

# Somatic responses; my body knows best

A DT inquiry in the identification of somatic responses while working with a patient with Cluster-C Personality Disorder traits in a psychiatric setting



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## Table of content

|                                                                                                           |           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Table of content .....</b>                                                                             | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>Abstract.....</b>                                                                                      | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>Keywords .....</b>                                                                                     | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>1. Introduction .....</b>                                                                              | <b>5</b>  |
| 1.1 Personal motivation.....                                                                              | 5         |
| 1.2 Objective and Rationale .....                                                                         | 5         |
| 1.3 Definition of terms.....                                                                              | 6         |
| 1.3.1 Differentiation between somatic countertransference and my research inquiry.....                    | 8         |
| 1.4 Research Question .....                                                                               | 9         |
| 1.5 Hypothesis.....                                                                                       | 9         |
| 1.6 Setting and selection of client .....                                                                 | 9         |
| 1.7 Ethical considerations .....                                                                          | 10        |
| <b>2 Literature review.....</b>                                                                           | <b>11</b> |
| 2.1 Understanding PD cluster-C/B.....                                                                     | 11        |
| 2.2 How do DT and Arts Therapies look at PD cluster-C/B .....                                             | 11        |
| 2.3 Non-verbal affect attunement and secure attachment .....                                              | 12        |
| 2.4 Theory of Mind, roots in attachment issues and how DT can help increase the “capacity to think” ..... | 12        |
| 2.5 Somatic responses and the nervous system.....                                                         | 13        |
| 2.6 Somatic countertransference .....                                                                     | 13        |
| 2.7 New paradigms of embodiment.....                                                                      | 14        |
| 2.8 An embodied awareness, self-knowing and empathy .....                                                 | 15        |
| 2.9 Using the principles of Authentic Movement as a way of knowing .....                                  | 15        |
| 2.10 Ways of using the somatic responses with PD.....                                                     | 16        |
| 2.11 Conclusion.....                                                                                      | 16        |
| <b>3 Research Method .....</b>                                                                            | <b>17</b> |
| 3.1 Methodology of the investigation .....                                                                | 17        |
| 3.2 Arts Based methods and Embodied methods in Research .....                                             | 17        |
| 3.3 Research design .....                                                                                 | 18        |
| 3.3 Data collection and analysis procedures .....                                                         | 19        |
| 3.3.1 Session notes, movement explorations, mannequin.....                                                | 19        |
| 3.3.2 Client interview (open interview).....                                                              | 19        |
| 3.3.3 On-site supervisor Interview .....                                                                  | 20        |
| 3.4 Strengths and weaknesses of the method .....                                                          | 20        |
| <b>4 Findings .....</b>                                                                                   | <b>21</b> |
| 4.1 Four stories of the four sessions.....                                                                | 21        |
| 4.3 Themes extracted from four sessions.....                                                              | 26        |
| 4.4 Findings from client interview .....                                                                  | 28        |
| 4.5 Integrated information from on-site supervisor interview .....                                        | 31        |
| 4.6 Description of creative process of the dance solo .....                                               | 33        |
| <b>5 Discussion .....</b>                                                                                 | <b>35</b> |
| 5.1 Personal reflection ( <i>micro level</i> ) .....                                                      | 35        |
| 5.2 For the field ( <i>meso level</i> ) .....                                                             | 35        |
| 5.3 For the body of knowledge ( <i>macro level</i> ) .....                                                | 37        |
| 5.4 Strengths and limitations of the study .....                                                          | 37        |

|                                                                                      |           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>6 General conclusions.....</b>                                                    | <b>39</b> |
| <b>References .....</b>                                                              | <b>40</b> |
| <b>Appendices .....</b>                                                              | <b>42</b> |
| Appendix 1: Information letter and consent form, institution .....                   | 42        |
| Appendix 2: Information letter and consent form, client.....                         | 45        |
| Appendix 3: Example of the "mannequin", record SR after DT session .....             | 48        |
| Appendix 4: Example of "tracking sheet" for movement explorations.....               | 49        |
| Appendix 5: Example of data analysis of the 4 <sup>th</sup> movement exploration ... | 50        |
| Appendix 6: Full analysis of session and movement experience.....                    | 51        |
| Appendix 7: Questionnaire/themes for client interview .....                          | 64        |
| Appendix 8: Transcript of client interview .....                                     | 65        |
| Appendix 9: Questionnaire for on-site supervisor interview .....                     | 73        |
| Appendix 10: Example of brainstorming for creation of dance solo .....               | 74        |
| Appendix 11: Notes on personal process .....                                         | 75        |

## Abstract

This research investigates the identification, meaning and use of somatic responses of the dance therapist (in training) in relation to a female client with Cluster-C personality disorder traits. The data is collected over four consecutive DT sessions through a qualitative arts-based research. In my double role of dance therapist in training and researcher, I investigated my somatic responses through in-depth movement explorations and a dance solo creation. Through the arts-based methods and a reflective interview with the client, five main themes emerged that seem to hold value for the client: inter-relational issues, somatic sensing, the need of expressing herself and the biographical story / trauma. This study encourage therapist to stay in touch with their somatic responses, allowing unconscious material to surface and daring to reflect and interact with their clients from this somatic perspective. This study has shown that it is a safe and non-judgemental approach encouraging the transformation of maladaptive patterns by present reflective somatic awareness. Furthermore, this method can be of great support and value in terms of therapeutic approach working with PD clients. A final artistic product in a form of a dance solo emerged, which added a final (fifth) theme to the above mentioned four, namely emotional regulation.

While there is a concrete body of knowledge on kinesthetic empathy, embodiment of the therapist as well as extensive literature on personality disorder (PD) non-related to DT, I aim to link these individual topics to somatic responses in relation to my own experience through this research.

## Keywords

Dance Therapy (DT), Somatic Responses (SR), Personality Disorder (PD) traits, Embodied movement research

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Personal motivation

For this study, I attempted to find words to describe a process I experienced as a dance therapist in training, in relation to clients with personality disorder: to explore my soma in depth by means of movement explorations. This is why I have chosen the artistic inquiry as investigative method because it is seemingly the most appropriate method to explore internal experiences of the therapist / researcher (and client) without letting go of its' original information (Cruz & Berrol, 2004). Encountering various different patients with personality disorder in the context of my second internship in a psychiatric institution, I observed my somatic responses being more intensely triggered than with most other patients I worked with. To me this internal somatic movement has been of great informative value since the beginning of my DT study. By repeatedly giving attention to my somatic responses while conducting DT sessions, I discovered a profound and direct link to the clients' experience, which allowed me to stay present and observative during the session. I became extensively curious about the process of identification and communication of this listening-process in relation to patients with personality disorder, how it informs me as a therapist and how it could possibly support the patients' process. I decided to take the topic further by researching my somatic responses (SR) through movement explorations and extracting the most relevant themes, which will inform an interview with the client regarding his/her process. The procedure of reflecting on my inner process by allowing my bodily perception to guide me to my inner knowing was very present in my first year solo presentation, which I called "My body knows best", reflected by the title of this thesis. Through this process, my body informed me about its state and the translation of information from the outer to my inner world as somatic responses linking both environments and offering deep insights about the session. By profoundly experiencing my body, I realized that the accuracy of my bodily signals filtering the inner and outer stimuli seemed more accurate than the thoughts my mind created about the current moment.

## 1.2 Objective and Rationale

By deepening my knowledge through literature, I discovered that verbal therapists seem to neglect their somatic process and the option to connect non-verbally to their patients, which I believe can also happens to body oriented therapists at times. *Samuelsson & Rosberg (2018)* mention the importance of non-verbal ways of working to create secure attachment, which is of great importance for PD. They also state that psychotherapists could learn a great deal by implementing somatic listening.

*For myself (micro level):* I would like to deepen my learning process of my somatic responses: becoming more conscious of what my somatic responses exactly are, how I recognize them, how I sense them, how I experience them and what they communicate to me in movement. Eventually I am curious to observe the artistic outcome of my movement experience based on my somatic responses. Lastly, I am very curious to find out if this process is potentially beneficial for my client and how it can be developed further for both the benefit of the client and the therapeutic skills of the therapist.

*For the profession (meso level):* By describing the process of my somatic responses, I hope to sensitize other (arts) therapists about their own somatic responses and encourage the extensive use of it. I hope to offer them an informative and creative perspective on researching somatic responses and its use with PD clients.

*For the body of knowledge of DT domain (macro level):* By using the somatic responses to enter in-depth movement explorations and extract valuable themes for the patient, I offer a specific way of dealing with PD clients as a DT. I additionally wish to link the term somatic responses with our known vocabulary of embodiment, which seems to be missing in the current body of knowledge in DT. Tantia (2016) mentions the conflict of identity between somatic psychotherapy and dance therapy and the current need of unification and work towards integration.

### 1.3 Definition of terms

When talking about somatic responses (SR) I refer to the term *soma*, meaning the holistic aggregate of human experience, the body as perceived from within by first person viewpoint; “*soma* is the very essence of self-reference” (Bernstein, 1979; Hanna, 1979; Tantia, 2016). This sentence is the very departure point of my study of self-perception. It is by using my somatic sense; sensed input from the body (Siegel, 2010), that I will use my somatic processing; the “checking” of new sensations, the nervous system to brain connection (Hartley, 1995) and finally provide a response based on it, which is called the somatic response (SR); responses based on somatic perception (Hartley, 1995). Within the family of *soma* we have somatics; the field that studies the *soma* (Hanna 1979; Tantia, 2016). In the DT field, such processing is usually referred to as kinesthetic awareness (Whitehouse 1958; Hindi 2012), interoception (Hindi, 2012), embodied kinesthetic empathy (Rova, 2017) and embodiment (Panhofer et al., 2011).

Another area I would like to refer to is the use of mindful presence mentioned by Siegel (2010) and embodied consciousness, a term mentioned by Samuelsson & Rosberg (2018), both referring to the attunement to our own body in the present moment without distraction of thoughts. When trying to understand to which DT term corresponds best to somatic responses, I stumbled upon the term kinesthetic responses quoted by Pallaro (2007) on page 183. I found it only once in her literature, generally she refers to kinesthetic empathy. That said, the main difference I recognize between kinesthetic empathy and somatic responses is that the former refers to « tuning into client's movement » (Pallaro, 2007), whereas my understanding of the definition of somatic responses happens without aiming to tune into the client but rather tuning into my own soma. I am aiming to highlight that SRs happen uninterruptedly on a physiological level with everyone, but according to my understanding its intensity and clarity might depend on the individuals training, sensitivity and empathy.

Table 1: Glossary of terms (based on literature)

|                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Countertransference          | First coined by Freud (1910; Pallaro, 2007, p. 177) as projection from patient to analyst, "the analyst is not immune to reactions to the patient": unconscious reaction to the projection of patient, which needs to be identified in order to not interfere with treatment. Heinman (1950; Pallaro, 2007) mentions how countertransference can be used as an instrument of research. |
| Embodied consciousness       | Attunement to our own body in the present moment without distraction of thoughts (Samuelsson & Rosberg, 2018)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Embodied reflective practice | Increased self-awareness grounded in physical sensation, although including images, thoughts and feelings (Leigh & Bailey, 2013)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Embodiment                   | (Panhofer et al., 2011)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Embodied Kinesthetic Empathy | Empathic body mind-connection (Rova, 2017)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Interoception                | "The process of internal stimuli" (Hindi, 2012, p. 129)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Kinesthetic awareness        | (S. Whitehouse 1958; Hindi 2012)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| Kinesthetic empathy          | Therapist embodying client's feeling state and movement qualities; therapist's kinesthetic & self-perceiving awareness coupled with bodily felt understanding of patient's inner affective states. (Dosmantes-Alperson, 1980; Dosmantes-Beaudry, 2003; Pallaro, 2007, p. 182-183)                                                                                                      |
| Mindful presence             | Mentioned by Siegel (2010)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Mindful presence             | Attunement to our own body on the present moment without distraction of thoughts by Siegel (2010)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <i>Soma</i>                  | The holistic aggregate of human experience, the body as perceived from within by first person viewpoint. <i>Soma</i> is the very essence of self-reference (Bernstein, 1979; Hanna 1979; Tania, 2016)                                                                                                                                                                                  |

|                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Somatic countertransference      | Coined by Bernstein (1984; Pallaro, 2007, p. 184); "countertransference reactions which occur at a bodily level" and "bring awareness of and embody the patients' somatic unconscious". Also coined by Lewis (1984; Hervey; 2000; Cruz & Berrol 2004, p. 185) as a "DMT method that can be used as a form of data collection and analysis" |
| Somatic intersubjective dialogue | Coined by Dosamantes-Beaudry (2003; Pallaro, 2007, p. 187) "the therapist's process of paying attention to her 'her own bodily-felt reactions while simultaneously tracking and attending' the clients' ones.                                                                                                                              |
| Somatic memory                   | Charles (2004; Pallaro, 2007) the bodies memory                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Somatic processing               | The "checking" of new sensations, the nervous system to brain connection (Hartley, 1995)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Somatic response                 | Responses based on somatic perception (Hartley, 1995)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Somatic sense                    | Sensed input from the body (Siegel, 2010)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Somatics                         | Western body-mind disciplines, (Mullan, 2014) or the field that studies the soma (Hanna 1979; Tania, 2016)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Transference                     | Stolorow et al. (1987; Pallaro, 2007, p. 178): "countertransference has a decisive impact in shaping the transference" of the client. Bolas (1987): Establishing countertransference readiness is creating internal space for the patient's transference.                                                                                  |

### 1.3.1 Differentiation between somatic countertransference and my research inquiry

My aim in this study is not to examine countertransference by comparing my somatic experience with the one of my client but rather examine what my somatic experience is and what it communicates through the medium of creative moment explorations. It is important to notice that somatic transference automatically happens by being present in the room with the client. Not to forget that in research there is a method called somatic transference research aiming to look at this exact process (Pallaro, 2007). My aim is not to discern which somatic signal belongs to whom but rather allow my being to sense the somatic sensory experience and allow it to tell its story through movement. It is not the difference but rather the content of the somatic information that matters.

## 1.4 Research Question

*How do I identify my somatic responses as a DT trainee working with a client with Personality disorder traits, what do my somatic responses communicate and can this process provide valuable themes for the client?*

- 1. How do I identify my somatic responses?*
- 2. Exploring somatic responses through movement explorations, what do they communicate to me?*
- 3. By analysing this process during four sessions, what kind of themes arise?*
- 4. In a final interview with the client, are the proposed themes recognizable and/or of value for the clients' process?*

## 1.5 Hypothesis

My hypothesis is that through the process of in-depth movement explorations after a DT session with a PD client I can recall one evocative somatic response on a purely physical level. Through the repetition of that process, I imagine that my somatic response will communicate previously unnoticed information about myself and the client through my somatic exploration including emotions and thoughts. Lastly, I presume that the movement exploration process will help me extract recurring themes, which are of potential value for the client. My presumption is that somatic sensing and exploring through movement allows a deeper understanding of the therapists' somatic responses, and through this listening processes a more profound link to the clients' themes.

## 1.6 Setting and selection of client

The research is conducted in a Psychiatric Hospital in acute and preventive care of mood and psychotic disorders in an urban area in The Netherlands. The patient is a 38 year-old female treated for a psychotic depression with a former diagnose of Cluster-C personality traits. She stayed for a length of 7 month in the clinic. I started to work with her as a dance therapy trainee at the end of her treatment where her psychotic depression had stabilized and difficult personality traits were coming to the forefront. During the last two months of her stay, personal growth was encouraged through different therapies, dance therapy being one of them.

I was an intern at this institution for nine months, under the supervision of the dance therapist working there. By the time the data collection started I have known the patient for three months and I had been an intern in this institution for three month. Together with my on-site supervisor we choose this patient as suitable for this study because of her PD diagnose and because she was at the end of her treatment where the personality traits were clearly noticeable

### 1.7 Ethical considerations

I ensured that the institution and the participant were informed about the purpose and procedure of this research and her questions answered (Appendices 1 and 2). The information letter invites the client to participate and explains the purpose and the procedure of the research, as well as any foreseeable risks, inconveniences and discomforts associated with participation. I followed the code of ethics of the EADMT (Europe) and FVB (Netherlands), including the research ethic code of the institution itself. Since I am a dance therapist in training, my responsibilities are shared with my on-site supervisor and the institution. In terms of relationship, I was aware of my dual role; the one of the therapist and the one of the researcher. "The goals and outcomes of the therapy must take priority over goals of the research" (Cruz & Berrol, 2004, p.183). In terms of supervision I took part in a supervision group at Codarts and I received on-going supervision by my on-site supervisor and the multidisciplinary team of the institution. The research methods were carefully designed to avoid burden on the participant, to respect the time span of the sessions, excluding any video or photography. The possible benefit for the client is that the emphasis on bodily sensations and the verbal reflection of it is a helpful method for this client group (Samuelsson & Rosberg, 2018). Without specifically emphasizing the clients' bodily sensations, by naming my own body responses and verbalizing them, there is a possibility to bring the clients attention to his or her own sensations as by-product of sharing mine.

## 2 Literature review

### 2.1 Understanding PD cluster-C/B

Personality Disorders (PD) are characterized with lasting and inflexible maladaptive thinking, behavioural and emotional patterns, which cause distress, inhibit the person to build and keep relationships, and make it difficult to function in every day life. Suicidal thoughts and self-injurious behaviour can be part of the equation. Haeyen et al. (2018) describe cluster B/C as having serious emotional and self-regulating issues but according to Doomen (2015), cluster C seems easier to treat than B because they are less likely to fall into a crisis situation. Cluster C PDs are generally characterized as anxious, introvert or dependent. The cause of PD is still discussed but the recent study of Haeyen et al. (2018) links the disorganised and anxious attachment of cluster C/B to childhood mistreatment, which seems to connect childhood abuse to adult Personality Disorders (e.g. Beeney et al., 2017; Levy, Johnson, Scala, Temes, & Clouthier, 2015; Haeyen et al. 2018). Ingenhoven (2015) supports the view that early childhood trauma and neglect interferes with the development of the personality but adds that the genetic vulnerability and what happens after the trauma is of high significance and too often neglected in the equation. He also states that interpersonal functioning, emotion regulation and mental understanding of the trauma is needed for integration.

### 2.2 How do DT and Arts Therapies look at PD cluster-C/B

I have not found any specific documentation explaining the use of DT with cluster C PD, but extending the above-mentioned thought that PD partly originates in childhood trauma, I am linking to the work of Shafir (2015), whose study shows how the use of a somatic movement approach helps integrate underlying patterns of attachment trauma including disorganisation. She mentions that somatic movement adds an emotionally intelligent dimension with the potential to reveal dysfunctional patterns of attachment. Body awareness, contact support exploration and expression are all central to somatic-based trauma practises. Shafir (2015) states that following the body's story through its impulses, movement patterns, muscular tension and limitations, internal sensations and breathing patterns, missing pieces of a patients' experience can be revealed and processed. The very strength of somatically informed interventions is the "refocused attention on the richness of one's inner world and the self in relationship", mentions Shafir (2015). Looking at cluster C/B from an Art Therapy perspective (AT), self-expression is the major factor to uncover and integrate suppressed emotions through art making (Haeyen et al. 2018).

According to Haeyen et al. (2018), handling materials helps exteriorizing but also regulate internal images through sensory perception and affect regulation, offering insight and self-comprehension in an interacting approach. Furthermore this article mentions that non-verbal therapies are perceived as potentially better methods for PD patients compared to verbal therapies, due to their explorative and experiential standpoint addressing difficult emotional patterns, which is even more useful for people with difficulties to verbalize (Bernstein, Arntz, & de Vos, 2007; Haeyen et al., 2015).

### 2.3 Non-verbal affect attunement and secure attachment

As mentioned above, there is a link between attachment styles and PD connected to emotion regulation. It is of great importance to acknowledge that affects are always expressed and delivered by the body (physical expression, posture, tone of voice, gaze), which according to Samuelsson & Rosberg (2018) verbal therapies seems to neglect or be unaware of. Integrating body-oriented interventions such as DT, by giving better attention to nonverbal affect attunement in the therapeutic relationship, could significantly support the clients transformation in terms of attachment style (Håvås et al., 2015; Samuelsson & Rosberg, 2018) and the capacity to reflect and verbalize, which are problematic for PD. Haeyen, Kleijberg and Hinz (2017) state that using arts assignment allows previously blocked emotions to be experienced, expressed, shaped and shared. Arts therapies including DT seem ideally suited to address this non-verbal connection in the therapeutic relationship, offer an experience of secure attachment discover internal process while regulating and verbalizing emotions. All of these are accessed much more directly through non-verbal therapy (Haeyen et al 2015) though they highly suggest combining verbal and non-verbal approaches for a better integration.

### 2.4 Theory of Mind, roots in attachment issues and how DT can help increase the "capacity to think"

A remarkable study (Arntz et al., 2009) counters the hypothesis that lack in social cognition or inferior theory of mind (ToM) explain difficulties associated with interpersonal problem, unstable relationships and fear of abandonment in BDP and Cluster-C PD. The research shows how there is no evidence for deficits in ToM in both in cluster B and C. On the contrary, they generally show superior performance to the non-patients and are perceived as sensitive and receptive to others. Arntz et al. (2009) argue that PD do not lack empathy but rather need more support from others due to the lack of care received in their early childhood. Furthermore, ToM is a must in order to empathize (Choi-Kain & Gunderson, 2008; Arntz et al., 2009). Here we address the hypothesized attachment trauma and that the capacity to think would be hindered when the attachment system is activated (Arntz et al., 2009).

These findings do not suggest that PD patient may not have troubles comprehending others and themselves in specific circumstance but rather highlight that interpersonal difficulties might be linked to emotional responses such as stress, fear of abandonment and anger, than a lack of social cognitive capacities. That said, according to Manford (2014), DT can the clients' process of reflecting and verbalising and suggests a body-oriented approach to emotion regulation and interpersonal relating. DT enables the exploration of thoughts, emotions and behaviours' through embodied experiences, fostering reflection through metaphors, and shows to be an effective approach to PD (Manford, 2014). Samuelsson & Rosberg (2018) add that embodied consciousness in the therapist, meaning the awareness of the therapists' non-verbal inner processes, helps the client regulate emotions and develop a reflective mind.

## 2.5 Somatic responses and the nervous system

Earlier we mentioned the importance of non-verbal attunement, affect and embodied approaches, but what does it mean, practically? Siegel (2019) introduces us to the external incoming signals into our first five senses and by deepening the listening process we can discover what he calls our "sixth somatic sense", the one that senses the internal input, from within the body. The "sixth somatic sense" coined by Siegel (2019) can be compared to what Hannas' (cited in Tantia, 2016) term 'Somatics', named back in 1976 and differentiated body from *soma*; the body perceive just as the physical body and the *soma* as the total experience of the self. The article of Tantia (2016) also explains how the field in which this holistic experience of self from within is studied, the *soma*, is called Somatics and recognised the *soma* as the heart of self-reference (Bernstein, 1979 and Hanna 1979; Tantia, 2016). To get a better understanding of this process on a physiological level, Hartley (1995) explains how the "sensory nerves within the sensory nervous system receive impressions from the external and internal environment and conveys this information to the brain" (Hartley, 2014, p. 248). She continues, "A complex process of 'checking' these new sensations against other incoming information and against the memory of previous similar and related experiences allows meaningful perception of the impressions to be made and an appropriate response to be initiated"(Hartley, 2014, p. 248). "There is thus a continually interweaving cycle of action, perception and response. Most of the somatic processing is done unconsciously" (Hartley, 1995, p.249).

## 2.6 Somatic countertransference

To continue the above-mentioned line of thought, these incoming sensations are both information form outside and inside the body and here the importance to discuss the transferring of somatic information form one body to another.

Bernstein (1984; Pallaro, 2007) coined the term “somatic countertransference” to describe exactly this process of countertransferential responses which occurs on a bodily level. And we DTs have been particularly focused on the bodies’ responses happening during the therapeutic procedure (Pallaro, 2007). Bernstein (1984) noted “the necessity to be aware of and embody the patient’s somatic unconscious so as to aid the patient in the process of cathecting, metabolizing, and integrating split-off parts of the self, as well as revealing in the patient’s resistances and defences” (Pallaro, 2007, p. 184). Pallaro (2007, p.184) mentions how most DT aim to fulfil this task with their patients such as Eberle (2000), Nikolitsa (2002), and Ramharter (2000) who make use of “creative movement and dance improvisation after their sessions as a free associative instrument in order to understand better their bodily responses experienced while I relationship to their patients”. She adds; “it is imperative to be able to access one’s own body memories, bodily affective states, and sensations in order to differentiate one’s own material from that of the patient’s” (Pallaro, 2007, p. 184). That said Bernstein (1984; Pallaro, 2007) explains that each therapist has a dominant receptive conduit; for some the information is mainly captured through the senses, others through the thoughts, feelings or intuition. “Sensations described in the literature include pure body sensations (such as dizziness, emptiness, hunger, fullness, claustrophobia, sleepiness, pain, restlessness, sexual arousal, and so forth) as well as images rooted in the somatic unconscious (such as sudden desire to hold the infant self of the patient, feeling penetrated by the patient, feeling swallowed up whole or split out in pieces, feeling choked to death, feeling like a monstrous, devouring creature etc.),” (Pallaro, 2007, p.185). Nevertheless Pallaro (2007) mentions a very important point for this research, namely that not all felt sensations are considered countertransferential and that DT surely experience other somatic reactions. Of course a combination of some or all are possible.

## 2.7 New paradigms of embodiment

Bridging bodily felt sensations to embodiment, I would like to share a view on the current understanding of the term. The theoretical approaches of Freud and his followers, as well as Reich and Lowen seem somewhat out-dated and do not fit anymore to the modern clinical issues (Safra & Cotta, 2009). The same authors mention that on the contrary, Winnicotts’ work brings the body to the centre of the scene and is perceived as much more suited to our present perspective on health and recovers (Safra & Cotta, 2009). In the Winnicottian perspective “the body is the home of the Being; it is the place, if all goes well, where the psyche dwells in *soma*, allowing the individual to develop his/her personal body” (Safra & Cotta, 2009, p. 247). This latter approach is the one adopted by DT.

## 2.8 An embodied awareness, self-knowing and empathy

Taking a step further into philosophical terms, embodied awareness is essentially perceived as the process of self-knowing, a psychophysiological philosophy rooted in both Somatic Psychotherapy and DT (Tantia, 2016). Moreover the theorist Gendlin "introduced embodied awareness, or 'felt sense' as a way to identify implicit knowledge before the mind can completely articulate experience in words" (Gendlin, 1980; Tantia, 2016, p. 185). On that same thought line, Panhofer et al. (2011) explore a method of non-linguaged ways of knowing through a proven insightful write-move-write process for self-supervision by a "somatic mode of attention" (Csordas, 1993; Panhofer et al., 2011, p. 12), which confirms an access of knowledge from "behind the scene" or modestly said from our entire self. The capacity to enter someone else's experience through embodied intelligence introduces empathy. Our perceptual-motor system (neural system) involved in the creation of empathy, activated by moving oneself or seeing someone else move, and offers a felt sense of an experiencing in the body. In effect, these networks mirror the behaviour of other, thus the common term, mirror neurons (Berrol, 2006).

## 2.9 Using the principles of Authentic Movement as a way of knowing

As Wyman-McGinty (2005; Pallaro, 2007) explains that setting the attention on internal body sensations allows access to unconscious information rooted in preverbal mechanisms in shape of emotional and somatic remembrance. Somatic memory can be recovered through an inward focus on the bodily experience (Wyman-McGinty, 2005; Pallaro, 2007). According to Wyman McGinty (2005; Pallaro, 2007) this process gives a chance to re-embodiment and harmonize formerly indistinguishable affective states into a more consistent storyline. "Authentic Movement is fundamental to sorting out and understanding somatic countertransference responses elicited within the therapist" (Pallaro, 2007, p.189). "Authentic Movement allows individuals to attend more fully to feelings, bodily sensations, movement impulses, and allow images that may be present" (Chodorow, 1991, 1997; Whitehouse, 1963, 1979; Pallaro 2007, p. 203). A form of active imagination called "Authentic Movement," in which attention is given to the somatic unconscious, the unconscious as it is experienced and expressed on a bodily level, can make an important contribution to analysis in several ways (Wyman-McGinty; Pallaro, 2007,).

In –depth-movement (Whitehouse 1979, Pallaro, 2007, p.222) based on Jung's (1916) concept of active imagination is a process of "allowing oneself to be directed from within and to give form, through movement, to the images and feelings which arise from attending to one's own somatic experience". Waiting for the inner impulse to appear is described as authentic by Whitehouse (1979; Pallaro 2007) and to be differentiated from more ego-directed and calculated movement.

## 2.10 Ways of using the somatic responses with PD

"We actively perceive by shifting our attention toward certain stimuli and choosing which stimulation we will take in and register, consciously or unconsciously, in the process of organizing sensory information into recognizable and meaningful perceptions" (Hartley, 1995, p. 249). "In action, we align our perception with our attention, desire, and intention" (Hartley, 1995, p. 250). Siegel (2010) suggests keeping the focus on both our own integration and on that of our client, indirectly affecting our own mindful presence in many deep ways in which we can support the growth of others towards integration. As an extension of presence, DT uses movement observation skills to attune to the patients presence, to understand the personality and distinctiveness of each and everyone. Not to forget the use of embodied knowledge to "tap into somatic images" (Smith, 2002; Panhofer, Payne, Meekums, Parke, 2011) and develop them into active somatic responses.

## 2.11 Conclusion

Much relevant literature has been found to support the relevance of the research question. DT provides a holding, containing and trustful relational environment in the absence of healthy attachment in PD and help access, explore and regulate feelings (Manford, 2014). By using the DTs somatic responses, conscious and unconscious material emerges from within the therapeutic relationship and can be used through self-reflection, emotion regulation and social interconnection. "Transference reactions in the therapist are considered as particularly valuable for making reconstructions of patients' past stories and offer an opportunity to gain access to early experiences and work through their meaning in the present (Dosmantes-Alperson, 1987; Panhofer et al., 2011, p. 15). Entering the somatic unconscious by bringing inward attention to the bodily felt sensation allows the patient to bring somatic processes to the mind for integration (Wyman-McGinty, 2005; Pallaro, 2007). It has been shown that verbal psychotherapies can significantly be improved by integrating body-oriented interventions in the method (Samuelsson & Rosberg, 2018) and for movement therapists pay more attention to their somatic transference. Bringing all these topics together, I found a literature gap in the use of the DT therapists' somatic responses in relation to PD cluster C and B.

### 3 Research Method

#### 3.1 Methodology of the investigation

The methodology used for my research questions is an artistic inquiry using elements of the heuristic method. My working assumptions include:

- 1 Somatic perception is internal and “most of the sensory integration happens unconsciously” (Hartley, 1995, p. 248), therefore it needs a subjective perspective on the lived experience through an arts-based medium.
- 2 My research is about understanding my Somatic Responses; identifying them and exploring them through movement. This complex process needs to be approached in a qualitative manner.
- 3 Because I am analysing my own somatic signals and discover their usefulness through movement exploration I am using elements of the heuristic method, which could be called embodied heuristics.

#### 3.2 Arts Based methods and Embodied methods in Research

“Understanding human experience, including art and creativity, requires ways of knowing that can best be described as aesthetic, emotional, and intuitive” (Cruz & Berrol, 2004, p.182). In this case, Cruz and Berrol (2004, p. 192) mention required research skills such as “accurate kinesthetic attunement, sufficient dance technique, strong observation skills, and creativity, especially from dance improvisation and choreography”. The description of the arts-based method comprise shared features with qualitative procedures but different from customary, quantitative techniques (Cruz & Berrol, 2004). Amongst arts-based characteristics, I highlight the “trust in the intelligence of the creative process and a desire for relationships within the images that emerge from it” (McNiff, 1998, p.37; quoted in Cruz & Berrol, 2004, p.192). I created my own research design (Table 2) that suits best the needs of the research with focus, systematic examination and with the purpose of contributing to a useful body of knowledge. Lastly, artistic research methods “reflect ideas, skills, methods, and values that are central to dance / movement therapy” (Cruz & Berrol, 2004, p.183).

### 3.3 Research design

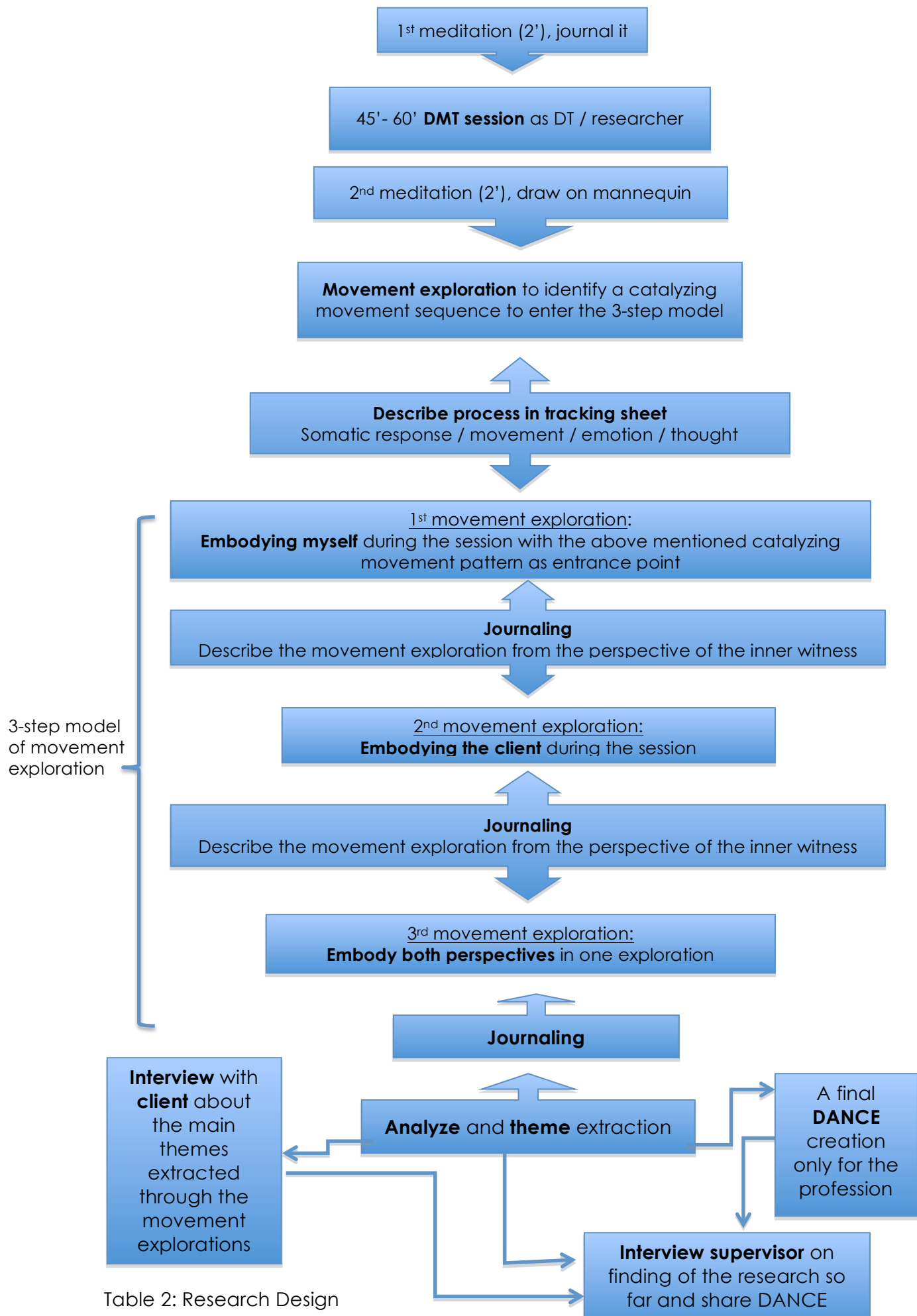


Table 2: Research Design

Table 2 shows the steps of the research design, steps that I systematically followed before and after each of the 4 sessions that served as data collection for this study. After the 1<sup>st</sup> two-minute meditation, the DT session and the 2<sup>nd</sup> two-minute meditation (see Appendix 3), I find a catalysing movement sequence, which I describe in the tracking sheet (see Appendix 4). This movement sequence is the entrance to the 3-step movement exploration, which consists of movement exploration 1 (embody myself as DT), 2 (embodying the client) and 3 (embody both perspectives). Each movement exploration takes 10' and 5' to be documented (see Appendix 5). The whole process is analysed, categorized into themes (see table 3), shared with the client through an interview (see Appendix 7 and 8), re-categorized (see table 4 and 5), shared with the onsite supervisor (see Appendix 9) and transformed into a dance solo (see Appendix 10).

### 3.3 Data collection and analysis procedures

A challenging aspect of using movement as data material is that it has to be seized in a way that can be analysed and evaluated (Cruz & Berrol, 2004). In order to do so I created the above pictured systematic research design where data collection and data analysis overlap. As new data is analysed, new data is produced and so forth until it crystalizes in a final dance, which I considered as a final artistic product of the whole process.

#### 3.3.1 Session notes, movement explorations, mannequin

The data collected through the session notes, movement exploration notes (see Appendix 4, 5) and "mannequins" (see Appendix 3) was analysed and categorized first in four themes per session, meaning a total of 16 themes. They were subsequently analysed and reduced to six main themes, which served as starting point for the client interview (see Appendix 7), which was analysed again to identify four final themes (see Appendix 8). My aim was to narrow down the themes to a number of four and use them as a starting point for the onsite supervisors' interview (see Appendix 9). The four concluding themes were also analysed and researched in movement and put together in a final solo (see Appendix 10).

#### 3.3.2 Client interview (open interview)

Considering the clients traits of personality disorder cluster-C and her tendency to please and agree with what the other suggests, I decided that best member-checking method would be to invite her to an open interview where I could present the identified themes to her, keeping an eye for the specificity of her answers, instead of her general approval of my perspectives, offering a deeper understanding of her process. The themes that were most elaborated on by the client, and seemed to have an emotional impact were further selected as having passed the member-checking test.

Only four themes were extracted from the transcript of the interview (see Appendix 8), which served as starting point for the on-site supervisor interview and the creative process of the solo.

### 3.3.3 *On-site supervisor Interview*

The interview questions were aimed to extract specific (see Appendix 9) answers, using the on-site supervisor as a sounding board to check the relevance of my findings for the DT field. The added value of this interview is that the on-site supervisor has been the dance therapist of this client for the past 7 months and can offer an in-depth and embodied perspective on the subject, and has been working as a DT for the last decade. Thus, peer checking of the findings (onsite-supervisor interview) adds to the member checking of the findings (client interview), in an attempt to test their validity.

### 3.4 *Strengths and weaknesses of the method*

The strength of the study lies in the development of a systematic and structured method design (Table 2). Through the movement exploration and repeated extraction of potentially dormant knowledge through the *soma*, unconscious information can be perceived and developed into themes. The mannequin drawings, journaling and notes extracted from the movement exploration offer a visual, tangible and traceable perception of the researchers' experience of her somatic responses. Another interesting point is the reflective interview with both the client and supervisor (member checking and peer checking the findings), offering a different perspective on the themes. At last, the sharing of the dance solo offers a very personal and somatically insightful understanding of the researchers' process for a wider audience. Looking at the weaknesses; the somatic responses are only felt by the researcher herself and thus cannot be checked or re-lived in the same way by anyone else. Experiencing one's *soma* (the experience of the body from within) cannot be replicated, and thus the outcome of the use of the somatic responses stays individual. The reliability on the sensations of the researcher is therefore highly personal and distinct, which is why I chose the arts-based method to explore it. Another foreseeable limitation is the term "value" used to understand if the themes, that arose through the therapist/researchers' *soma*, are of value for the client. Can the value for the client be objectively established? Furthermore, the research is based on four consecutive DT sessions and it can be argued that it is a short time frame to come to solid results. I believe that the information gathered in each individual session is of value and can be crystalized in defined themes.

## 4 Findings

### 4.1 Four stories of the four sessions

I attempt here to synthesize my session notes and my journaling after each movement exploration, to give the reader some insight into what happened during and after each session. See Appendix 6 for the full account.

#### 1<sup>st</sup> session

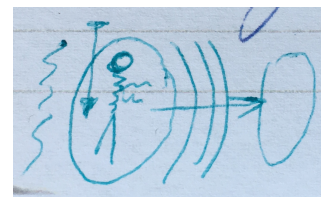
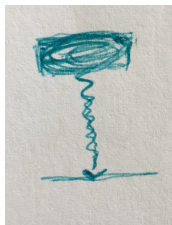
##### *Synthesis of session notes*

In this session I used breathing exercises and inwards attention through several Yin Yoga based postures observing the body's reaction, emerging emotions and thoughts. What stands out in this session is that the client has no difficulty going inwards with closed eyes but once out of the posture and back into contact with me her physical tension reappears. I sense discomfort and a great challenge for her to be in connection with me. I observe her coping mechanism of wanting to please me, which gives me a sense of merging.

##### *Synthesis of discoveries of the movement exploration after the session*

I feel as if I have a heavy blanket on my back making me sink into the floor. The physical need to express myself arises through my throat sensation, but I keep sinking. Surprisingly fast tracking movements arise; with my hands, I surround my head, then throat, heart and lastly my belly (top-down). My breath is tight and high up in my chest, as my arms gesticulate outwardly towards the front relating to something or someone. Through my somatic experience, I feel restlessness and dependence in relation to an external force.

Intriguingly, when my attention is guided inwards, my tension transforms into a feeling of rest and concentrated awareness on my self. My body yields into the ground and through the release, emotions of anger, sadness and loneliness emerge. The themes of insecurity, indecisiveness and dependence are experienced during side-to-side and front-back movement patterns in relation to a frontal presence. Furthermore, vertical presence and the use of expression in space offer me a sense of freedom, wholeness and sense of self.



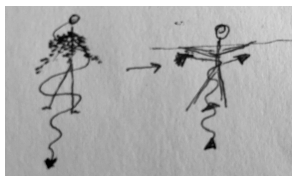
## 2<sup>nd</sup> session

### *Synthesis of session notes*

Through breathing exercises, we address the body, expanding the awareness of somatic sensations through relaxing movement postures and closing off with a body scan and reflective talk. From the start, I notice the client's physical discomfort and tightness during the breathing exercise. Through the session, her tension slowly releases and I can see a stronger centre, a stronger sense of self. The discomfort in the social contact is slightly less apparent than last time. The session seems to have given her more grounding, assurance and flexibility in her body and the opportunity of expressing herself independently, coming from an embodied perception.

### *Synthesis of discoveries of the movement exploration after the session*

My chest is open, I feel centred in my stomach area and sense my spine as centreline. My body registers three outstanding elements; discomfort in the upper body, release of tension into the ground with pouring energy from the feet upwards expanding my arms side wards and a clear limit to my movement amplification. The journey is complex. Three differently vivid movement explorations offer a similar perspective; body parts move detached from the whole leaving me scattered and disconnected, without cohesion. I feel physically insecure, my thoughts kick-in and the paralyzing tension leaves me stuck. Following my body's inner guidance, I am pulled diagonally into space through repetitive movement, bringing clarity to my mind and calmness in my body. I slow down. My hands reach towards my skin and metaphorically pull it towards the front of my body. The action of shedding my skin causes a release of tension. A warm sensation enters my chest – there is something about my heart; feeling pleasure and flow in my body I am left curious.



### 3<sup>rd</sup> session

#### *Synthesis of session notes*

We commence the session with an active warm-up leading us into deepening floor postures combined with conscious breathing, hands-on feet massage, and embodied resting concluding with a reflective dialogue.

The client's body is still holding much tension even though her communication of wishes and needs has improved. The emptiness in her centre catches my attention and I initiate external and internal movements emerging from the centre space to tackle it. I see her very receptive, concentrated and determined to move through the discomfort. Sensing her body's needs and expressing it verbally and non-verbally became our theme. Through sensing our somatic responses, we meet our boundaries and train its externalisation. I encourage her to sense and reflect on her physical state and making decision accordingly. Self-care and personal space were addressed.

#### *Synthesis of discoveries of the movement exploration after the session*

My physical tensions are distinct and I have no sense of centeredness, which makes me feel confused and overwhelmed. On one hand, I find myself pushed by my whole body running forwards even though I am not grounded



and half stumbling over my own feet. There is an inner fight between this force and my (in) capacity to keep up with it. It feels harsh, self-inflicted and merciless. I am assiduously asked by my body to turn inward. The internal determination decelerates as I tune inwards and a sense of deep connection emerges. It resets my body a new but my chest stays closed.

On the other hand, I am standing still with my arms wide-open feeling compassion for myself. I hear my inner voice; "I hear you, I see you". My flanks, back and chest ask for expansion. I move through space, taking the space, surrendering to the floor; "I care about myself". My shoulders and core create space and support for my heart to speak, for my chest to open. In an active and repetitive bursting jump, I fully express my feeling and sensation of self, of embodiment in the moment, which leaves me complete and integrated.

## 4<sup>th</sup> session

### *Synthesis of session notes*

This session comprised a meditative body scan, bringing awareness to a specific body part and moving its' story to end with deep and relaxing movement posture.

The clients' attention goes to her arms and hands, which tell their story in a free movement improvisation. I move with her, moving my own way. Unexpectedly I see her make clear personal choices, allowing to being seen and daring to try out new movements and verbally reflect how it makes her feel. As she talks, her body stays in movement, which indicates an integration of mind and body. She stays with her own movement as I am exploring my own. There is no need to mirror but rather allowing being inspired by the other. She eventually verbalized personal meaning and realizations through the movement metaphors. She developed a highly sensitive and fluid movement quality in space while staying grounded. That being said, it is new and still confronting to her to experience and express herself in this unfamiliar manner in relation to me. In the relaxing movement poses, she allows emotions to come up and expresses them verbally without closing up and contracting.

### *Synthesis of discoveries of the movement exploration after the session*

I explore which posture fits best to me while breathing through the tensions, limitations and surfacing emotions. I feel very connected, as if I was sensing all the cells in my body, sensing the traveling and transforming impressions within. It is a feeling of sensitivity and delicacy. This is a new place, with more space and a feeling of joy. Nevertheless, I still sense a blockage in my chest area that does not fully open up. I am standing on the spot deeply sinking into my body and find it very challenging to rise back up. Surprisingly my chest starts to speak. For the first time it is wide open and extending through my arms. It feels so good. Only my thoughts are holding me back and a sensation of emptiness in my belly. I sink inwards with closed eyes and my arms and hands energetically express their story in rapid movement, the pace is unexpected, open, explorative and active. However, something limits me. By opening my eyes I free myself from the constrain and ultimately relate to the space around me. By this exploration I re-member movement from the session and realisations emerge. I feel free from insecurities, I move openly and expressively. Giving my body a voice to tell its story makes me feel complete, strong and calm. I relate to myself and to space.

### ***Throughout the 4 sessions: Synthesis of the role of Meditation before and after the session***

The two-minute meditation before and after the session proved to be the way for me to tune into my body and essentially bring me back to the present moment, ground and centre me. Moreover, I released accumulated tension by putting my awareness on my breath and body sensations. Most importantly, it made me conscious of my somatic responses in the here and now, which partly answers the first part of the research question ("How do I identify my SR?"). Likewise, when I entered the movement exploration, the same inward attention helped me bring my somatic responses to consciousness and express them in an embodied, creative way. It offered me deep insights on the meaning of the SR, answering the second part of the research question ("What do my SR communicate to me?").

### 4.3 Themes extracted from four sessions

#### 4.2.1. First cycle of data analysis:

What kind of themes arose from the analysis of the four sessions?

The nineteen chosen themes (see Table 3) are drawn from my somatic experience and what they communicated to me, during and after the four sessions and were chosen and categorized based on the intensity and recurrence of the topic. As mentioned above in the “role of the meditation”, by tuning into my soma various sensations are felt. By “checking-in” with them and expressing them on a creative movement level, new sensations and previously unconscious information comes up and a deeper understanding emerges. This process of “checking” is well explained by Hartley (1995) in chapter 2.5 (somatic responses and the nervous system).

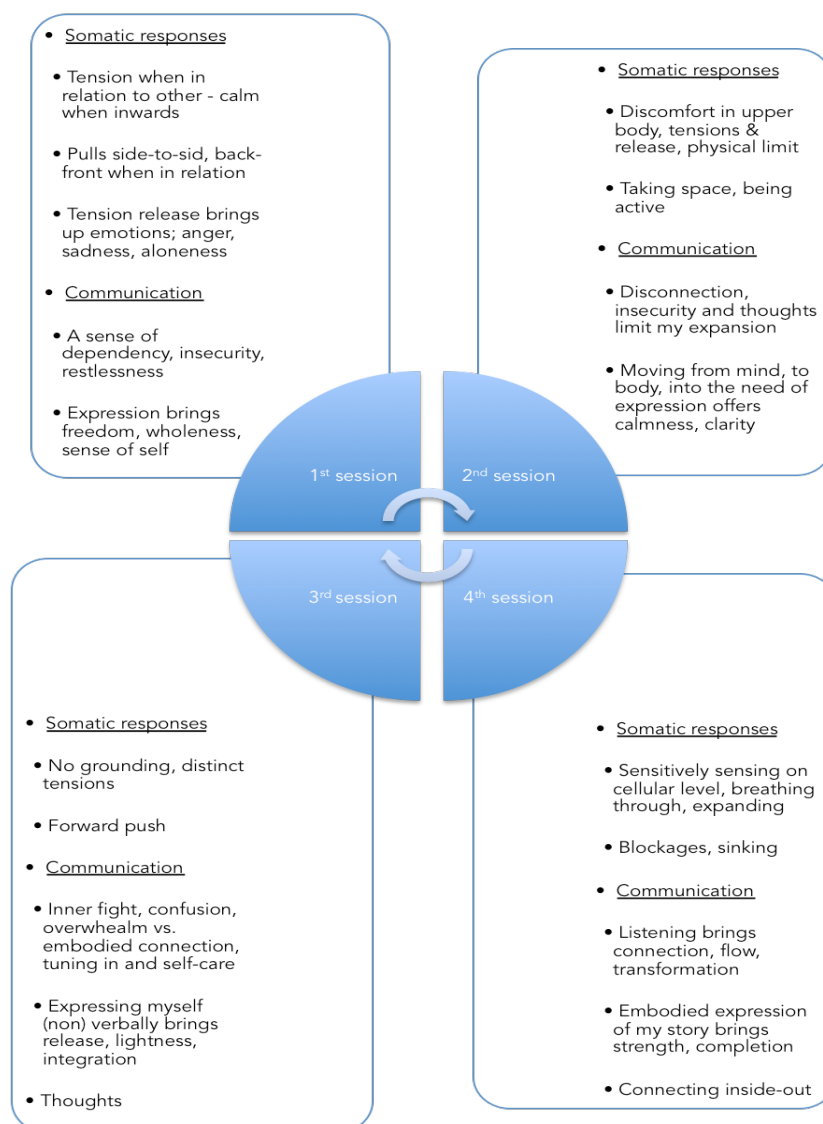


Table 3: The nineteen themes extracted from the four sessions

Table 3 above presents the four sessions with each their somatic responses and what they communicate to me during the movement explorations. In an attempt to bring clarity to this process of creating meaning from somatic responses I present below for each session how the somatic responses are linked to their communicative function.

- 1) SR bullet point 1 (tensions) and 2 (pulls) are linked to the communication bullet point 1 (dependency). SR 3 (tension release) results in communication 2 (freedom).
- 2) The first part of SR 1 (discomfort) connects to communication 1 (disconnection), the second part of SR 1 connects to communication 2 (mind-body-expression) and SR 2 (space) equally connects to communication 2 (mind-body-expression).
- 3) SR 1 and 2 (no grounding / forwards push) connect to the first part of communication 1 (inner fight) and communication 3 (thoughts). Whereas the second part of communication 1 (embodied connection) and 2 have no described SR in this session, though I would connect them to the "release" part of SR 1 and to SR 2, which were also present SR in the third session.
- 4) SR 1 (sensing) connects to communication 1 (listening) and 3 (inside-out), SR 2 (blockages) has no documented communication but could be linked to point 1 (listening), 2 (expression) and 3 (inside-out).

#### 4.2.2. Second cycle of data analysis:

Thorough the process of analysing the sessions with each other and extracting the nineteen above-mentioned themes, clarity was brought to the understanding of my SR. For example:

- High physical tension and sideward pulls when in relation to another, which gave me a sense of inferiority, insecurity and dependence.
- Physical discomfort, restlessness and tension would transform through sinking into my body finding a release through sensing, listening, being present with body and eventually express it (non) verbally.

Often blockages in the body would limit my expansion and hold me back. Through this process of going inwards, sense and release, emotions would come up and here again through presence and / or communication it would transform. Traveling from mind, to body, into expression, brought calmness and clarity. In every exploration I felt the somatic need of expressing my self through the opening of my chest, throat and the use of space inside and around me, providing me with a stronger sense of the experience of freedom, lightness and integration. On the other hand, I would experience an intense inner pull forward originating from my organs making me stumble over my feet leaving me ungrounded, overwhelmed and confused.

This would be communicating the inner struggle versus my embodied awareness, inner connection and self-care. Aside from the physical blockages, my self-judging thoughts would at points hold me back from exploring and releasing further.

By comparing, contrasting and evaluating the themes of each session according to their reoccurrence and intensity, I subtracted six main ones. Here again they were chosen based on the intensity and recurrence of the SR. The SR and its communication are illustrated below in table 4. For each theme, the first bullet-point represents the SR, the second one how I experienced and expressed it in the movement explorations.

|                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Tension in relation        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• tensed upper body, held breath, pulls side to side &amp; front to back</li> <li>• insecurity, dependence, inferiority, victim, pleasing</li> </ul>                                  |
| Specific somatic sensation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• heavy shell / sinking, empty belly, closed chest / heart</li> <li>• stuck, blocked, in a box; need to open my heart and express my self</li> </ul>                                  |
| Emotions                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• when physical tensions release emotion surface</li> <li>• anger, sadness, aloneness vs. pleasure, joy, lightness, curiosity</li> </ul>                                              |
| Expression                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expressive hand gestures, use of space, large Kinesphere, verticality</li> <li>• (non)verbally expressing how I feel, sharing who I am, setting boundaries, make choices</li> </ul> |
| Tuning into Body           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensing, listening, feeling my Body - high sensitivity</li> <li>• Go inside, inner voice, guidance, sense my boundaries, sense of self</li> </ul>                                   |
| Thoughts                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• negative self-limiting thoughts holding me back from expressing/ expanding</li> <li>• hard on myself vs. compassion, acceptance</li> </ul>                                          |

Table 4: The six main themes extracted from the nineteen themes

#### 4.4 Findings from client interview

🌈 Are the proposed themes recognizable and/or of value for the clients' process?

During the interview (see Appendix 8) I shared five of the six main themes with the client. Due to time limitations and my concern regarding the burden of research for the client, I left out the "thoughts" theme, also because this theme had recurred less in the analysis and weighted less in relevance in my view compared to the other five.

Through the co-investigation and testimony of the client, four central themes crystalized out of the six previous ones (see table 5 on the next page):

1. The clients' inter-relational issues
2. The clients' somatic sensing
3. The clients' need of expressing herself
4. The client's trauma / the biographical story

During the interview, the client helped me to link my SR to its communicative function and to the clients' biography. By extracting the most elaborated on and recognized themes by the client I created four new clusters. These four clusters answer the sub-question "Are the proposed themes coming out of my SR recognisable and/or of value for the client's process?"

According to the interview transcript (see Appendix 8), the value of sharing the themes constituted by my SR offered the client great insight about herself and an inwards guidance. What she saw as my ability to put myself in her shoes was of great value to her. Retrospectively, I notice that she seemed to have referred to my general approach of using and communicating my SR, rather than the value of the specific themes mentioned above. Nevertheless, I witnessed a direct connection between my approach and the resulting themes, which suggests that the process of self-investigation through the body was valuable to the client.

*" You point exactly to the place I am looking for. I feel that very much and it gives me a lot of peace."* – excerpt from transcript of client interview

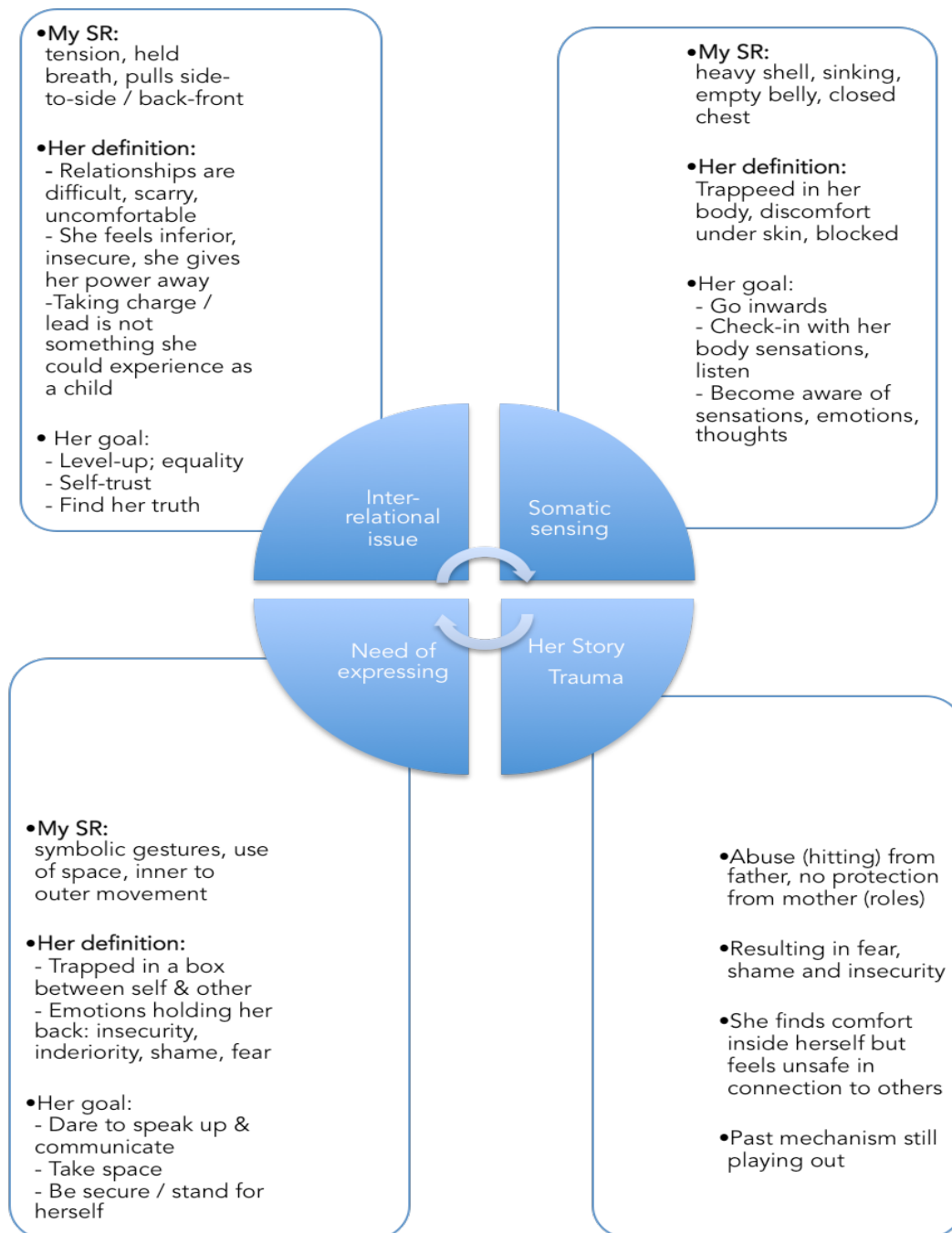


Table 5: The four final themes

#### 4.5 *Integrated information from on-site supervisor interview*

Soon after the interview with the client, I conducted an interview with my on-site supervisor (see Appendix 9), a dance therapist who knows the patient since the beginning of her stay at the psychiatric ward. On the chart below you will find details about the discussed themes.

Noticeable was that both hers and my somatic responses were very similar in relation to the patient when in movement, which suggests somatic responses of therapists working with this population are not exclusively personal; there might be to a degree a shared somatic responses across therapists. However, more studies are needed to further strengthen this impression.

What further stood out is that the on-site supervisors' first somatic reaction in relation to this client was to feel "nothing". According to the onsite-supervisor, the client's merging/mirroring with the DT did not allow the DT to feel anything else than herself, until they started to dance. Then, the somatic responses started to come. This makes me consider the importance of bringing the interpersonal relationship into movement, on a non-verbal level, to allow the body to get a deeper understanding of what is being played out. Additionally, the on-site supervisor pointed out that SRs not only inform us about the present dynamic but also reveal something about the clients' past stories held in their body. Furthermore, according to her beliefs expressed in this interview, the practice of tuning inwards, becoming aware of our SR permits a pure and non-judgemental approach to process and transform maladaptive patterns of the client, based on the body's wisdom and communication, proposing a safe way of exploring the complexity of the self and its relation to the external world.

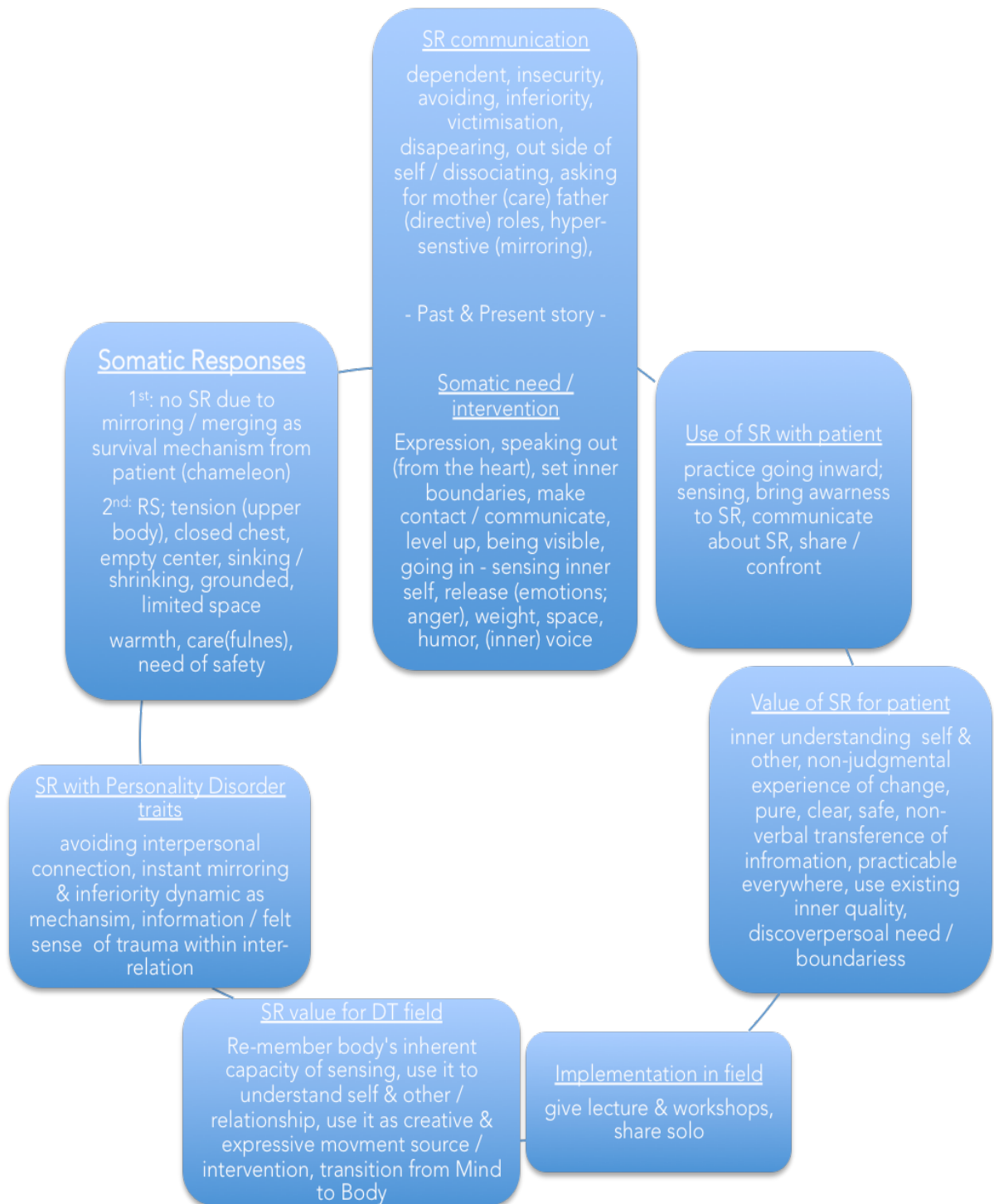


Table 6: Onsite-supervisor interview

#### 4.6 Description of creative process of the dance solo

- ✚ How do I integrate the collected data and findings into an artistic product and how does this artistic process help me reach final insights about the research question?

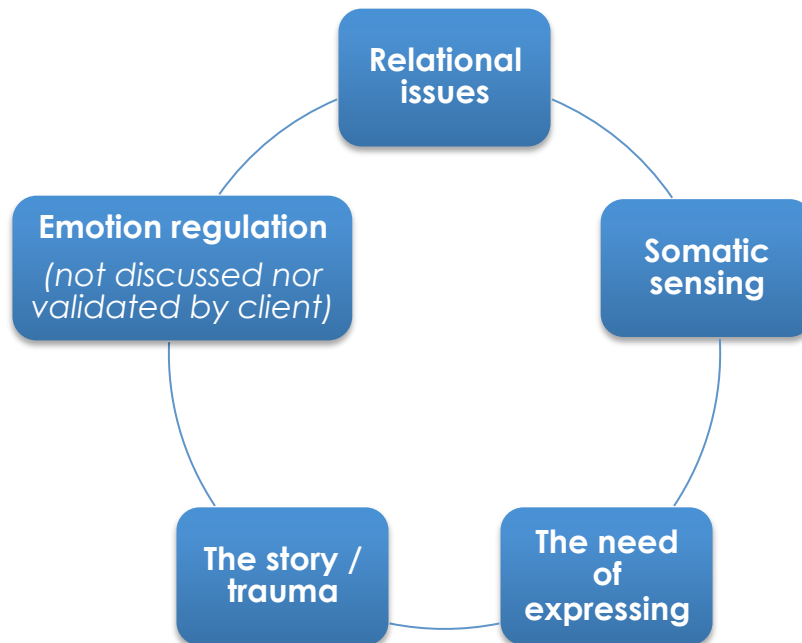
By brainstorming and linking the four main themes to possible movement, I created an inspirational grid to enter the creative movement process (see Appendix 10). From that place, I allowed my somatic responses to become the movement generator, creating material from inside out. As a professional dancer and choreographic co-creator, I usually find inspirations from internal sensations, images, states and emotions, but I always use a line of thought or main inspiration to follow. In that context it always matters how it is structured in terms of dramaturgy. However this research process was very different because I did not allow my mind's opinion to take over and chose which movement feels, fits or looks better nor did I pressure or limit myself in terms of length or choreographic perspective. I stood still, meditative, until my *soma* would lead me into a certain movement, which I would repeat over and over again to fully grasp what is going on internally and expressively. After having exhausted my somatic resources I would go back to the themes and use it to remind me of the structure. Effortlessly, a story line appeared, which I decided to use as a choreographic time line (see Appendix 10). It turned out that I did not fix or create any movement in space but rather set up an improvisation grid (choreographic timeline) based on sensations and actions. I would memorize them and every time re-discover somatic experience and its effect on me.

#### Final insights about the research question

Through this process I realized that there was a major difference between the movement explorations and the solo creation. In the former one I paid much attention to my inner-witness, continuously observing my somatic responses, emotions and thoughts to become as aware as possible of the somatic experience. The latter one, on the contrary, allowed me to fully immerse myself in the somatic experience, as I would do when rehearsing or performing. I merge the inner-witness with the somatic experience, loosening up this previously very present observer and shift into a much more intense sensational and emotional experience. I was not observing myself anymore but rather getting an insight of the overwhelming emotional load of those themes through my *soma*. This profound closeness to the somatic experience gave me a whole new perspective on the emotional load carried by the movement and therefore perhaps a deeper understanding of the clients' emotional state and sensation of self. This experience made me reflect on the role of emotion regulation with PD clients and the mission of the inner-witness to bringing awareness to previously unconscious inner processes.

Through the performative aspect, I gained a deeper understanding of the intensity and depth of my clients' emotional state and the importance of experiencing it in a supportive and safe environment to foster emotion regulation, which I would like to add as an extra theme within the research.

#### Final five resulting themes



## 5 Discussion

I will discuss here the relevance of the findings at three different levels: micro, meso, and macro. In other words: for me personally as a dance therapist in training, for the field of dance therapy and for the body of knowledge.

### 5.1 Personal reflection (*micro level*)

At the very beginning of the research process, at the stage of designing this study and its methods, I wanted to separate myself from the terminology that had been proposed in the literature, such as (somatic) countertransference or kinesthetic empathy, hoping to truly understand my own processing of SR and its communication (see 1.3, definition of terms; transference & countertransference), instead of matching-up to a theory I did not yet understand within soma. Having gone through the research process, I now understand that I found a form in which to use possible (counter) transference without aiming to research the clients' projection but rather creatively discover what information underlies somatic responses and most importantly to me, which ones have a value to the client. The added value I brought with my research is how to get in touch with this process in the first place, how to assimilate SR and how to train this inherent mechanism and access its insights through the movement explorations. But as Pallaro (2007) mentioned, not all felt sensations are considered countertransferential and DT surely experience other somatic reaction than countertransferential ones. Even though I had no intention to research somatic (counter) transference, it is fundamentally present in any therapeutic relationship and it is my duty to process it. You will find a briefly documentation of this process in *Appendix 11*. Through this research I have not only learned how to get in touch with my SR and what they communicate, but I have discovered that it can be of great value for the client and most of all, that using the knowledge gained through my SR in the DT session creates an equal, safe and trusting therapeutic relationship allowing the client to experience a whole new relational connection, which is of great importance for PD. That said I used my SR not only as research tool but also as a main relational and interventional approach to my client throughout the whole session. This attitude is an unexpected discovery of my research, which I elaborate on further below (see *macro level*).

### 5.2 For the field (*meso level*)

This case study shows that there is value in using the dance therapists' SR for this particular client. However, would it be of use for other clients with personality disorder traits? Interestingly, I discovered similarities in the five emerging themes of this research and the ones of Haeyen et al. (2018) and Manford (2014), hinting that the proposed approach could be of use for PD in general.

They correlate with self-expression, interaction, insight and emotion regulation themes from the Haeyens' et al. (2018) study on Cluster C/B PD while trust, exploration, connection, accessing feelings and thoughts through the body, expressing, and reflecting within the therapeutic relationship, were found in Manfords' (2014) study on Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD).

The literature and the findings of this study perceive the body as translator and suggest that using the dance therapists' SR gives insights in the clients' current and past interaction with the self and the environment. This understanding could encourage other dance therapists to share somatic insights with their clients verbally or non-verbally by guiding the clients' attention to bodily-felt sensations, encouraging interoception and self-expression. By staying present in the "somatic intersubjective dialogue" (see 1.3), the DT holds space and offers support for the client to enter unconscious somatic processes. This containing and non-harmful connection provides a new relational experience for the client. Similarly, Ingenhoven (2015) mentions the importance of a trustful therapeutic relationship to start of cautious exploration when working with personality disorder with a past of attachment trauma. That said I believe that this approach could be of great value for BPD, where the fear of abandonment plays a major role in the therapeutic relationship. Safety has also been mentioned as an important factor for PD patients in the study of Haeyen et al. (2018), permitting clients to confront hidden and "shielded" emotions and allowing visibility to what previously was "below the surface". The somatic approach used in this study is equally supported by Haeyen et al. (2018), stating the value of experiential therapies to patients with cluster B/C is valued through its effects of improved sensory perception, emotion regulation, insight and comprehension of self (Haeyen et al., 2015). Essentially, bringing attention to the therapists' SR and sharing this awareness with the client initiates transformation and offers insight to somatic sensations not yet understood and integrated.

This study attempts to remind therapists of their body's inherent capacity of sensing and its valuable way of translating external and internal information through the *soma*. This internal process offers personal and interpersonal information. By experiencing and reflecting on it, it is brought to awareness and can be verbalized (Manford, 20014). My experience is that this approach offers a highly personal and individual entrance to an expressive and creative movement source, offering understanding of the current dynamic and offers further inspiration for interventions. Using interoceptive movement research after a DT has been supported by various sources (Pallaro, 2007, Panhofer et al., 2011, Leigh & Bailey, 2013 and Hindi, 2012) and according to this study there might be additional value for DTs in using some aspects of the method.

### 5.3 For the body of knowledge (macro level)

As DT, by staying aware of my somatic responses during the session, I am proposing to remain interacting within the field of somatic transference where changes can be reflected on and fed back to the client without needing to step out of the dynamic. I am proposing an experiential approach to Cluster C/B PD clients by staying within the dynamic and working with and reflecting on the somatic responses and transference with the client. A pure and direct link is experienced by the instantaneous sensing of the somatic responses within the field of somatic transference. This is especially valuable for clients with abandonment issues, fear and anxiety within the interpersonal relationship activated by attachment trauma. By consistently staying within the field of somatic transference with the DTs commitment to his/her somatic responses, a safe and deep process of transformation can take place. This of course is only practicable if the DT has a strong enough sense of his/her SR.

Opting for an artistic inquiry results in a deeply embodied understanding of the research, which can be shared through the final dance with the field. I believe that not only DT could make use of this approach but any practitioner working with people and willing to listen to their somatic responses as a source of understanding and inspiration.

### 5.4 Strengths and limitations of the study

The strength of this study lies in the systematic and deductive way of processing data to its crystallization into four main themes into the solo. In this way the essence of the somatic processing is conserved and it offers a product to share and inspire others through an embodied presentation. As Hervey (2000; Cruz & Berrol, 2004, p. 181) mentions, "artistic skills can assist in presenting findings, and research can be more authentic ". The advantage of an arts-based research is that the results are not only understood by the researcher on a mental level but also felt and rooted in the soma and shared through the final artistic product. As Hervey says (2000; Cruz & Berrol, 2004, p. 182 & 184): understanding human experience can be "best described as aesthetic, emotional and intuitive" and "dance-making could be essential to the research process".

Additionally, the emotional load uncovered in the performing of the solo has added a whole new level of understanding the client and how cluster C PD can feel.

The difficulty I encountered was rather in the transformation of the experiential work into words. Looking at the client interview structure, I realized that more targeted questions would have helped to offer more clarity to the questions.

Looking back at the research process I realise that it would have also been more logical to interview my onsite-supervisor after having created the solo in order to better process the given information and further integrate it through the discussion chapter. I would also have preferred to share my solo with a multidisciplinary team as part of the data collection and further peer checking, but instead it will be presented after the completion of this master thesis, due to lack of time.

### 5.5 Further investigations

This study contributes and supports the body of knowledge testifying the added value of arts, movement and dance therapy while working with PD. Not enough studies have proven the value of DT with PD. Through my research I would like to suggest further inquiry specifically based on the value of dance movement therapy, linking the use of somatic responses to emotion regulation with PD. Furthermore, investigating the use of somatic responses in relation to somatic (counter) transference with PD clients would bring more clarity to the approach used in this inquiry, which has not been researched in this study.

## 6 General conclusions

To summarize, my study suggests that encouraging therapists to stay in touch with their inherent somatic responses while daring to remain interacting within the field of somatic transference with their client, distinct physical sensations are captured offering a direct understanding of the inter-relational dynamic and insights about the clients' current and past functioning and story. This study suggests that by guiding the client to get in touch with his/her somatic responses, unconscious material such as personal story hidden behind somatic sensations can be accessed. Most valuably, the findings show that by experiencing the process of SR together, a safe, supportive and containing relationship is created with a PD client with a past of childhood trauma and attachment difficulty. This offers the client a new way of experiencing a relationship, in a safe and non-judgemental way, encouraging the transformation of maladaptive patterns by present somatic awareness, which can be of great support and value in terms of therapeutic approach working with PD clients. This study also points at the significance of movement exploration and solo creation following the DT session to gain a deeper understanding of the client's themes. Through the in-depth movement research of the SR and the clients' feedback, four main themes emerged summarizing recognisable and valuable themes for the client namely: inter-relational issues, somatic sensing, the clients' need of self-expression, and the story / trauma. An extra theme emerged through the creation of the dance solo, namely emotion regulation, but has not been discussed nor validated by the client. Using SRs permits DTs to stay close to their body experience and to the client, it also creates consciousness about the on-going dysfunctional dynamics, cultivated by a safe and supportive relational approach. This case study was conducted with a cluster C PD client but by making comparisons with the literature I suggest this approach could be applied to PD in general.

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## Appendix

### [Appendix 1: Information letter and consent form for the institution](#)

#### Information letter to institution

Research: Identification and use of Somatic Responses of the dance movement therapist with a patient with Cluster-C personality disorder traits

Researcher: *Pauline Brigueot*, Master in dance therapy (DT), student and intern

Supervisor: *Name*, position, institution

To whom it may concern,

With this letter I am asking your permission to do my Master Thesis research in your establishment. This letter contains the information about my research, the clients' participation, the structure of my research, the data storage and your participation. Please read it carefully and feel free to ask any questions regarding this research: what would be asked of you, what will be done with the collected information, possible risks and benefits, your rights as a participant, and any un-clarity in this letter. Only if you are satisfied with the information provided, you may decide whether to participate or not.

#### **The purpose of this research**

The purpose of this research is to investigate the process and use of somatic responses (bodily-felt sensation) of the dance movement therapist and extract themes, which could be of value for the patient. It is a process influenced by many different incoming stimuli that are sensed while being in contact with the patient.

As a research and dance therapist intern, my aim is to track my somatic responses during four consecutive therapy sessions. This means that we will be mainly two people during the session; you as the patient and me as your dance therapist, with a possible assistance of my onsite-supervisor *Ilona van de Meent*. The sessions will develop as usual. My aim during the sessions as a dance therapist intern is to allow the session to unfold as you are used to with integrity and consideration, regardless of the ongoing research process. The main focus stays your therapy session.

At the end of the four sessions there will be an interview between the client and me the dance therapist / researcher. My purpose of the interview is to find out if some of the themes, which appeared to me during the four sessions, are of any value to you. This interview will be recorded (only audio) and transcribed for my study. The findings from this investigation will be presented in a thesis and available to you for reading.

**Clients' participation**

The client will be given four dance therapy sessions of each 60 minutes. The sessions will proceed as usual and will include verbal and non-verbal interventions. At the end of the research, the client will be invited for a 30 minute interview to reflect on the emerging themes and find out if they are of value to him / her (feedback).

**Structure of my research**

The methodology used for my research questions is a single case study combining a heuristic and arts-based approach. According to the UMC I am not obligated to the WMO.

I will investigate my somatic responses through movement investigation after each DT session without the client. The data collection consists of session notes, movement exploration notes, a recorded (audio only) interview of the client, a recorded interview of the onsite-supervisor, and a final dance solo. The solo and the findings of my research will be presented the 28<sup>th</sup> of June 2019 at Codarts Rotterdam as my final exam. The aim is to also present my findings at the UMC by the end of July.

**Confidentiality and data storage**

All information you provide will be treated with confidentiality and will be strictly used for scientific purpose. This means that the name of the institution, client and other personal information will be made anonymous, prior to any writing and discussion with any third party. Possible third parties are my supervisor and members of the research committee at *Codarts, Rotterdam* who may request access to ensure the quality and reliability of this study. All data presented in my thesis will be anonymous. All material produced throughout this research will be kept safely, and at the end of the research, will be returned to its creator or be destroyed.

**Your participation**

Before I started my research I had already received the approval of my research by my onsite-supervisor and the head of the department XXX including the WMO constitution. Here by I am aiming to receive a written consent. The request to your institution is to cooperate with this investigation. Depending on the possibilities that arise, the research will take place in the period January 2019 - March 2019. For the participation of the client a separate information letter with permission form is offered.

I hope to have informed you sufficiently about the investigation with this letter. If you have any further questions about this research you can always contact me. Further suggestions are very welcome.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Pauline Brigue  
Dance therapist intern  
0633419563

## Institution consent form

Research: Identification and use of Somatic Responses of the dance movement therapist with a patient with Cluster-C personality disorder traits

Researcher: *Pauline Briguet*, Master in dance therapy (DT), student and intern

Supervisor: *Name, position, institution*

I have received sufficient information about the investigation and I cooperate with the investigation from the institution. I understand that the information I provide will be for scientific purpose and all data will be made anonymous. I give permission for anonymous clinical information to be used in this research. Next to the researcher / dance therapist, the supervisor of the researcher and members of the research committee at the Master's program in Dance Therapy at Codarts may request access to the anonymous research data for the evaluation of this research.

Institution: \_\_\_\_\_

Institution: **Codarts Rotterdam**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of researcher: *Pauline Briguet*

Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Position: DT intern / researcher

## Appendix 2: Information letter and consent form for the client

### Information letter to client

Research: Identification and use of Somatic Responses of the dance movement therapist with a patient with Cluster-C personality disorder traits

Researcher: Pauline Brigue, Master in dance movement therapy (DMT) student and intern

Supervisor: Name, position, institution

Dear .....,

With this letter I am inviting you to participate in my Master Thesis research. This letter contains the information for your participation. Please read it carefully and feel free to ask any questions regarding this research: what would be asked of you, what will be done with the collected information, possible risks and benefits, your rights as a participant, and any un-clarity in this letter. Only if you are satisfied with the information provided, you may decide whether to participate or not.

#### **The purpose of this research**

The purpose of this research is to investigate the process and use of somatic responses (bodily-felt sensation) of the dance movement therapist and extract themes, which could be of value for the client. It is a process influenced by many different incoming stimuli that are sensed while being in contact with the client.

As a research and participant observer in your dance therapy sessions, my aim is to track my somatic responses during four consecutive. This means that we will be three people during those four sessions, you as client, *Ilona van de Meent* as your dance therapist and my supervisor and me as research and participant observer. The sessions will develop as usual. My aim during the sessions as a participant observer is to allow the session to unfold as usual with integrity and consideration, regardless of the ongoing research process.

At the end of the four sessions there will be an interview between the client and me the researcher. My purpose of the interview is to find out if some of the themes, which appeared during the four sessions, are of any value to you. This interview will be recorded (only audio) and transcribed for the study. The findings from this investigation will be presented in a thesis and available to you for reading.

#### **What can you expect as a participant?**

Four dance therapy sessions of each 60 minutes will be conducted in the period of **8<sup>th</sup> of January** until the **31<sup>st</sup> of January 2019**.

The sessions will proceed as usual and will include verbal and non-verbal interventions.

At the end of this research, you will be invited for an interview to reflect on the emerging themes and find out if they are of value to you (your feedback).

**Possible risks, benefits, and drawbacks**

The therapeutic process will proceed as usual and therefor you will not receive any direct benefit from participating in this research. Reflecting on the process of somatic responses may or may not give insight of its use, which may have therapeutic value. Participating in this research will cost you time for the interview at the end. Refusing to participate in this research will not have any consequence on your contact with the therapist and the team, or on your further treatment.

**Confidentiality**

All information you provide will be treated with confidentiality and will be strictly used for scientific purpose. This means that your name and other personal information will be made anonymous, prior to any writing and discussion with any third party. Possible third parties are my supervisor and members of the research committee at *Codarts, Rotterdam* who may request access to ensure the quality and reliability of this study. All data presented in my thesis will be anonymous. All material produced throughout this research will be kept safely, and at the end of the research, will be returned to its creator or be destroyed.

**Your rights**

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. You may at any time withdraw and/or cancel your participation without being required to provide a reason. Should you have any question about your rights, you may always contact me. After the conclusion of this research project, you have access to the resulting thesis at the library of *Codarts, Rotterdam*.

I hope I have informed you clearly about this research. For further questions and comments, you are always welcome to contact my onsite supervisor *Ilona van de Meent* or me at any time.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Pauline Briguët

## Consent form client

Research: Identification and use of Somatic Responses of the dance movement therapist with a patient with Cluster-C personality disorder traits

Researcher: Pauline Briguet, Master in dance movement therapy (DMT) student and intern

Supervisor: Name, position, institution

I hereby confirm that I have read and understood the information letter. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and received concrete answers. I have had enough time to consider my participation.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may at any time withdraw my consent without being required to provide a reason. If I later decide to withdraw my participation, I understand that my decision will not have any consequence in my contact with the therapist and co-therapist or my further treatment.

I understand that the information I provide will be for scientific purpose and that my data will be made anonymous. I give permission for my clinical information to be used in this research. Next to the researcher and the dance therapist, the supervisor of the researcher and members of the research committee at the Master's program in Dance Therapy at Codarts may request access to the anonymous research data for the evaluation of this research.

I **give / do not give\*** my consent for this research.

I **give / do not give\*** my consent to be contacted again after the conclusion of this research, for any possible follow-up research. I understand that for any follow-up research, my participation is also entirely voluntary and I may withdraw my consent anytime.

I will receive a copy of this consent form.

Name of participant:

Name of researcher: Pauline Briguet

Signature:

Signature:

Place and date:

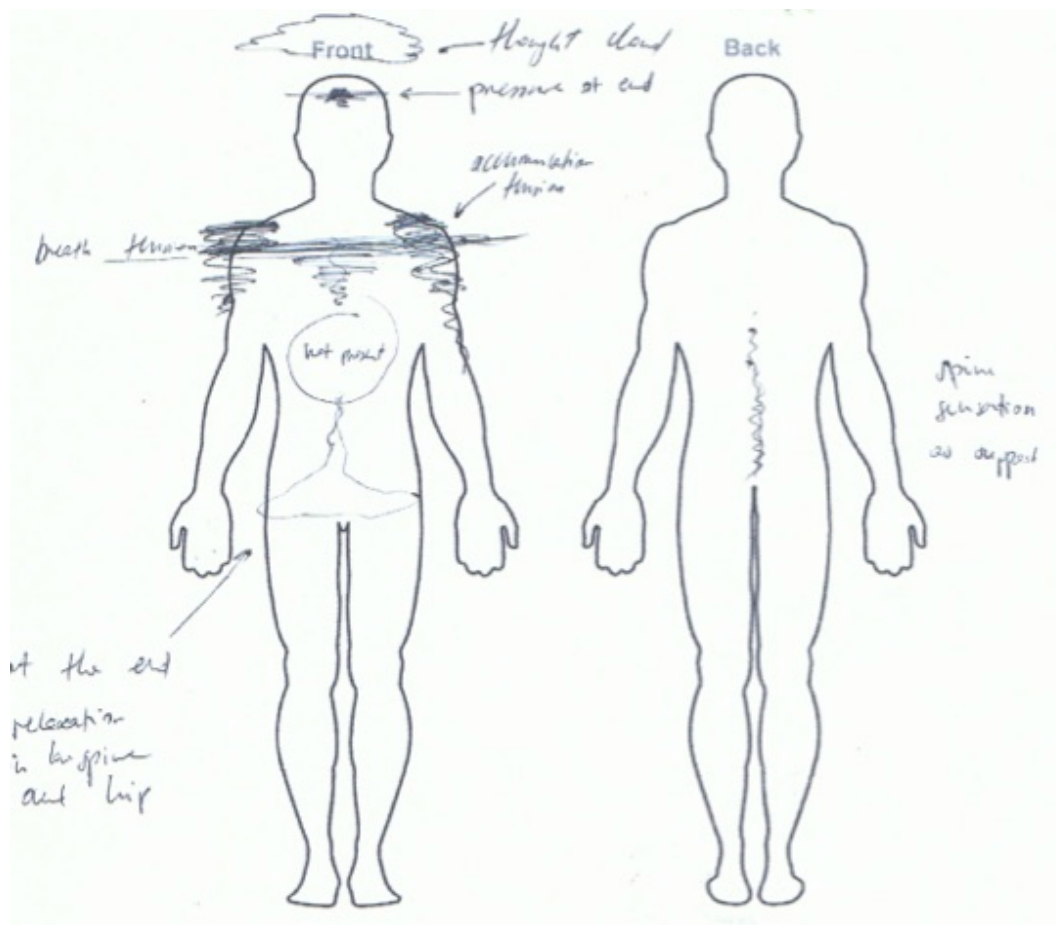
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Appendix 3: Example of the “mannequin” used to record somatic responses after each session

I used this sheet right after the 2 minute meditation just before the individual DT session to make visible my somatic response / somatic state. Each “mannequin” gave a clear picture of how I felt somatically before the session and was compared with the outcome of the movement exploration after the DT session.

Example 3<sup>rd</sup> session



#### Appendix 4: Example of tracking sheet used during the movement explorations after each session

This tracking sheet was used every session (after the 1<sup>st</sup> movement exploration) to identify the main somatic reaction experiences during the DT session (the trainee's embodied perspective)

| Somatic response / physical sensation | Emotional state | Thought process | Additional reflection / session description |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------------------|
|                                       |                 |                 |                                             |

| Somatic response / physical sensation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Emotional state                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Thought process                       | Additional reflection / session description                                                                                                                                                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>My feet take on a wider stance. I feel like I'm standing on the beat now. As I find it and feel into my body, my attention goes into my legs. I feel emotional. I breathe through it. I feel very connected to my body, my cells. It is very sensitive and delicate. I start moving my arms, they feel lighter and looser. I move at points. I move freely, my legs open. Though I feel still, I feel I am a home or becoming in opening my arms. I spread my arms out and feel the energy and space and it reminds me through my body. It's new. I smile.</p> <p><i>g sensation</i><br/><i>cellular sensitivity/delicacy</i><br/><i>inner chest</i><br/><i>flow</i></p> | <p>emotions come up at the beginning when I am widening my stance as I take space. I allow it even if it feels intense. It moves away. Later on I smile. I feel I am opening up. My cells open and it makes me happy.</p> | <p>not much. less than last time.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* wide grounded flow</li> <li>* arms taking space</li> <li>* chest opening on fully still close</li> <li>* emotions flowing in and out</li> <li>* space in body</li> </ul> |

Example: filled-in and analysed tracking sheet of the 4<sup>th</sup> session

Appendix 5: Example of data analysis of a movement exploration (4<sup>th</sup> session)

|                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                   | 8.3.19<br>2nd Mo. exploration Myself                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 3 <sup>rd</sup> mov. exp! "Her in my skin"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| grounded                          | My feet are flat and embracing the floor, my knees are slightly bent. I feel very calm and in connection with the ground. I connect with my whole body, and energy. I sense the inner body. I sense space, floor and air/water.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | request muscle<br>sink into body<br>I feel the muscles in my legs relaxing and bit by bit allow my body to sink into itself and the ground. I'm heavy but I release as I let go into sinking. It's hard to get up from there but I do find my way. My chest speaks a lot. I'm wide open, my arm slightly to the back. It feels good, really intense but just right. My arms and hands feel so sensitive, it's a new feeling, a new sensation. I do feel thoughts still holding me back from exploring further. Do my thoughts often hold me back? It feels as if my fingers are touching something new in a very sensitive and careful way. |
| sensing: space, floor, air, water | My arms and hands move fluently in different flowing ways: from inside out. (exhale). There is a blooming feeling. It moves and transforms inside of me. It makes me smile. My chest and arms more open. Later, my arms stop in the different position for a longer period of time. I feel much tension and restriction in my upper arms - shoulders. It's heavy, like a shell or super heavy / sticky stuff which slowly undress itself as I stay in the pose. It moves, it transforms. It evaporates. | in open chest area, good feelings<br>thoughts hold me back<br>questioning<br>sensitive trying<br>empty belly<br>I do feel thoughts still holding me back from exploring further. Do my thoughts often hold me back? It feels as if my fingers are touching something new in a very sensitive and careful way. There is a emptier space though, my belly. It feels a bit empty there. I do feel how my intestines feel. My hand support my belly.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| flow movement transformation      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Body takes Pose                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| tension restriction, shell        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| I stay - it leaves                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| transformation                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |

## Appendix 6: Full analysed version of session and movement experience

This is the first full analysis of the session notes and movement experience. The original version is collected in a journal.

### **1<sup>st</sup> session**

Before the DT session I am in a pleasant and open mood. I feel physically flexible and quick as if fluid or light would run through my flesh and joints, which gives me a sense of clarity and efficiency.

### ***Session notes from the DT perspective***

- Introduction talk
- Meditative / relaxing music
- Breathing exercises
- Bringing attention to the breath situated in the belly and expanding attention to different body parts including tensed, blocked and uncomfortable once
- Explore different movement postures and relax deeply inward; Yin Yoga based
- Physical feet and leg kneading
- Closure and reflective talk

She looked tired (slow movements, rather closed position) but in a pleasant mood. She has a headache and her breath is up in her chest (tensed). I give her the choice of using music the starting position in the room; she chooses music and sitting-position.

What I observe on a physical level during the movement session is that she has no difficulty connecting to her breath, staying focused and present with her body during the postures and the different movement experience. Her body and muscles releases while in the postures, her breath is audibly deep and slows down and her focus stays inward. Once out of the posture she is verbally very communicate and reflective. I observe a tendency of hers to be extremely kind, nearly pleasing, which gives me a sense of merging.

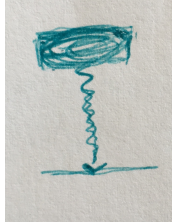
After the first breathing experience she shares how she feels completely different than before the exercise, she looks surprised (facial expression and voice change). She mentions that she doesn't remember feeling so connected in a long time. Her headache is gone and she mentions having more energy in her body. I observe that most of the time when I guide her verbally out of a posture and there is a chance to reflect verbally, her breath goes up to her chest and that a slight tension appears in her body (especially shoulders, hips). It feels as if there is a discomfort and challenge of being in connection with me.

Apart from that she mentions how her physical tensions seems to disappear if she stays present with them in the movement posture. She seems again surprised (noticeable in her voice tone and facial expression) by the effect of the movement experience on her being.

At the end of the session she seems more relaxed and embodied (in connection to her body, aware) than when she came in.

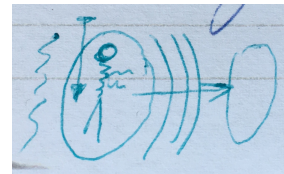
### *Discoveries of the movement exploration after the session*

Entering the embodied **meditation** I feel as if I have a heavy blanket on my back making me sink into the floor. This sinking heaviness felt in my whole



body re-appears in my **first movement exploration** where a strong pull starting from my head leads me towards the ground. I embody a feeling of sleepiness and eventually the need to express arises through my throat sensation, with no other movement than sinking. Embodying myself in the **second**

**exploration** I feel grounded in my feet and body, supported in my back, fluid throughout my body bringing clarity to my state. Through surprisingly fast tracking movements I first surround my head, then throat, heart and lastly my belly (top-down). I feel a sense of relatedness to the space in front of me. Interestingly, as I embody my patients' movement through my somatic responses in the **third exploration**, totally different body signals appear; my hips move from side to side making wavelike movements, my breath is tight and high up in my chest, as my arms gesticulate outwardly towards the front relating to something or someone. Through my somatic experience I feel restlessness and dependence in relation to an external force. Intriguingly when my attention is guided inwards my tension transforms into a feeling of rest and concentrated awareness on my self. From that point my body yields into the ground and through the release emotions of anger, sadness and aloneness appear. In the **fourth exploration** the themes of insecurity, indecisiveness and dependence are experienced during side-to-side and front-back movement patterns in relation to a frontal presence. Furthermore vertical presence, personal Kinesphere and its movement in space offers me a sense of freedom, wholeness and sense of self. This embodied experience equally shows me the potential from moving from the mix of different pulls and planes to inner-connection and depth while experiencing verticality in space.



**The main themes for this session:** heaviness, inter-relation / dependence, pulls (push, pull, yield, reach) and special / relational movement patterns, surrender and surfacing emotions

## Possible transference: relational role given to me through her behaviour

| <u>Highlights</u>          | Somatic elements / movement                                                                                     | Feelings / sensations                                                                              | Relational / Space                                                                                  |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Med. before session        | Open, active, light, fast, efficient                                                                            |                                                                                                    | Open                                                                                                |
| Med. after session         | Back, heavy, sinking                                                                                            |                                                                                                    | Inward, into ground                                                                                 |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> mov. expl. | Heavy, sleepy, sinking, fluid spine, breath support                                                             | Need to express from throat                                                                        | Inward, bring external elements towards floor                                                       |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> mov. expl. | Grounded, embodied, fast, head-throat-heart-belly (top-down), sensing, traveling, fluid, tensionless            | Flow, support, clarity, communication, safety, calmness, knowing, kindness, sharing                | Sharing personal Kinesphere with front space                                                        |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> mov. expl. | Side-to-side, front-back, tight breath in chest, grounded feet, arms movement, belly breath=coming back to body | Tensed, restless, calm, concentrated, emotional; anger, sad, alone                                 | Connected to something in front, frontal presence, external input / instructions, inward – outward, |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> mov. expl. | Side-to-side, front-back, Vertical / centeredness,                                                              | Not knowing, insecure, in between, indecisive, dependent, concentrated, sense of self, whole, free | In relation to someone, into the floor, here, use of space, move through space                      |

## 2<sup>nd</sup> session

Before the session I am calm and at ease. I have a slight cold / throat pain but I am present without apparent thoughts.

### Session notes from the DT perspective

- Short talk
- Breathing exercises on meditative / relaxing music
- Bringing attention to the breath situated in the belly and expanding attention to different body parts including tensed, blocked and uncomfortable once
- Explore different movement postures and relax deeply inward; Yin Yoga based
- Body scan
- Closure and reflective talk

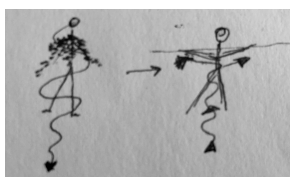
She shares that she has a lot of arm, neck and stomach tension especially since her EMDR session of yesterday where she released emotionally. She is motivated to free herself from her physical tension in this session.

I effectively notice her physical discomfort and tightness during the breathing exercise. She shares that her change of medication affects her physically (headache, dizziness and physical tensions), which appears in the session. Through the deep relaxation movement postures her tension release; her breath slows and deepens, her body sinks into the floor, her face is relaxes and turned inward. The discomfort in the social contact, which I could feel last session, is less apparent this time.

At the end she mentions feeling much better in her body, more relaxed and connected. She is positively surprised that the session has such an effect on her. She visibly looks physically more comfortable and embodied and has visibly a more vertical and flexible position. I can see a stronger center, a stronger sense of self. Her way of talking is more direct(ed) and expressive. The session seems to have given her more ground, insurance and flexibility in her body and though relaxation a opportunity of expressing herself more independently.

### Discoveries of the movement exploration after the session

Entering the embodied **meditation** my chest is open and I feel cantered in my stomach area. I sense my spine serves as centreline, my sit bones in the floor giving me a sense of grounding and at the same time a holding tension in my hip flexors. I feel tension and heaviness in my arms and shoulder blade area.



In the **first exploration** my body senses and registers three outstanding elements; 1<sup>st</sup> much discomfort and tension in the upper body, 2<sup>nd</sup> a release of tension into the ground and a resurging of energy from the feet upwards expanding my arms side wards, 3<sup>rd</sup> a clear limit to my movement expansion.

The **second exploration** is more complex; I sense my body scattered, disconnected from the whole and I try to hold on to something, which I can't find. Feeling physically insecure my thoughts kick in. I do feel the floor under my feet supporting me and slowly I find a repetitive swing movement diagonally through space bringing clarity of mind and calmness. I slow down and a force opens up my chest and expresses through my vivid and expanding arm movements, leaving me a sense of freedom and strength. In the **third exploration** I feel an intense physical tension that paralyzes me and leaves me stuck. Slowly my hands reach towards my skin and metaphorically pull it towards the front of my body. The action of shedding my skin and causing a release of tension persists. I yawn repeatedly and I feel tired but calm. My hands touch my face, neck and throat and I feel how I am not ready to touch my heart. I embrace myself until a motion of gentle arm-twisting and wringing appears leaving me with a sense of curiosity and inner strength and verticality. The **last exploration** is much more imaginative and metaphorical; I see an orange tight tunnel under my feet which I am walking on, I create space and as I stop my arms guide me into three different poses, as if I was externally guided. I am positively surprised by the beautiful guidance, my body relaxes. A warm sensation enters my chest and brings my arms forward discovering five different "boxes". I take the lowest one and enter it; an emotion of joy, pleasure and flow emerges my body. There is something about my heart – joy and freedom of sensing.

**The main themes for this session:** discomfort - release, from mind to body into expression, curiosity, pleasure of sensing the heart and joy

Possible transference: bodily transference, and my work of relaxation passed on to her (two way transference), influence by working through my own soma transferred to her

| Highlights                 | Somatic elements / movement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Feelings / sensations                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Relational / Space                                                                                        |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Med. before session        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                           |
| Med. after session         | Open chest, centered, spine center line, sit bone in floor, tension in hips and arms                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Vertical, centered, grounded and contracted                                                               |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> mov. expl. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tension, discomfort, and stress in upper-body; arms, neck, face, under my skin</li> <li>- Release of tension, recharge of energy and expansion of body and arms</li> <li>- Clear limit / stop in expansion of arms</li> </ul> | <p>Discomfort, stress, restlessness, tension, twitches, dizziness, trying to bring flow, release, re-generation, expansion</p> <p>Registered thoughts: "I can't let go", "How will I get there", "What am I doing", "it's ridiculous"</p> | On the spot, vertical and Horizontal expansion, yield into ground – push upwards and expansion side wards |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> mov. expl. | - Physically scattered                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | - Insecure, in between,                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | On the spot and short front-                                                                              |

|                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                            | <p>(sensing parts without connection) also felt in small movement, wobbly in steps, physical insecurity / doubts, very little movement and much tension</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feet on the ground</li> <li>- Flow through body through swing in arms and legs and repetition, grounding</li> <li>- Intense opening chest sensation into arm movement</li> <li>- Breath connection</li> </ul>                                                  | <p>scattered, thoughts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support through ground</li> <li>- Clarity, calmness of mind, consciousness, grounding</li> <li>- Expressive, moved, slightly agitated, vivid</li> <li>- Strong, freer</li> </ul> | <p>side stepping</p> <p>Diagonal in space</p> <p>Floor (sitting)</p>                                 |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> mov. expl. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High physical tension full body</li> <li>- Hands take off skin</li> <li>- Yawning repetitively</li> <li>- Hands touching my extremities</li> <li>- Arms calmly / slowly start twisting and wringing</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stuck, paralyzed</li> <li>- Shedding skin</li> <li>- Transforming</li> <li>- Sense of self, embracing self, calmness</li> <li>- Curiosity, strength and inner power appears</li> </ul>                      | <p>On the spot movement towards front space</p> <p>Vertical power</p>                                |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> mov. expl. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feet walking off balance in circle, I see a tunnel under my feet</li> <li>- Arms move up into three poses, my whole body is allowing small soothing movements within the posture</li> <li>- My arms relax, a sensations enters my chest and lifts my arms to ceiling into describing five boxes in front of me</li> <li>- My body entering the box I feel a free flow running through my body, I sense my heart</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Grounded</li> <li>- Allowing, soothing, caressing, guided, unexpected, positive experience</li> <li>- Assertive, calm</li> <li>- Emotional; joy, pleasure, flow, freedom, sensing, heart feeling</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Circling on the spot</li> <li>- Stepping forward</li> </ul> |

### 3<sup>rd</sup> session

#### Session notes from the DT perspective

- Introduction talk
- Active warm-up (grounding, balancing, centre activation; cross-lateral, stretches side and back body)
- Yin Yoga postures with breath work
- Hands on feet / massage
- Embodied resting, body scan
- Closure and reflective talk

As she comes in she looks quiet tired, her back is slightly curved to the front and her shoulders contracted. As always she is very friendly, makes eye contact and is open. She mentions much physical tensions, which are visible in her shoulders, arms and upper body / chest. She chooses to start the session with active movement, which is a change from last session. She really improved in her verbal communication skills and sharing her feelings and wishes for the session. She mentions feeling more comfortable in working in duo than at the beginning, which is visible in her physical and verbal expression (more relaxation and flow).

We start with grounding movement exercises, balancing exercises, which she executes with much concentration. She uses the space around her (takes space). When I observe her movement I see that her centre is not as active as the rest of her body therefore we work on bringing external movement into internal movements and vice versa. We use twists to bring consciousness to the centre. We use stretching, shaking and sharp full body movements to bring some blood flow and energy in her limbs, tensed arms, shoulders and chest. She is very receptive and concentrated and seems to feel freer in expressing the way her body feels after the exercises. This became part of our theme in the session; where does she feel tension, what is her body communicating in movement, what does her body need and ask from her? Through this she trains to feel her body, her boundaries and communicate about her state and make choices accordingly. We work with reflecting on her physical state and making decision based on it. After the active movement experiences she mentions feeling less tensed more comfortable being just the two of us in the session. I was surprised in how clearly and precisely she expressed and reflected on her physical experience.

After the active movement we went into yin yoga postures with breath work. At the beginning I see her holding her breath but I see her staying in the posture even if it seems challenging, she hangs on and tries to relax into it, which is physically visible in the coming two postures. Here again she communicates clearly how she feels in her body, which is an improvement to me in terms of clarity. As she mentions becoming dizzy after the "pigeon pose" we went into a gentle feet massage to bring attention to grounding

and self care. Here again emphasizing communication and taking action accordingly. Self-care became another themes of the session; how to slow down when her body asks her to slow down.

### *Discoveries of the movement exploration after the session*

Entering the embodied **meditation** many focused tensions and stressors appear (forehead, shoulders, chest, breath) and I notice that I have no sense of centeredness. Looking back at the first session I observe more distinct tensions rather than a general heaviness. Capturing a catalysing somatic response through the **first exploration** I initially experience myself as off balance (wobbling legs, feet) without centeredness (no sense of core), which gives an emotional response of confusion and overwhelm (dizziness, cloudy). Subsequently my arms glide dynamically forward communicatively gesturing releasing my chest and opening up from inside out. In the **second exploration** I am standing still with my arms wide-open feeling compassion for myself. I hear my inner voice; "I hear you, I see you". My flanks, back and chest ask for expansion. I move through space, taking the space. Standing still I feel fatigued from the opening. I collapse to the ground into a ball-like position. I gently touch my neck, hold my head, "I care about myself". Contrastingly in the **third exploration** I find myself pushed by my whole body running forwards even though I am not grounded and half stumbling over my own feet. There is an inner fight between this force and my (in)capacity to keep up with it. It feels harsh, self-inflicted and merciless. My hands gesture. As my body stops my head rolls halfway down, I am assiduously asked by my body to stay there, turned inward. The internal determination decelerates and a sense of deep connection emerges. Rolling back up resets my body a new but my chest stays closed. It feels intense, different and somewhat overwhelming. In the **fourth exploration** my shoulders and core create space and support for my heart to speak, for my chest to open. In an active and repetitive bursting jump I fully express my feeling and sensation of self, of embodiment in the moment, which in return leaves me complete and integrated.

**The main themes for this session:** distinguishing tensions, insecurity, confusion, being hard on myself, inner drive / fire, inner voice / bodies voice, compassion, holding myself, self love, expressing my self = completion

Possible transference: thought, insecurity and self doubt transference was very strong in the session to the point where I did not even realize that it was a transference at the first place.

| Highlights                 | Somatic elements / movement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Feelings / sensations                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Relational / Space                                                                                     |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Med. before session        | Calm, centred, release of minor physical tensions through meditation, no apparent thoughts                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Calm, receptive                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                        |
| Med. after session         | Sensation in spine (support), cloudy mind and thoughts, forehead pressure, breath tension, arm/shoulder tension, relaxation in lower back and hips, no sense of center                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                        |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> mov. expl. | Wobbling – out of balance, no center, dizzy,<br><br>- Arm sensing / reach forward, dynamic mov., suspended chest and shoulders, arm gesticulation<br>- Sense of body expansion / opening, quieting in chest                                                                                                                                    | - Emotional, confused, overwhelmed, thought cloud<br>- Communicative, suspended, expressive<br><br>- Embodied, calm, expressive, open, peaceful,                                                                                                                                                                                | - Standing on spot<br><br>- Forward space<br><br>- Standing on spot                                    |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> mov. expl. | - Wide open arms (stretching), broadening chest, flanks and back<br>- Release, collapse into floor into ball-like position, breath connection, released head in hand, touching neck gently, holding my body                                                                                                                                    | - Compassion towards self, inner voice: "I see you, I hear you"<br>- Feeling tired, heavy<br>- I care about my self, I hold myself, kindness                                                                                                                                                                                    | - Movement in space giving my self space, taking the space<br>- On the ground on one spot              |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> mov. expl. | - Physical pressure to run forward and don't stop while not grounded (wobbling)<br>- Directive hand movement<br>- My head guides me to a roll halfway down, arm bumble, I feel the weight of upper body, my body forces me to stay down - inwards<br>- Body / Mind signal to roll up, shoulders fall back, chest is more open but still locked | - A sense of being hard on myself, of pushing myself<br><br>- Communication of state<br>- Opening / stretching of back, deep connection to my breath, body / self, it feels good, thoughts; "I need to stay here longer"<br><br>- Intense, overwhelming, still closed chest / heart, "I am in my body", a hint of self-judgment | - Forward and out ward movement in space<br><br>- Inward movement<br><br>- More open but still limited |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> mov. expl. | - Sleepy shell (Body), inner chest sensation of expression need,<br>- Shoulders, core and inner organs; stomach, intestines create space (move) for chest opening (tender, accessible)<br>- Active repetitive full body jump                                                                                                                   | - I want to express my story<br><br>- Support, opening, full connection and flow<br><br>- Light, active, expressive, opened, communicative, complete, integrated                                                                                                                                                                | - Standing on the spot<br><br><br>- In a big circle in space                                           |

#### 4<sup>th</sup> session

The **meditation** before the session is truly the way for me to tune into where I am and relax. Usually I am quiet in a rush before the session so it helps me to connect to my body to release all the tension. I am more flexible in my skin and feel everything that is running through me consciously. It mainly helps me to be **present**.

#### *Session notes from the DT perspective*

- Introduction talk
- Breathing exercises

We start with a short catching up talk. She mentions feeling much better and that her medication is being lowered. She still has physical complaints especially her feels spine, which feels very stiff.

I propose to start with a meditative breathing exercise and I guide her with my voice in becoming conscious of physical tensions; which place in your body is asking for attention in this exact moment?

During the body scan - meditation she felt that her back was eventually feeling alright but that her arms and hands were holding much tension and were asking for attention. With this information as departure point we entered a movement improvisation by allowing our hands and arms to tell their story in movement, trying to leave our minds thoughts aside during the movement exploration.

I found this movement exploration outstanding and very meaningful in her process for different reasons: the first one is that she allowed herself to freely improvise with her own movement in my participation and observing presence. This is a very big step forward in her process of taking space, making personal choices, being seen and staying with her own movement as I am doing exploring my own movement. Secondly through the medium of free movement improvisation she was lead to free movement association and exploration of movement metaphors. This means that personal meaning and realization emerged through her own movement improvisation. The specific themes that she reflected on were; execute own movement without discomfort, no copy but rather inspiration from each other, full concentration and curiosity about her own movement, taking space felt comfortable and light but that it is often what she doesn't do – that it is difficult normally to take space.

Therefore we explore taking space; I could see her expanding her arms to the side and to the ceiling, there was a very sensitive flow leading her arms from one movement to the other. Her fingers would tingle as if she would taste the space. I could see her look at her own movement and later on verbally reflect on what went on inside of her self during the movement exploration. The tone of her voice and facial expression held a sense of surprise of her own

experience, as if it was something new to her, as if it was a new way of looking and experiencing herself and linking it to her patterns.

She also experienced that taking a larger stand made her feel different; usually she stands with her feet close to each other and she mentions how this usually makes her feel insecure. But trying on a larger stand made her feel more stable or grounded and present in space.

We discussed how we could take in the space around our self, the room and the other person (space and interpersonal relation).

As she talks I see her integrating with her body, she is much more fluid in switching from movement and talking. Before she used to move and as she would talk her body would tense up (as a freeze) but now her body keeps a flow as she reflect on her movement. The top down is more integrated.

From the movement improvisation we moved to the ground into the Yin Yoga postures still with bringing the attention to her arms, hands and back; crossed arm position, one leg front head to knee and both legs front head to knee.

At last we went into Shavasana (bead mans pose = lying on the ground with closed eyes) and I guided her through a body scan with some visualizations. At the end when it was time for her to share her experience she mentioned how she became very emotional and remembered the emotional discussion with her father last week Wednesday. It was difficult for her to breathe into the emotions during the body scan but she could completely let the emotions go once she verbalize her experience to me. This also seemed to have been a meaningful moment and realization for her (through her self).

To close off she mentioned how these sessions became very important to her and the she felt more comfortable to express herself over time. To summarize the session she is physically more relaxed and open than in the previous session. She seems happy to be able to go home and is less stressed about it than she was last week. Her capacity to stay focused with herself (body) while being in relation with me (verbally and in movement / non-verbally) is clearly growing. She is physically taking more space in her movement explorations and dares more to by herself without having me to propose a movement. She can allow emotions to come up and talk about it without feeling tensed in her body. In general there is more flow in movement integration than in the previous weeks and her mood seems lighter, she seems happier and more joyful.

### *Discoveries of the movement exploration after the session*

Entering the embodied **meditation** I feel a slight tension in my arms, as a light protective layer around my upper body. My breath is calm, my tummy is calm and I feel space in my whole body. My chest and face is open and I feel a tingling sensation on the crown of my head. My spine is strong and supportive, my hips grounded into the floor and my legs light. In the **first movement exploration** I sense which stands fit best to me. I breathe through the little tensions in my legs and the surfacing emotion and feel very connected, as if I was sensing all the cells in my body. It is a feeling of sensitivity and delicacy. This is a new place, with more space and a feeling of joy. Nevertheless I still sense a blockage in my chest area that doesn't fully open up. Embodying my **second exploration** my feet are embracing the floor, sensing my inner body, sensing the traveling and transforming impressions within. My arms and posture shapes into three different poses where I first notice tension and restriction, which eventually evaporates but as I stay present with it. In my **third exploration**, standing on the spot, I deeply sink into my body and find it very challenging to rise back up. Surprisingly my chest starts to speak. For the first time it is wide open and extending through my arms. It feels so good. Only my thoughts are holding me back and a sensation of emptiness in my belly. In the **last exploration** I sink inwards with closed eyes and my arms and hands energetically express their story in rapid movement, the pace is unexpected, open, explorative and active. However something limits me. By opening my eyes I free myself from the constrain and ultimately relate to the space around me. By this exploration I re-member movement from the session and realisations emerge. I feel free from insecurities, I move openly and expressively. Giving my body a voice to tell its story makes me feel complete, strong and calm. I relate to myself and to space.

The main themes for this session: senses and delicacy, self-interest, making choices through sensing, breathe through tension, presence and release, opening chest, expressing, empty belly, space, relating

Possible transference: -

| Highlights                 | Somatic elements / movement                                                                                                                                    | Feelings / sensations                                                                                                            | Relational / Space                                     |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Med. before session        | Sense, tune in, release, flow and physical space                                                                                                               | presence                                                                                                                         |                                                        |
| Med. after session         | Space in body, shell upper body / arms, length & strength in spine, relaxed hips, open chest and crown                                                         |                                                                                                                                  |                                                        |
| 1 <sup>st</sup> mov. expl. | Sense & follow body impulse, breath connection, cells, sensitivity, listening, allowing, acceptance, compassion                                                | Sensing what is needed, overview to make choices, emotions flow in and out, joy                                                  | Opening space in body                                  |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> mov. expl. | Grounded, sensing inner body, traveling / moving sensations, transformation, 3 poses, blockage / tension / release, letting go                                 | Realisations                                                                                                                     |                                                        |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> mov. expl. | Muscle release, allow to sink in body, heaviness, effort to come up, open arms & chest speaking, sensitive hands and fingers, tasting                          | Managing<br>Expressing emotions<br><br>Thoughts hold me back<br>form exploring                                                   |                                                        |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> mov. expl. | Closed eyes, expressive energetic arms / hands, active, limitation in expression, open eyes, free flow, re-member mov. from session (embodiment of own story), | Turned inwards<br>Expressive, surprised<br><br>Realizing to space, exploration,<br>Realisations<br>Insecurity free, strong, calm | Open to words & in space<br><br>Open and free in space |

## Appendix 7: Questionnaire/themes for interview with the client

### **1. The interpersonal dynamics**

What I experience in my body is that you always put me in charge. You give me the power and maybe you even give away your power. You allow me to have power over you. I work hard not to take the power you give me, to remain equal, but if I did not notice that in terms of dynamics, I could very easily cross your borders.

- Personal boundaries
- Dependency
- Movement and different traits (dynamic) while in connection with someone

### **2. Physical tensions**

Several times, I have experienced a discomfort in my body, like a shell of tension. Usually it comes down to arm and chest tension/anxiety (?).

I have also experienced an empty space in the abdomen.

Every session I felt the need to open my chest/heart. I feel the need to open and express my heart. Is this something you recognize?

### **3. Emotions**

When I experience the release of tensions, emotions often arise such as anger, sadness, sadness, and loneliness. On the other hand pleasure, joy, completeness, lightness and integration. Do you recognize this process and these emotions?

### **4. Need for expression**

In all my movement processes, the need arose to express myself. I felt the need to throw off my skin, open my chest and heart and take up space. To express how I feel, whether it is a positive or negative emotion.

Taking space was also an important theme. How does it make you feel?

### **5. Self-judging thoughts**

I experienced in the motion exploration that if I wanted to continue with "letting go" or discovering/expressing myself, my thoughts would block me and limit myself to the expression. A sense of inferiority, incompetence and uncertainty would block me. Do you recognize it?

### **6. Inner voice (body intuition)**

I experience that my body led me to places where I could deeply connect with myself. Do you recognize that?

Because sometimes I have the feeling that you are in a place (in a kind of box) where you cannot really connect with yourself and cannot be connected with the others and the space / are not able to express yourself.

By getting closer to yourself, you meet yourself and are then better able to say what you need.

### **7. Feeling, listening to my body and myself**

In the last session, I experience an incredible sensitivity (in you), a deep listening to my body, to my story. I also remember that I saw you in a completely different way, you listened to yourself and not to me, you discovered yourself.

Do you remember this session and this feeling?

## Appendix 8: Transcript of interview with client

### Colour-coded during the data analysis. P = Pauline; C = Client

P: On a physical level, I felt different things. I wrote it down and did it four times, for each session. Then I analysed it, and different themes came up. Those themes I'd like to share with you now and see what you think about it and how you feel when I share them with you, how it is for you. (Yes) And if you don't understand something please say it; my Dutch is not that good.

C: Well! It's very good! I understand you very well! (laughing) Well say... ☺

P: What I have noticed or felt when I went into my body, especially when I embody the first session, I felt that it was not easy for you to be **in relation or contact with me** in space, that there are tensions (Yes, that's right). Do you remember what it was like for you?

C: I also found it **very difficult**, in the beginning. I usually have... I have that anyway also when I was alone with I. Then I would say to her "we wouldn't let it go on, because I find it far too scary to dance alone with you". And when she would say, "It's fine, then we let it be". So for me it was already a big step to do it together with you. I actually thought it was quite scary. I wasn't used to it at all and I found it **uncomfortable**.

P: But I think it's incredibly good that it has developed throughout the sessions. In the first session I really felt a physical tension, especially in your upper body. But that changed towards the fourth session. And now we are even further, being at our 8<sup>th</sup> session, so it has developed.

C: Right. I also got used to it more and more... I **trusted** you too. Because of this, I felt at ease and because of that I **dared** to surrender much more....

P: And that felt good for you too?

C: I felt very relaxed.

P: That was a positive point for our goal actually; to relax. (Yes) And that wasn't really easy in this situation. But then it went well no?

C: Jeh I've never been so relaxed. Especially with... yes in the first session not yet, there I was quite some tension, but then especially after the fourth or after... I was very relaxed. I really experienced it very much as.... as good. I really went out the door and felt really ... **pleasant** (Laughing), **relaxed**. Yes ☺

P: And I see that also on your body. So what you say is also...

C: You really meant it?

P: Yes. Yes, you really see it on your body. When you relax I really observe a connection between your words and your body, and that is very positive. You are "embodied". (Yes, yes...) What I still feel, or what I also felt in this last session, is that it seems like it is still **difficult for you to be in charge** or to take the lead. I feel like you usually "lead" me in a way. Then you give more "power or power" or something... Do you feel that, or else?

C: **Yes, I always do.**

P: Hm... And my goal is from the beginning; "we are equal" (Ha yes). I try all the time; "how can we be equal or on the same level?"

C: That is how it feels for me, because of you. Through you, you radiate it out. And you certainly give me this feeling. That makes me feel very relaxed, very quickly. I only have to hear your words.. "try to feel quiet, in your belly, where is tension..." and immediately I feel it.

P: Nice. Nice to hear.

C: It directly comes across.

P: And how is it with others?

When you give me your power, I work for equality in the relationship dynamic. And my goal is eventually that you step up for yourself and take your power back, so to speak. (Okay...hh..) What's it like if you **take the lead**? How does it feel for you?

What I mean is how is it for you with other people, because if you place yourself under someone and give away your strength, people can abuse from this power?

C: Right. That's true.

Yes it is. I recognize what you say. I.. I see someone else very quickly... I look up to someone. I always see myself very quickly as.... em... less or so. I am also insecure and think, or I hope that one day it will be less. But what you say is true because I also had em... for example in the "compassion training" today the woman told me: "Everything you say... no I mean everything I say is good. You say yes everywhere, even if you might think in your mind, that's not the case! You don't dare to go against me, you don't dare to say what you really feel or think. It's quiet right. I quickly place myself into someone else. But not in myself. And that is indeed, I am very much outward looking. And not "what do I think or how do I feel". And I can do that with you, but you also give me the chance or... it's easy with you.

P: I have the feeling. I have the feeling that I.... I sense you, too! And I have the same tendency as you do. I actually understand your pattern quiet well from my own experience (Yes... right).

C: Great yes. For me it's here (showing the chest), right now the space on my chest, is the most relaxed, comfortable.

P: Is that so?

C: Yes!

P: I find that very interesting. Because that came up very often in my improvisations; that this place, the chest and my heart, that it wanted to express itself, and open but that one was very difficult. When I set it in motion it was tense here (shoulders - chest area), (beating!) and in my belly it felt leather (Yes you are right) or without strength or something. I felt that in my body, that buzzed with me when I moved our session. "I want to express myself, express myself. I want to open myself".

On a physical level this expression happened by supporting my "center" and opening my shoulders and arms. And then I felt a lot of space in my heart, actually (Yes). This gave me a feeling of lightness, a super nice feeling, joy and strength. It appeared in all sessions and it became a theme. Closed chest and leather belly measure the will to express it. I want to open myself from my heart actually.

C: That's true what you say. I often don't dare. But if I do dare, I am very open. Then I am indeed someone who really wants to share with other people.

P: I feel that now, and I felt it more often with you, and I feel that if you have a possibility to give, you do too. (That's right!) I have the feeling that you also give that strength, also to your personality. (Yes?) You have a way. (Okay. Laughing.) This is a very strong side of you. I think. It goes together with that strength (belly) and that (heart), that work together. Just one is not enough, one cannot work without the other. (Yes indeed, yes!)

C: That's quiet right. In the beginning I thought "I really feel tight..." ...I didn't feel so good in my skin today and... that I'm trapped all together. And on the other hand I thought "no I want to, go back and ... euh ... open up.

P: Yes that's what I felt, I saw it on you. So interesting, because it was really my feeling within myself, and I never saw that movement in you (No, that's right).

C: But I didn't dare to do that at first.

P: No you couldn't... I felt that too, I wrote it down, that there were blockages. Like a shield or shel...

C: on the shoulders or so? And in the arms?

P: Yes ... and under the skin a kind of discomfort, under my skin (Yes is right). That was also a point. Like a kind of box but also under your skin, that too.

C: But do you really mean by the arms?

P: Yes! Yes! That was my feeling I don't know what it is like for you?

C: Uah how great because... but I also have the side effect that it's in my arms. The tingling and also the tensions. I also have it with my legs but less. In my arms I often feel some kind of muscle pain. It may be that it is because of the medicine.

P: I thought so too, I felt a difference between the four sessions at this level and I thought it was because of the medicines. That certainly has something to do with it. What came back and what also has a connection with this

"opening", is your own expression. To be able to express yourself (Yes is right) or to feel yourself and to be able to express that in movement or in words or.... (Yes!)

C: I am very insecure but I have been on stage myself.

P: Really!

C: Yes. I really enjoy being on stage. Because then I don't have any nerves anymore. (Laughing)

P: I didn't know that.

C: I really like this. Then I don't feel any nerves at all anymore. I really enjoy participating in theatre. And dance. And then I'm very different from the way I feel now. Now I'm really myself but I'm actually quite insecure all the time but when I'm on a stage I'm no longer myself.

So I can give myself completely. And then I feel very free and I just like to do it. I also met my husband like that. He also played in the same theatre group. Yes. It is funny (laughing).

P: so it's actually.. on one side you have this intense uncertainty where you give your power to others or when you see yourself less than the other person and on the other side you feel strong and in your power when you can share yourself in a different way, when you are open, heart opened?

C: How great that you can feel that.

P: You have never heard before?

C: No. That's a very strong intuition they call it, right?

P: You remember in the last session, when we went to the body to our hands and translated the hands... (Yes) and there you did super sensitive hand and arm movements in space (Laughing). Do you remember that? (Yes) There you also had much more space in your body and you also look up space (Yes!). That was for me.... I remember... That was a very special moment for me. I saw your really grow. You were really busy with yourself and in space. It was really a deep connection with your body (Yes). And there I saw you for the first time; "wow, that's Sharon". It was very special for me.

C: Without me being ashamed or so. But it is difficult, still.

If I have to do it a new then I don't know if I can do it. That's why I told you: if you're alone, of course you can do anything, but if you're together with someone, I automatically retain a bit. But with theatre or something like that; "no then I would go for it, fantastic! (laughing) ☺

P: How so?

C: I don't know. It's very weird, very strange. I am on stage with myself or something.

P: On stage you don't see the person?

C: That's right!

P: Maybe it's less personal?

C: Yes. You only see the first row.

P: I don't know what I feel with drama and then you have Adrenaline.

C: That's fun, I really like that.

P: Is that the same with your physical challenge, is that what you also like?

C: Yes, that's right. I also really like sports.

P: I find it super interesting to hear that.

C: I think it's very smart of you to know it all at once.

P: That was also my research topic; in one session I see all "that much" but if I then take my time and move deeper. I feel my body tells me something. And I have the feeling is that this process can also help you. To feel yourself.

What I heard from you and also sense is your feeling of being in a box or something. And then you are not fully in touch with yourself. And at the same time you can't really be in contact with someone else. It seems to be a place in between. Do you recognize that?

C: Yes, that's right.

P: And that's where **physical tension** comes in.

I have the feeling that if you go inside that tension and body though relaxation or movement... if you take the time for yourself then you find yourself.

C: yes. That's right.

P: And I said it a few times; you can go inside very well.

C: Yes. And it's hard for me to dance in this kind of way, to move it...with someone. (laughing)

P: Did you also have the before, in the past?

C: No I don't know, I think I'm probably too insecure for that. I always have to think about it.

P: And if you were a **child** did you have that too?

C: **No then not.** Not as a child.

P: You were different there?

C: No, I **was very happy** there. Then I just went dancing with everyone standing by. At that time I **didn't have that shame** or something.

P: Okay. Can you still remember how old you were when this reversed?

C: Yes I do think so euh... well I have of course also lived through a lot...with my **father**. It was not safe to be at home. I really think when I realized as a child being that I was very much **hiding**. I was very often **afraid**. Then it became a bit less.

P: What I feel when you say that, is that you really had **to go inside, inside yourself, for your own safety**. Was that true?

C: Yes.

P: What was your **mechanism** when it happened with your father, to keep yourself safe?

C: I always felt a lot of **fear**. The attitude I just adopted (sitting position, holding legs in curled up like a ball) was actually my attitude then. But when my **father hit** my sisters or against... and then I did jump in between. Then **I would dare, for someone else, but not for myself**. Always, in the schoolyard too, at school: if my sisters started arguing or fighting with others... yes then I would jump in; "you shouldn't come against my sisters! But if they would come to me and say; "after school I grab you and I beat you up" then I would get so scared. But not when it came to my sisters. Very strange yes... I...

P: It is interesting because I can see what you explain in your posture and movement.

C: Yes, that's right.

P: You always carry that story with you.

C: Yes, that's true.

P: It's your **story**. (YES) It can own that. It was certainly a difficult and painful moment. And this **mechanism "to go inside"**, for your sisters to jump in and for yourself not, or less... (YES not at all) Maybe that was **your way of being safe?**

C: Yes it was. That's why when you asked me, "As a child, you couldn't make choices?" at some point not anymore. **I couldn't make my own choice** because I was **terribly afraid** that it wasn't good or... That wasn't allowed or... Yeah.

P: It sounds as if it wasn't safe for you to make your own choices?

C: Yes. Yes. Yes exactly. That's right. Switching the TV to another channel was already wrong. Because my father drank a lot, was aggressive. And he wanted to watch soccer, but didn't want to get it through. It was very quickly unsafe.

P: So your way of reacting is your coping mechanism, as I see it?

But you beyond or under this coping mechanism is actually open, cheerful? (YES)

You want to be on stage... (Yes). You want to make choice and can easily jumps in for others. (Yes). That is your core, that is how I see you.

C: ha... That very sweet. Haha or yes... (emotional)

P: But do you see that in yourself?

C: Yes, yes. I can remember what it was like for me and also how I actually am inside. Because also... because of that depression... I'm no longer there. And then I look at a picture from before and then I think; "I was really happy, really, really happy". (Emotions, crying)

P: ...you still have. I see it.

Inside of you. I still see it in you.

C: Then I can no longer be happy with myself... or no longer. Although.. I'm actually capable to go deep in my being.

P: What I sense is that you coping is still very much present and the pain is also a part of you, now. You took that with you and you have to be able to see it now to let go of it.

C: Yes, that's true. That's why I invited my father to just say it. I've never talked to him about how I actually experienced it. And I still didn't dare to say it to him, but I did say; "I know that you had a very difficult childhood yourself but actually I also had it with you". And yes... that's how I said it; that he was always very aggressive, and hit. I look at him differently now.

P: What I feel when you say this is; "I feel what it was like as a little girl, and I am no longer" (No, true). And that is very painful. Or that's what I feel when I hear you. How do I get back there, or can I?

C: Yes, yes! That's right. I constantly wonder how can I get back (emotions, crying)

P: Do you feel somewhere in yourself that it is possible? Do you have hope?

C: Yes, yes.

P: I believe in you and in this process, very strongly.

I really believe that by looking at it and by feeling the painful moments, like now, that you allow the healing. You become conscious of what happened. (Yes)

C: But that was a long time ago but my father is still the same. And that makes it difficult.

P: Do you still have a lot of contact with him?

C: Yes. Every week.

P: Okay. Is that good for you?

C: I'm thinking about it, my feeling is that it can't be different.

P: Okay. How come?

C: Yes, I don't know. Because it's my family, because it's my parents. Because my mother is very sweet. My mother is a very sweet person. But yes, she has accepted everything and never left. I think so... "you should just have left! For yourself and for your children". I understand that for many people it can't be perceived differently. You could think... "how can you say such a thing!" Because; "without a father you have nothing at all" but he was not a good father.

C: What I hear you say is; "my mom stayed and should rather have left", but at the same time I see you still having a close connection with your father, and that it is a "must". I wonder; do you see the same behavior of your mother accepting it all in yourself?

You want to stay connected but can that connection be different? (Yes!)

That power you give away, can that change?

C: Yes, I did say to him, "I don't want to see you as often". And so I took a little power back from him... yes.

P: I hear that you want to stay connected with your father, and you should be able to. But how are you in that connection?

C: Yes, that's true... it can be done in many different ways.

P: exactly, and that is your choice. (Yes)

The same is being with me, it is your choice how you answer or how you are in contact with me. It is your choice to say what you feel and think (You are right). And my reaction to you might be totally different than what you expected (You are really right).

C: You are also right because very often present myself differently to him. My husband always says: "why do you give him a hug at all! Whenever you go to him you give him a hug while you don't really love him," you know. There I actually thought; "I only do it for my mother. I'm not going to stop now". But now I don't do it anymore.

P: When you say that I feel you could "check in" with yourself; what is going on with the little girl in you and what does she want or need? In your heart how does she feel, here, now? What does she want now in this moment rather than; what "must I" or "should I" do. (Yes) What do "I" need? (Yes)

Maybe I want to give him a hug today, but maybe not tomorrow, and that's okay too.

Because I notice that you can feel at peace, you have that deep connection with yourself. (Yes) And that is special, not everyone has and can do that.

When I moved our session I feel that connection with myself every time. It is difficult to go outside and communicate, but I do feel it.

C: Yes, you're really right there because I've also had moments very often when I told people certain things I really couldn't know. One day I said to my therapist: "have you met a new love, I see it on you?" and then she says: "Yes, but how do you know that? (She laughs) I just know, I can see it in you. I just feel it is like that. Not the voice that talks to me but I know it is just that way. It's just a feeling.

P: That's really a present. And you have it in yourself. And you can use it for yourself. That's the most important thing. For yourself, to choose for yourself, to put yourself on an equal level with others, not below.

C: Yes, that's also right. Because with her I felt that too; that we were equal or that I didn't have to feel subordinate. And with a lot of other people I feel less, and then I feel insecure.

P: Yes, many people can use it. They have had a different childhood, story and a different personality. That happens.

C: Yes, yes, you can already see it verbally from someone. If you ... you don't want to show it but you radiate it right away ... and another person can see it directly.

P: So it "attracts" certain people..

C: Yes, I think you have to believe in yourself first, and have that feeling first to be able to radiate it. If you are always not sure of yourself and are insecure towards yourself, then others really see that right away, I have the idea. And some people abuse that, that's true.

P: And that is one of the main themes for me; the interpersonal dynamics and how you can change that by becoming conscious of it. At the beginning it's also about practicing, feeling and sensing this. Like on stage, when you play a different role. How is that and how does it feel. Being able to move into another role and what it does to your self and to others. We actually have all the different personalities; sometime we feel like that and sometime we feel like that. So, we have different "parts" within ourselves, and the question now is how can we get them to the same level and not suppress some of them?

C: yes, yes, one is higher and the other is lower. Yes, that's right.

And if someone then "criticizes" what you say and says; yes, you're doing it very badly, you have to do it like that" then I'm very quick to say "hm yes, maybe that's true. You're right", you know? Like with my sister or like or like...

P: In that I see your pattern. And can it be different? (Yes!) Can you see it from another perspective? What is your perspective, not that of your sister but you?

Not to be at home with yourself but also to ask if there are other possibilities?

"Do you know what I think; I understand you, but I feel that now! ...

C: Yes exactly. I immediately **think about the other**; the other who speaks the truth, without thinking about **what my truth is** or **how I think about it**. I immediately have the feeling of; Oh yes, I understand you and maybe it is true, but without thinking "Is it really so?"

P: Yes, because when I **hear your opinion**, I also get to know you, I hear your perspective. Then I can also grow through you. As a person. If I always have the same role, I hear myself talking, and I personally don't find that interesting. I want to know what you think, what your opinion is. And maybe other people are different; they might counter you. **How do you react then?** Because that is more difficult.

C: Yes, right. That's a **good theme**. For next week too!

P: Yes, we can certainly take that with us. And practice as physical exercise in a calm way like today, that is possible.

C: **I just have to give myself a push. I'm just going to do it.** It's not that bad at all.

P: You can also practice with your son. With children it is sometimes easier to **express yourself** and practice it. They are more **impulsive** and give their **opinion** more easily.

C: Yes exactly. And he feels that too. When **I am clear** he will also be calmed down. He feels exactly when I am insecure, like "Mum, can I get a candy"? "hm no..." and then he feels like I might be in doubt. But when I say "no, you get an apple or you can choose a tangerine". And then he doesn't even talk about the candy anymore, because he knows; I don't get that from my mom, so.

P: You say it yourself; it's actually good for him to get clarity from you.

C: Yes, to **be clear and to give structure**.

P: Then he knows, ah that's mama's opinion; I don't get that from mama.

C: That's right, he just knows that I won't give him one.

P: very nice to hear all this actually. (She laughs)  
Maybe we can finish it off slowly. How do you feel now? Was it a lot?

C: No, it's going well. I have very quickly that I can't concentrate anymore. What I tell you about conversations... I can get out of my energy very quickly. But now things are flowing.

P: and how is it now physically?

C: Yes... I really feel **pain in my heart** (laugh loudly).  
In the beginning it was a very **warm feeling**, you know, that I just felt good and now it really feels like... **as if someone touched me**. Yes.... very weird.

P: For me on a physical level the **heart was also an important theme**.  
Yes.... I had one more theme that I wanted to discuss with you, but maybe we can take that with us but the next session. It was about "thoughts" and "being hard on yourself".  
But it feels "round" and we can leave it here. For me it is enough. How does that sound to you?

C: For me too.

P: My very last question: was it valuable to you, or is it **valuable** to work this way? Because I share with you how and what I feel. (Yes, sure) Does that have any value for you? Or is it also difficult to hear?

C: It is **very valuable** to me because it gives me a lot of **insight**. You give me a lot of insight and also a lot of **peace**. I just find what you do very special. Even when you say words, I immediately feel what you mean. I really like the fact that you can **put yourself in my shoes** like this. I think that's super great. And it is very valuable to me.

P: And can you find yourself and find your **own opinion** in this?

C: Yes!

P: Sometimes I think it can also influence your opinion. For me the most important thing is that you can find yourself and find your own ...

C: Yes exactly. Yes actually about myself I know deep inside. But at the moment I am so restless that I don't see so well anymore, and you point me exactly to that place again from... this is... this is what you are looking for or where you want to be. And I feel that very much. And that gives me a lot of peace.

P: ahh. Beautiful ☺

That touches me. That's actually where we can start from. (Yes) And then we can see.... Okay what now. I feel like we should be able to start from this point. And then we can try out how we are connected and... Thank you so much!

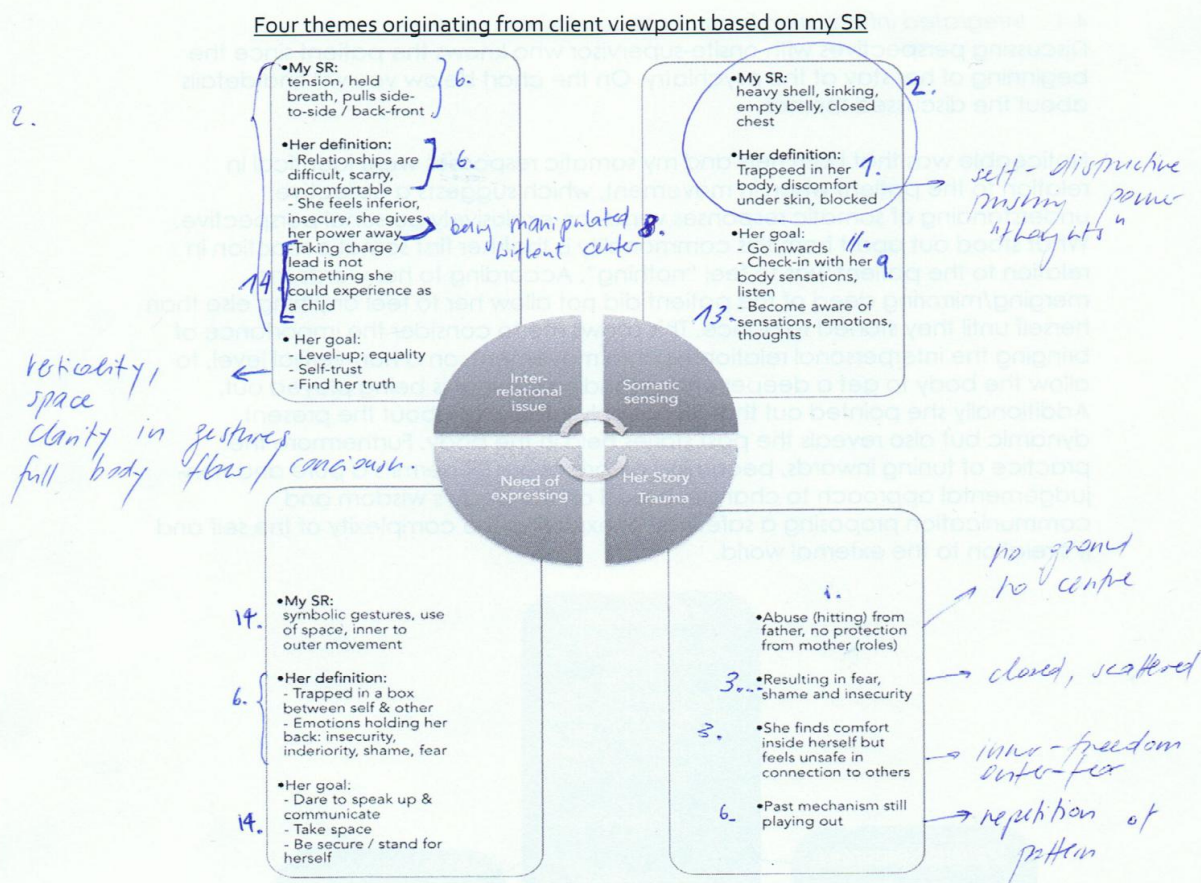
C: Thank you very much.

Both continue to laugh... ☺

## Appendix 9: Questionnaire for interview with the on-site supervisor

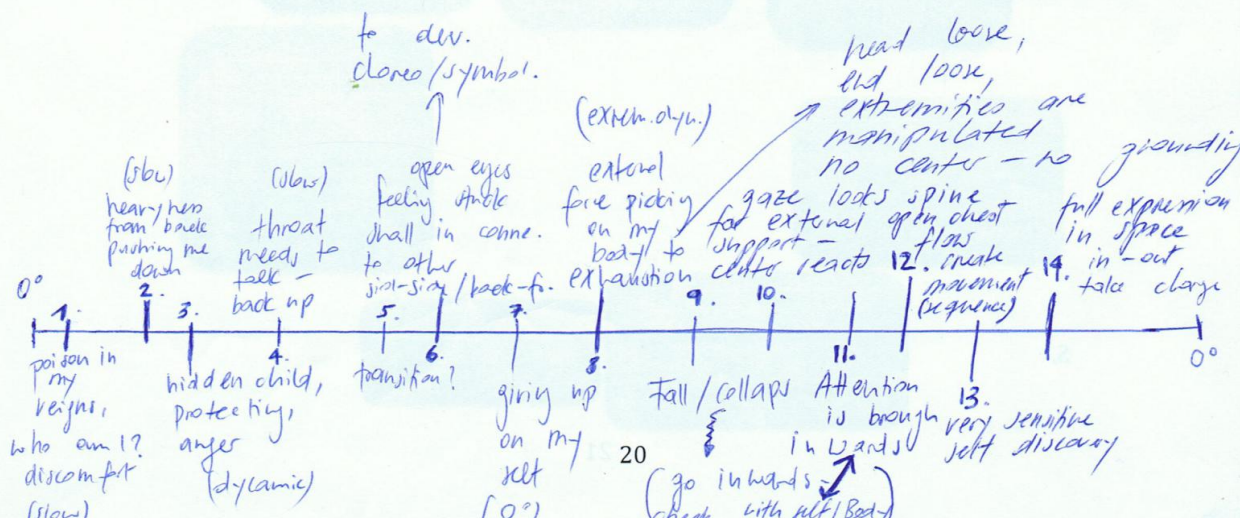
1. **What** where your somatic responses when in contact with her?
2. What do your somatic responses **communicate** to you about this specific client?
3. What were the **themes** that came up to you about the client?
4. **How** do you become conscious of them?
5. How do you **use them** with the client?
6. In which way do you think using your somatic responses can **help** especially clients with personality traits?
7. Are your somatic responses more reactive when with clients with personality disorder traits or does it differ?
8. Do you see a **value** for your **clients** to work with your somatic responses (verbally or non-verbally)?
9. What are the strengths and disadvantages to work this way?
10. Can this topic be of **value** for the field, for other **therapists**?

## Appendix 10: Example of brainstorming for the creation of the dance solo



experiencing expressing through postures  
transferring the box

What matters is the  
semantical execution,  
not the form.



## Appendix 11: Notes on personal process

### **Looking at (counter) transference themes:**

By tuning into my body I am more capable to differentiate between my personal themes and the one of the patients, determined by the repercussion these themes have on my soma. This equivalently supports my understanding of the somatic (counter) transference.

### **Main somatic (counter) transference topic:**

1. Relational role given to me through her behaviour; I felt superior than her and by being conscious of it I could work on constantly re-placing myself on the same level than her. On a somatic level my inner space, directness and expression would slightly increase in relation to her and I would feel a sense of tension in this role, which I could directly communicate to her and transform.
2. Thoughts, insecurity and self-doubt transference were very strong especially after the second session during the movement exploration to the point where I did not even realize that it was a transference. Through this processing after the session I could strengthen my self of grounding and observation during the next session.
3. Bodily transference goes both ways: by personally developing relaxation in my own body, I was transferring this state through my voice and posture to my client (two way transference). By influence my own soma I have the possibility to influence the soma of the other, so called somatic transference.

### **Training my somatic responses**

Besides my training as a dance therapist, I honed my skills in identifying somatic responses by doing the following extra-curricular activities. All of them are documented in my journal starting from the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2018 on. This training prepared me for collecting the data for this study: in the design of my tracking sheets, interviews and questionnaires as well as a descriptive back-ground information in my way of understanding and training my somatic responses.

- Meditation
- Authentic movement circle, training my inner witness
- Individual practice based on Authentic Movement