in terms of showing how pre-understandings form and shape the dance experience. Some participants' positive experiences of creative dance as children seemed to support an experience of 'returning' to a familiar, creative home-world when they engage again in CTD as an adult. For others coming to this dance for the first time as an adult was a new and adventurous experience. It seems our historical fore-structures are embedded and present in every moment, although often they remain implicit.

The next theme of 'arriving/transitioning' shows how particular 'things' are needed or found, to be supportive in transitioning from one mode of being to another, particularly the change from a social relational context to a bodily felt sense of being. Becoming embodied shows how participants had uniquely situated ways of turning to their somatic sense of being. A participant bravely showed her important journey of embodiment through years of engagement in CTD; from disconnection to reclaiming and enjoying her bodyself in dance.

'Embodying mood' is the next theme shown; implicit mood is sensed, unfolds and is mediated through movement metaphor and primal expression. Emotional truths, perhaps held or repressed by conformity or culture, seem to pour forth, or 'body forth' (Todres, 2007). They powerfully express themselves, through the ability of the mover to 'let go' in a permissive group atmosphere of trust. A suspending and letting go of the intellectual, revealing a different pathway to understanding and coming to terms with

oneself is revealed, a kind of healing through feeling (Baker, 2007). Connecting to this primal authentic sense of self seems to lead to the next theme, 'relation-ality'.

Connecting with others at a deeper level emerges as a theme, both through intentional relating in the 5Rhythms® practice and as sensitivity to the 'field', the group energy exchange, highlighted by dreambody dancer Sunny. Also the relationship with the facilitator emerges as important to the journey, a basic trust with and encouragement from the facilitator supports the unfolding. When there is a real attunement and sensitivity it becomes a very special and heart opening experience. The inter-subjective domain in dance also reveals a high level of complexity.

The next theme of 'creative freedom' is experienced as play and healing. Some find inspiration from others creativity in this play. Within this changing emotional, social, creative relation to the world, the next themes of 'temporality' and 'spatiality' are uniquely experienced in dance. Through this type of movement and dance a certain type of time and space is created, a flow of time and expansion of space can happen in moments sometimes experienced as 'clearing', or a deep dwelling.

This leads to the theme of 'embodied spiritually' felt through a deep sense of connection between the physical and the spiritual aspects of being, an opening can occur that moves participants beyond fixed boundaries of the self, this sense of being transforms reality to one of presence and greater connection to the whole.

Finally, the theme of 'being-with and becoming' reveals a journey of self discovery. Through 'being-with what arises, a sense of potentiality - 'becoming' occurs. The meaning forms around CTD as a therapeutic and spiritual journey, through embodiment, integration and potential transformation.

The themes inform each other, intertwine and gather together to form a web of interwoven experience, one of moving and being moved in all aspects of being.

Discussion

I will now consider the key understandings this research has revealed and discuss how these findings relate to other research. The study's strengths and limitations, implications for education, research and practice will be offered for consideration.

van Manen (2002) suggests that expression through the arts is already a creative interpretation of lived experience and meaning in relation to the animate, inanimate and spiritual. The data analysis uncovered the richness, variety, complexity and depth of participants' experience of 'being' in CTD. We have seen how the experience of dance resonates with deep existential qualities, accesses personal history, is cultural and socially contextualised, and provides rich terrain for exploration. The lifeworld domains provided a natural means of exploring both the particular experiences and more essential meanings. The experience uncovered existential domains of 'being' and 'becoming' through dance. The particular situated experiences in dance were shown through the themes of body, time, space, relation, mood, creativity, spirituality and therapeutic meaning. These domains were experienced in a multiple intertwinement. The discussion offers the conclusion of potentiality and play.

Potentiality

In regard to therapeutic experience, rather than a universal acontextual therapeutic experience, the conclusion is of the potentiality for a therapeutic experience. It is clear that each of the participants experienced positive, powerful, potentially transformational happenings through CTD. There are many dynamics at play that determine whether or not therapeutic transformation is experienced. This potentiality is 'in play' throughout the experience.

Play

There is a play revealed between these themes and horizons of specific and essential dimensions. Aspects of play manifested within, and between, the horizons of situated contextual experiences and the essential universal experiences (Gadamer, 1975; Todres, 2007). The goal is not to resolve these, but rather to understand the play as having its own essence and thematic horizons (Mitscherling, 1992). There are many potential plays or tensions in any one CTD experience. Some of these will be discussed further now.

Play of body - mind – embodiment:

The lived experience of CTD is the play of connection to a felt sense of embodied movement. However there is a tension or play of the mind-body experience in CTD. Participants described, doing a ‘switch’ in their head and, ‘getting into’ their body. Phenomenologically speaking this may be understood as a play of attention; a ‘turning toward’ the somatic information that is always already there. The music, facilitation and the embodied presence of others are part of this play. The potential for the arising of a ‘bodily felt being there’, a sense of full, alive embodied living movement. Experience and perceptions may go to and fro, the somatic play is compelling, between the experience of ‘having a body’ and ‘being the body’.

Play of mood - implicit/explicit – expression – meaning:

Emotion and movement are intertwined. There is a play between ‘expressing movement’ and ‘being moved’. Play moves between the implicit somatic sense and mood, as more is unfolded and revealed. One finds oneself ‘thrown’, already there, in the intertwining multiplicity of sensations, emotion, moods (Heidegger, 1962/1995). These pre-reflective feelings and moods are then clarified and expressed in creative movement. It seems through a ‘surrendering’ to this play between vulnerability and adventuring, allows the emotional truths arising and to emerge more in movement expression and there may be a confrontation and powerful release of feelings. There is a sense of primal authenticity to this kind of expression that seems to speak to the play of life’s complexity; the joy and the pain of being-in-the-world. From this kind of authentic expression, a clearing may be revealed and personal meaning and insight may unfold, accessing levels of emotion and ‘being’ usually implicit or hidden. The personal meaning in the experience then becomes deeper.

The concept that creative expression of emotion through dance and movement contribute to improvement in well being, is central to research and theory in DMT (Ritter & Low, 1996). Emotional processing is described as a process through which emotional disturbances (emotionally charged unprocessed memories of negative events) are expressed, understood and integrated (Baker, 2007) .

Play of home - adventure – creativity:

There is an existential play between home and adventure (Todres, 2007). The CTD experience is structured in a way that does seem to call forth or require willingness to adventure into the unfamiliar in order to discover and expand ones horizons. There is a challenge of ‘letting go’ perhaps risking the familiar in order to be available for the new as it arises. There is a play between the known and unknown creative horizons.

Play of self - other – relation-ality:

The complexity of connection is revealed. Deeply felt intimate connections in the dance can be experienced with strong emotional resonance of an I-Thou empathetic relating and deep spiritual qualities (Buber, 2000). This was also experienced as felt attunement to the whole group. At other times there was a sense of fear, ambivalence or vulnerability in the interchange, or a need to claim the experience for oneself alone. The play between self and other, revealing and concealing, the unique and shared dimensions of being in CTD are always present.

Play of space - time – consciousness:

The experience seems to open up the play of time/space and consciousness. Participants did not experience an impartial space; rather, the qualities and sense of space were made in the ongoing, complex, intertwining of being-in-the-world of dance. There is a ‘spacial play’ between the felt sense of space, the geographical space that contributes to this lived space experience. Heidegger talks of space as potentiality, the ‘free and open’ into which things can come (Todres, 2007). Similarly Fraleigh (1987) describes how living and moving through time, a certain potentiality of space is experienced as a “lived flow of present-ness” (p. 193), the ‘now’ of time and space that contains the past and opens up the future. In this dance experience, space and time can also have, a ‘we’ quality (Heidegger, 2001) as the participants describe being ‘held’ in the space. There was at times a sense of the usual boundaries of space/time altering, perceptions of reality shifting, mystical dimensions to ‘being’ arising. There is fluidity and play in how the dimensions of time and space are experienced.

Play of descendance - transcendence – immanence:

There was a sense of play between descendance, into primordial sensation, feeling in movement and a new opening or clearing. Fraleigh (2004) calls this a “depth transcendence” (p. 17). Others have described the play between these poles of

descending and transcending as an “immanent orientation” (Davison, 2009, p. 131), a celebration of the play between the tangible physical element and the spiritually felt dimensions of life.

Play of situated - open – communion:

The transpersonal or spiritual dimensions of ‘being’ were experienced as the bodily felt play between situated self, freedom of being and being held within in a larger deeper context/presence. Todres (2007) describes this as a play between “a specialised engagement, a situated freedom and a non-seperative being-here” (p. 223).

These ‘plays’ seemed to share a potentiality for healing/transformation or ‘wholing’ experiences (Rozario, 1997). They seem to gather meaning together, contributing to understanding a personal and a larger deeper sense of the experience of being-in-the-world of CTD

How is this research related to other studies?

As a health orientated practice that is newly established and evolving in Aotearoa/New Zealand, there is a need for CTD research in a local context. Understanding from a qualitative perspective is helpful in developing practices to bring insight and understanding to a newer field of practice. In the literature review I focused on interpretive studies that explored the lived experience of DMT and CTD and were comparable in size and depth, in order to compare the qualitative dimensions, the practices, experiences and effects.

This dissertation reveals some comparatively similar findings to the research reviewed in Chapter Two. All the studies reviewed, shared the themes shown in my dissertation. They are: embodiment, emotional journey/release, freedom, expression, empathetic connection, spirituality, play and creativity. In all the research reviewed, a ‘felt bodily/emotional/spiritual connection’ was identified as fundamental to whether and how the experience was therapeutic for participants (Davison, 2009; De Leon, 2007; Hammond-Meiers, 1992; Juhan, 2003; Mills & Daniluk, 2002; Mullane, 2003; Stromsted, 1999). This is similar to the findings of this study, the experience of ‘embodying’, ‘dwelling-with’ and moving from, the lived body, the ‘bodily felt sense’ of mood and the spiritual dimension, contributes strongly to the connection, potency and potentiality of therapeutic experiences for participants.

In particular, findings from Stromsted's (1999) doctoral dissertation are similar to aspects of this study's findings. Stromsted interviewed long time practitioners and the major theme or metaphor was "descent and return" (p. 227). This is similar to this dissertation's finding of descending/transcending through the body, connected to the emotional and spiritual journey.

Findings from Fallis (2002) and Stromsted's (1999) studies were that participants found having their experiences heard and witnessed in a positive and respectful manner, during the interviews was transformative in itself. This is similar to my dissertation, as described in the methods section. Participants in follow up conversations with me conveyed how the interview and reading/discussing their transcripts helped them to reflect, validate and integrate meaning from CTD experiences.

What was unique to my dissertation was the opportunity to explore the lived experience of CTD in a New Zealand context with a small but varied sample of people and exploring two different CTD forms. Also what was different from other phenomenological studies (Davison, 2009; Juhan, 2003), in terms of methodology, was my decision to not hold a dual role of researcher/facilitator, partly in order to clarify and contain these two different roles.

Limitations

Some of my own pre-understandings may remain implicit and unarticulated which could be perceived as limitation to the self reflexivity of the study. A positive bias toward the phenomena has made it challenging to remain vigilant to all my pre understandings regarding the phenomenon. I acknowledge my bias in terms of language, the pre-reflective 'therapeutic' frame I gave the phenomena. Another bias acknowledged is the use of a chosen sample of participants, who I knew would be able to deeply reflect and articulate their experience, were keen to be part of my dissertation and are positively invested in the phenomena.

Implications for practice and education and research

The use of a phenomenological framework has revealed unique and shared experiences through common lifeworld domains. Implications for education, practice and research are intertwined, considering; (1) the general community based contexts of CTD practice, (2) the emerging development of professional education in creative arts therapies and DMT Aotearoa/New Zealand and, (3) CTD's and DMT's potential role in

health care and promotion in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Further research is needed to understand and support these three contexts of engagement. I will outline broad implications for health care practice and promotion and then address more specific implications for CTD and DMT practice, education and research

Health care practice / education

This research argues that CTD holds potential for individual and group therapeutic process and positive change. This has implications for being part of health care and promotion. As shown, movement and dance may access and express levels of emotional, embodied, spiritual meanings and connections that many other therapies and health promotion practices may not (Payne, 2006). Understandings shown in this study, the language, meaning and experiences of CTD, the variety of unique and deeply felt human experiences, revealed in and through the lifeworld domains, may help health practitioners reflect on CTD as tool to support emotional literacy, embodied understandings of body/mind/spirit, and the potential as an integrative humanising practice that supports health care and promotion. Being aware of creative health care practices that honour the unique lifeworld of people is important for health professionals and educators.

CTD and DMT practice / education

I hope to stimulate CTD and DMT practitioners thinking, in regard to the potential for phenomenological inquiry as a holistic approach to practice and research. Although in my dissertation lifeworld inquiry was used as a methodology I believe it has also shown the potential as a framework for practice and education. Understanding a phenomenological approach, the significance and play between pre-understandings, situated and existential aspects of being-in-the-world may support enhanced practitioner reflection and reflexivity.

Phenomenology and lifeworld inquiry, as a map for practice, education and research may enhance practitioners sensitivity and skills to support participants unique and shared experiences of 'being' in CTD. For example specific promptings in facilitation, to explore the lifeworld domains in a variety of ways (time, space, mood, relation-ality, home, adventure, implicit, explicit, transcendent, descendancy) within a CTD session may support deeper and wider inquiry, connections and understandings of 'being' with self and others. This is supported by the findings of the participants' experiences in this

dissertation. I recommend the use of existential, humanistic, client centred principles of advanced empathy, regard and respect for unique experience, to encourage the safety that honours and supports an unfolding of unique and shared authentic experience in CTD.

I plan to present this research at the arts therapies conference in Auckland in September 2010, to discuss the role of a phenomenological-existential perspective to education, practice and research of CTD.

Further, given the positive experiences for participants in telling their stories, in this research process, there is the potential for shared reflection processes as a therapeutic and research tool in CTD, which may assist participants' integration process of the experience. This is supported by creative/therapeutic arts literature and research (Juhan, 2003; Knill et al., 2005). In summary a reflective phenomenological approach, in education and practice, may enhance practitioners' ability to understand and support participants' unique unfolding of lifeworld experience in CTD.

Ongoing research

Two exciting and inspiring discoveries worthy of ongoing research in CTD are: 1) CTD's role in processing difficult or complex emotions and 2) the message that the CTD experience can personally and relationally reverberate out into participants' lives, in a variety of ways. I would recommend further applied phenomenological studies to deepen understanding evaluation and application of these potentially therapeutic aspects of CTD.

A thesis could focus on the role and meaning of transformative experiences in CTD, on participants' lives. This could utilize artistic and co-operative/hermeneutic methods appropriate to embodied practices such as CTD. In my analysis I used Gendlin's (1969) 'focusing' technique to find the bodily 'felt sense' of the data, sensing into what was most 'alive' in the transcript to help reveal the 'presence' of phenomena in a more holistic way (Gendlin, 1969; Todres, 2007). This could be developed further using, other embodied and creative/artistic methods of enquiry such as poetry, dance, video, art and photography as reflective tools.

Has the question been answered?

In the ongoing search to support mind/body/spirit integration, healing and 'wholing' in our busy world, the experience of CTD has been shown to support this connection to a deeply felt sense of 'being' in the world. I believe this research has answered the question posed, "what is the experience of 'being' in CTD?" It shows in-depth, intricate and richly textured human experiences. The themes show CTD to be an interwoven exploration of the lifeworld in an embodied movement experience. They reveal the play of 'being' through the dimensions of body, mood, relationality, time and space as 'lived' in CTD. They show personally therapeutic and spiritual meanings. The discussion confirms the understandings and meanings of the 'play', in and between these themes. The conclusion is of 'potentiality', the genuine capacity of CTD to support embodied, expressive understanding of the self. The potential of the phenomenon to be experienced as transformative and integrative, and for shared understandings through reflection. CTD releases, engages and allows for understanding and meaning to emerge in deeply personal, unique, embodied and therapeutic ways for participants.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Consent Form

Appendix B – Participant Information Sheet

Appendix A

Consent Form



Project title: The lived experience of creative/therapeutic dance

Project Supervisor: Liz Smythe

Researcher: Anne Hurst

- Y I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 02 April 2009.
- Y I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- Y I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be audio-taped and transcribed.
- Y I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- Y If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including tapes and transcripts, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- Y I agree to any reflective writing, art or other creative resources that I provide being used in the research with my permission YesY NoY
- Y I agree to take part in this research.
- Y I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one): YesY NoY

Participant’s signature:

.....

Participant’s name:

.....

Participant’s Contact Details (if appropriate):

.....
.....
.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 15 June 2009

AUTEC Reference number 09/111

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Appendix B

Participant Information Sheet



Date Information Sheet Produced: 02 April 2009

Project Title

The lived experience of creative/therapeutic dance

An Invitation

My name is Anne Hurst. I am a mental health nurse with interest and experience in dance/movement therapy. This research is part of my Masters of Health Science degree at AUT. This is an invitation to explore your experiences of group community therapeutic dance, through participation in an interview. You are also invited to reflect through writing, or other creative forms of you're choosing.

To participate in this research you need to have attended creative/therapeutic dance/movement sessions of your choosing, and be willing to have a conversation about your experiences. This is an opportunity for you to reflect on your experiences and their significance.

Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time prior to data analysis without any adverse consequences.

What is the purpose of this research?

This research will provide information to interested parties on how creative/therapeutic dance is experienced and the meaning it has for people.

How was I chosen for this invitation?

This invitation has been offered to you as you have experience of creative/therapeutic dance.

What will happen in this research?

You will be invited to attend an interview with me at a place of your choosing. This is likely to take between one to two hours. I will then transcribe that interview and craft the data into units that may be used in my dissertation. These will be returned to you prior to analysis. You have the right to delete, change or add to the data at this stage. You may wish to reflect on your experience of creative/therapeutic dance through a reflective journal, art, or any other creative means. If you would like to contribute such work to my study I would welcome any such additional data. Once the dissertation is complete I will send you a brief report on the study. If you wish to read the full report I will make it accessible to you.

What are the discomforts and risks?

In the activity, reflection and discussion of therapeutic dance, it is possible you could experience intense feelings.

How will these discomforts and risks be alleviated?

If you experience any discomfort or distress from your participation in this study, a creative/therapeutic dance session is available to you at no charge if this may be helpful to you. Further, up to three free counselling sessions is available through the AUT Health and Counselling Centre.

What are the benefits?

The interview will provide a safe opportunity for you to explore your experiences which can deepen your understanding and provide valuable insights. You will also be contributing to the wider understand of the meaning and significance of creative/therapeutic dance in Aotearoa/NZ.

What compensation is available for injury or negligence?

In the unlikely event of a physical injury as a result of your participation in this study, rehabilitation and compensation for injury by accident may be available from the Accident Compensation Corporation, providing the incident details satisfy the requirements of the law and the Corporation's regulations.

How will my privacy be protected?

The information collected will be kept confidential. Your name will not be used in any publications, nor any other identifying information

What are the costs of participating in this research?

You will be asked to give one to two hours of your time for an interview and spend some time reading the crafted data from the transcript. You may also wish to spend some time in your own creative reflections.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have two weeks to consider the invitation.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

You will need to sign a consent form which I will provide you with.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Yes you will. I will send you a brief report of the study once the dissertation is complete, and if you wish to access the full report it will be accessible to you.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, *Liz Smythe* liz.smythe@aut.ac.nz ph 09 921 9999 ext 7196.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEK, *Madeline Banda*, madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 8044.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Researcher Contact Details:

Anne Hurst: 09 815 7366 mob: 027 209 5516 email: ahurst@pl.net

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Project Supervisor, *Liz Smythe* liz.smythe@aut.ac.nz ph 09 921 9999 ext 7196.

***Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on
15 June 2009***

AUTEK Reference Number 09/111