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Explorations Into Continuity: An Heuristic, Artistic Inquiry into the Interplay Between Work as a Dance/Movement Therapist and Service within the Bahá'í Community

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EXPLORATIONS INTO CONTINUITY: AN HEURISTIC, ARTISTIC INQUIRY INTO THE INTERPLAY BETWEEN WORK AS A DANCE/MOVEMENT THERAPIST AND SERVICE WITHIN THE BAHÁ'Í COMMUNITY

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis was to explore the concept of integration between two main aspects of my life: my professional career as a dance/movement therapist on an inpatient adolescent behavioral health unit, and service guided by Bahá'í teachings in a neighborhood-based setting. Literature reviewed encompassed instances of Rudolf von Laban's Effort elements found in the Bahá'í Writings, as well as research on the integration between the mind, body and spirit, the history of religion and mental health, and the current relationship between religion and mental health. Both artistic inquiry and heuristic methodologies were used to guide my research. Through Moustakas's method of data analysis – immersion, incubation, illumination, explication, and creative synthesis – certain themes surfaced that shed light on my personal embodied experience of integration, and its implications both in a dance/movement therapy (DMT) and religious vein. Two major themes included the role of improvisation in integration and the shift from fragmented language and movement to bodily integration found through utilization of the Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) Body category, in place of Effort. This study informs not only my own orientation towards integration, but also provides a platform from which both dance/movement therapists and any faith-based mental health practitioners can conceptualize integration and make it a more conscious part of their work.

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Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction

For much of my life, I have striven to understand the meaning of coherence. Conceptually, I think of coherence as a type of seamlessness or fluidity, where one thing transitions easily into another. Different aspects agree with each other, and do not create dissonance. What does this word actually mean in practice? How do all the many aspects that make up a human's life flow together seamlessly? Many times, a human has disparate interests that lead them to act differently in different situations. How does the whole person come to the table notwithstanding the situation? Coherence can be subtle. It is in the way we think, speak and act within all settings.

In regards to the Bahá'í Faith (See Appendix A), which I have attempted to understand in greater degrees throughout my life, the concept of coherence is of vital importance. If we are to make any kind of difference in the world through service to the body of mankind, we must live Bahá'í principles, letting the concepts of oneness, justice and the belief that all men are created noble permeate our beings. In one quote, it is mentioned that Bahá'ís should be distinguished even in the way they walk. It is quotes such as these, and the desire to be of service to mankind, that greatly led me to the field of dance/movement therapy (DMT) and counseling. How must people know our entire belief system by the manner in which we walk? Movement manifests and reveals our values, our intentions, our hopes and desires, and is, in essence, a reflection of what we, as humans, believe. It is with these thoughts in mind that the question of coherence moves to the foreground. How do the movement qualities practiced in my work within a Bahá'í context of service through core activities (See Appendix A) translate to my work as a dance/movement therapist and vice versa? Do Bahá'í children's classes, which speak to the spiritual qualities we need for our development, junior youth groups designed to help younger generations navigate a

challenging stage of life using spiritual compasses, and study circles that develop the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to walk a path of service to humanity, elicit the same movement patterns found in my workplace? Does my profession as a dance/movement therapist on an inpatient adolescent behavioral health unit require the same movement patterns found in Bahá'í service? If not, why? How do effort elements of weight, space, flow and time factor into the movement of coherence and integration? What other elements of DMT can be identified in Bahá'í service, comprised of the core activities of children's classes, junior youth groups, and study circles?

These questions are significant if we are to achieve coherence in our lives. Every aspect of one's life influences every other aspect. In my personal observation of my surrounding culture, there is a great tendency to fragment parts of one's life, while at the same time desiring balance. One's work stays at work, while home life takes on different qualities. I remember as a child going to work with my father, who is a high school teacher. I remember seeing a man far different from the father I knew at home. The man in the classroom was commanding, direct, and sharp, while the father I knew at home was quieter and more flexible.

With this in mind, I can speak to my theoretical framework as a dance/movement therapist and researcher. It is the same framework that I have as a Bahá'í. This framework is formed of concepts, which evolve over time as understanding increases. These concepts, drawn from the Writings of the Bahá'í Faith, and further discussed in subsequent chapters, help guide decision making both in my profession, and within service delineated by the current global plans set forth by the Universal House of Justice (See Appendix A). It is a framework which is at once structured and defined, but allows for branching avenues of exploration when necessary. It is a framework which holds that true human nature is noble, and that we should act in such a way

that elicits noble qualities and allows them to take root and flourish. It is a framework that holds that healing happens through therapeutic relationship, and evolves as need evolves. It necessitates adaptability to respond to the exigencies of the time. At its heart is the idea that humanity is moving toward unity and constitutes an advancing world civilization, which demands responsibility and effort on the part of all. Capacity must be built and released in every human being for the betterment of humanity. Further concepts include the notion that the individual and society are inextricably linked; one affects the other and is itself deeply affected by it. Therefore, both individual and collective transformation is necessary, and cannot exist in isolation from the other. These concepts are informed by guidance from the Universal House of Justice, which is explored in my review of the literature.

With this said, the purpose of my research is to explore the dynamic interplay between my profession as a dance/movement therapist in an adolescent inpatient behavioral health unit and my service within the Bahá'í community. In the continuum between profession and service, certain elements surface as common factors. I will analyze these factors with the goal of deepening my understanding of the mutually reinforcing nature between work and service, as these two arenas strengthen each other and exert a reciprocal influence. A concept common in the Bahá'í faith pertains to the continuity between being and doing. When one's inner life is mirrored forth in his outer life and actions, this represents coherence. In light of this concept, I intend to distinguish what elements of my career and religious affiliation affect the other and promote conscious coherence in my life.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

Effort Elements and the Bahá'í Faith

"If it be Thy pleasure, make me to grow as a tender herb in the meadows of Thy grace, that the gentle winds of Thy will may stir me up and bend me into conformity with Thy pleasure, in such wise that my movement and my stillness may be wholly directed by Thee…"

Prayers and Meditations by Bahá'u'lláh (1987, p. 240)

Within the Laban Movement Analysis (see Appendix A) system, there lie the categories of Body, Shape, Space and Effort (See Appendix A). Within the Effort category, specifically, fall the polarities of increasing and decreasing pressure, directing and indirecting space, acceleration and deceleration, and free and bound flow. In a thesis written by Sara Von Koningsveld (2011), she expounds on "the continuum between opposing effort qualities as increasing or decreasing intensity" (p. 26), and further explains that "Laban (1998) continues on to label these as fighting (increasing intensity) and indulging or yielding (decreasing intensity) within the effort quality" (p. 26). When looking within the Writings of the Bahá'í Faith, one can find numerous references to not only movement, but to words that specifically correlate to effort elements.

The Universal House of Justice (2010), in a message dated 28 December, 2010 to the Bahá'ís of the world, devotes an entire section to the topic of increasing intensity in regards to service. It draws parallels between the efficacy of service and the level of systematization of efforts and strategy achieved in planning, and includes phrases acknowledging that with an increase in the intensity and tempo of activity comes the need for further structure. The Universal House of Justice also expounds on the notion that when an intensive program of growth is launched, connoting an accelerated effort to expand core activities over a set period of time, the elements necessary for sustainability are also in place. In the writings of Shoghi Effendi (1980),

great grandson of Bahá'u'lláh and interpreter of His writings, we find a direct exposition of the effort elements of space and time when he says: "They must…act swiftly or mark time, they must use the direct or indirect method…in strict accordance with the spiritual receptivity of the soul with whom they come in contact" (p. 25). The quote goes on to mention many other opposite qualities that are necessary to consider when interacting with others, and highlights overall the necessity to meet the needs of those with whom we interact. With this in mind, we begin to see how situational circumstances demand analysis and ability to discern an appropriate response. There is no prescription of how we should be; it is dependent on the situation.

With specific reference to the fighting effort quality of time, VonKoningsveld explains, "fighting Time (Accelerating/Quick) is associated with the future or 'will be' thought" (p. 31). There is an element of intention toward the future. This is reflected endlessly in guidance from the Universal House of Justice (2010). Examples of this can be seen clearly when they quote Effendi, saying, "they press forward, undeterred and undismayed, in their efforts…" Although the word press at times carries with it the connotation of indulging use of time when used as an action drive, in this sense it relates to an underlying intentionality towards time. (Effendi, as cited in Universal House of Justice, p. 5). Abdu'l-Bahá (1972), to offer another example, also tells us to look to the future instead of dwelling on the present, further reinforcing the idea that acceleration and moving toward the future are important concepts in the Bahá'í Writings.

In regards to weight, Laban (1988) associated increasing pressure with a strong resistance to weight, whereas decreasing pressure correlated with a weak resistance to weight. Other examples in Effendi's (1980) writings re-emphasize the fact that we have a natural inertia or gravity that weighs us down, and that we must strive to combat its effects for the sake of service to humanity. Bahá'u'lláh (1990) again references weight by saying:

Ye are even as the bird which soareth…through the immensity of the heavens,

until, impelled to satisfy its hunger, it turneth longingly to the water and clay of

the earth below it and…findeth itself impotent to resume its flight to the realms

whence it came. Powerless to shake off the burden weighing on its sullied wings,

that bird, hitherto an inmate of the heavens, is now forced to seek a dwelling-

place upon the dust. (p. 327)

In addition to the dichotomy between "soaring" and "weighing" in the quote above, reference is

also made to ascent, which may correlate to decreasing pressure. Further, Bahá'u'lláh advises

that "if we wish to ascend the scale of progress…we must direct our gaze forward and upward..."

(as cited in Esslemont, 1980, p. 156). Here again we see the *will be* or future orientation

associated above with acceleration.

Additional direct references to indulging qualities are more difficult to find in the Bahá'í

Writings. In regards to deceleration, or sustained time, one finds numerous references to process-

oriented growth. Effendi frequently spoke of the processes whereby the Bahá'í Faith grew and

developed, and at times spoke of the teleological processes whereby religion has evolved to its

current state (Effendi, 1971, p. 154). The following excerpt from a letter on behalf of Effendi

(1976) to Bahá'ís in Alaska provides an example of the two indulging qualities of free flow and

decelerating time when he states: "…In countries where the friends may teach freely, a mighty,

sustained teaching effort may be exerted" (p. 24).

Other examples of indulging qualities, although not as readily found in a direct form, may

be indirectly present. The concept of free flow may also possibly be inferred from some of

Abdu'l-Bahá's Writings, in which he expounds on the idea that a pattern of uninhibited and free

communication with individuals from all walks of life should be encouraged, as it will lead to

friendship and fellowship (Abdu'l-Bahá, 1982a). Flexibility, which VonKoningsveld (2011) likes to indirect space (p. 24), is found in many directives to the Bahá'í community. In a message to the worldwide Bahá'í community on 12 December, 2011, regarding core activities, the Universal House of Justice explained that strong coordination skills and qualities allow us to respond to situations accordingly, and with a degree of flexibility. This same flexibility does not undermine quality or integrity, but rather allows for a more accurate and meaningful contribution to the advance of society, which is coherent with its spiritual and material needs. In *Gleanings From the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh*, Bahá'u'lláh (1990) exhorts us all to "Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and center your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements" (p. 213). Finally, in the seventh book in the Ruhi sequence, entitled *Walking Together on a Path of Service,* the approach of the Ruhi Institute (see Appendix A), which helps develop skills, qualities and attitudes for service, is summed up with the quote: "If there is one concept we hope characterizes the approach of the Ruhi Institute, it is flexibility" (Ruhi Institute, 2001, p. 59).

Research on Integration

Research on the topic of integration itself provides further insight into the connection described above between religion and DMT. In her book *Making Connections*, Peggy Hackney (2002) helps us understand integration on a fundamental level. "Integration maintains the integrity of the 'integers' and brings them into a participatory whole" (p. 16). She differentiates unity from integration, however, and uses the words to mean two different things. Unity, according to Hackney, refers to the wholeness of an organism before it has differentiated, whereas integration refers to wholeness after differentiation. The term differentiation implies the process by which an individual begins to experience the various parts of their body moving as a

part, and not as a whole. This happens early on in an individual's development, as a baby in relationship to the parent. The single body begins to function in a manner more representative of the parts than the unified whole as it interacts in different and increasingly advanced ways with the mother or father. The parts of the whole thus become integrated through the process of differentiation. In this connection, Fran Levy (1995) adds "The more one is attached…the greater the experience of fragmentation and, conversely, the more one experiences oneself as distinct from others, the greater the sense of integration" (p. 8). The Bahá'í Faith mirrors these notions by further illuminating the concept of integration. In a statement on the concept of global prosperity, the Bahá'í International Community (1995) wrote:

> It is precisely the wholeness and complexity of the order constituting the human
>
> body – and the perfect integration into it of the body's cells – that permit the full
>
> realization of the distinctive capacities inherent in each of these component
>
> elements. No cell lives apart from the body, whether in contributing to its
>
> functioning or in deriving its share from the well-being of the whole. (p. 6)

Integration is a common theme in the world of DMT, where bodily connectivity is conducive to health, both in the physical and mental realms. Integration spans many levels, from purely physical to mind/body, to mind/body/society. Finding integration in one's life has many implications, therefore providing a basis for a rich pool of research. Bartenieff Fundamentals (See Appendix A), which addresses bodily patterns of connection in a psychosocial context, reveals to us the many implications of body integration (Hackney,2002). On a psychosocial level, fundamentals, as it is sometimes called, offers a chance to examine patterns that may not have developed fully or correctly, and therefore do not adequately support the needs of the organism. Fundamentals work not only on a physical level, offering more complete integration

of the parts, but also support psychosocial security and well-being (Hackney, 2002). Hackney also makes the statement that "Our human system lives and moves effectively through both the perception of patterns of connection and the actual accomplishment of specific ones" (p. 21).

Perhaps we find support in the Bahá'í Writings for such a statement when Abdu'l-Bahá (1921/1978) says "for the mind to manifest itself, the human body must be whole; and a sound mind cannot be but in a sound body…" (p. 1). With this, we begin to see the correlation between bodily integration and the health of the mind. To support this point further, Irmgard Bartenieff (1980), predecessor and teacher of Peggy Hackney, affirmed that physical and mental therapy are consistently intertwined. They do not exist apart from the other. To give another indicator of this phenomenon, she goes on to say "The unity of the fundamental and expressive aspects of movement behavior became increasingly clarified and led back to the role of dance as a clue to the roots of behavior" (p. 4). When there is a disconnection or lack of integration in the body, the human being cannot experience wellness in its fullest form, and expressivity is hindered (Connett, 2011). Indeed, the disintegration of the body has profound consequences at many levels. We must be integrated on a physical level in order to manifest mental soundness. Radpour (2001) describes the literal meaning of integration on a bodily level, and how it affects other areas of one's life:

> Unity manifests itself at the level of the individual psyche as well as within
> relationships. An individual who is inwardly disunited, who does not want to do
> what he knows he should do, or who does not know how to do what he should do,
> or even who does not know how to want to do what he should do – we say that
> such a person lacks integrity. He is not integrated within. Therefore, a full
> understanding of the hierarchy of values is essential to mental health. We must

recognize true value, love it, and serve it in order to be a healthy human being.

(p.3)

The implications of dis-integration do not end here, however. Abdu'l-Bahá, in other writings, goes on to elaborate more fully on the implications of integration and coherence, bridging together the concepts of bodily and mental coherence with the rest of the planet. He explains that the world mirrors forth the human body, and vice versa. The human body can be viewed as a model for the world, with all its various parts coming together to form an integrated, coherent whole. Abdu'l-Bahá gives the analogy that the different limbs and organs, which to outward appearances seem unrelated, are really essential to the functioning of each other. So it is with the world. We are inseparably linked as a human race. The whole depends on the parts, and in turn, the parts are dependent on the whole. They cannot be separated, as in the human body (as cited in Research Department of the Universal House of Justice, 2007).

Thus, we begin to see the necessity and importance of integration on multiple levels. Connett again brings this point to summation by saying that "The patterns of total body connectivity provide a structured and holistic approach to treating mental health disorders. Mental health disorders affect the entire system of an individual, his or her mind, body, and interactions with the world" (p. 5). What, then, of the body and mind's connection to spirituality and God? The body and mind seem to be inextricably integrated with each other, but what of their direct effect on the spirit or soul?

Research on Integration Between Body, Mind and Spiritual Development

The New Oxford American Dictionary (2005) defines the word spirit as the non-physical element of a person, and the origin of emotions and character. According to the same source, the soul adds the dimensions of spirituality, immateriality, and immortality. It seems, then, that spirituality is a function of the soul. The Bahá'í Writings describe the intelligence of man as "the intermediary between his body and his spirit" (Abdu'l-Bahá, 1972, p. 97). This intelligence is a

faculty of the rational soul (Abdu'l-Bahá, 1972). Radpour delves further into this topic by addressing the spirit and soul's role in mental and bodily health:

> Spiritual development and emotional and mental development follow the same trajectory of growth and respond to the same developmental forces of love and justice. The soul's development, however, is not dependent upon the health, mental or physical, of the individual…People possess different degrees of dysfunction based upon their physical health, their environment, their experiences; but all must grow spiritually. (2001, p. 4)

Therefore, we see that mental illness does not affect the soul, but rather, the spirit. The individual may feel the effects of mental illness as they strive for spiritual progress. Mental illness may hinder the process, but does not affect the soul directly (as cited in Hornby, 1988). To add to the puzzle, Bahá'u'lláh (1990) Himself speaks as to the station of the soul as exalted above that of the mind. He says "Know thou that the soul of man is exalted above, and is independent of all infirmities of body or mind…" (p. 153).

The mind presents another facet of reality. The mind, which does harbor mental illness, can certainly benefit from those scientifically trained persons who deal with disease of the mind (as cited in Hornby, 1988). It seems, then, that the mind is integrated with the soul in a different manner. We gain further insight in more of Abdu'l-Bahá's Writings (1921/1978) when He explains "the soul dependeth not upon the body. It is through the power of the soul that the mind comprehendeth…whilst the soul is a power that is free" (p. 9). Later in the same passage, He says "the mind proveth the existence of an unseen Reality that embraceth all beings, and that existeth and revealeth itself in all stages, the essence whereof is beyond the grasp of the mind" (p. 9). Physical infirmity may cloud the spirit's radiance, and a healthy body, as mentioned earlier, is a prerequisite for the spiritual capacities of a human being to become fully manifest. Further, some mental illness occurs in correlation with a misuse of spiritual capacity and power. When these capacities are used properly, healing occurs (Radpour, 2001, p. 4). Founder of analytical psychology, Carl Jung, often expounded upon his experience with spirituality, and

offers additional insight. In his book *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* (1933), he reflected:

> Among all my patients in the second half of life – that is to say over thirty-five –
> there has not been one whose problem in the last resort was not that of finding a
> spiritual outlook on life. It is safe to say that every one of them fell ill because he
> had lost that which the living religions of every age have given to their followers,
> and none of them has been really healed who did not regain his spiritual outlook.
> (p. 234)

Through this multitude of examples, we learn that the soul, while independent and of infirmities of the mind and body, still represents a source of healing when spiritual powers are channeled properly, and it is just this channeling that some dance/movement therapists strive to achieve. "Dance therapy helps those who are…healthy as well as those with mental illnesses and with physical or mental disabilities to regain a sense of wholeness by experiencing the unity of the body, mind and spirit" (Patel, 2008). In my own experience as a dance/movement therapist, I created an Expressive Therapy intake assessment in which I ask patients whether or not they believe in God. It is rare to find a patient who does not. This has raised many questions in my mind as to why spirituality or religion is not more prominent in the realm of mental health. In my clinical setting, it is not uncommon for patients to express that God or religion is a source of comfort in times of tests, yet there is no specific outlet in this clinical setting to address this aspect of the patient's health (Rezai, 2012).

DMT and Religion

Dance traces its origins back to divinity, or the desire to commune with the divine. In its original form, dance arose from being moved by a transcendental power. It represented a sacred language that allowed us to communicate with the unknown (Noack, 1992, p. 189). Pioneer of authentic movement, Joan Chodorow (1991), made a curious connection in this light. When moving, the mover learns to experience the "difference between movement that is directed by the ego – I am moving – and movement that comes from the unconscious – I am being moved" (p. 28). Could it be that there is a connection between the unconscious and transcendental powers?

Further research suggests that, at one point, humans used movement to understand the divine through motions expressive of celestial order. Patterns of motion, and the body were used to mirror sacred forms, and religion was experienced physically, when deities were believed to enter and transform individuals. Dancing became a direct, participatory approach to encountering the gods. As this encounter took place, forces experienced by the mover were named in order to reduce fear and empower the individual. The unconscious was made conscious (Serlin, 1993, p. 66).

According to Serlin, this is where the tie to dance therapy comes in. A central aspect of dance therapy is naming the actions of the body in motion, so that as "vague movements chrystallize into form," the therapist may illuminate or clarify them into "clear statements of emotion, intent, or image" (p. 66). Serlin noted that early forms of dance represented generation, creation and union, and gave life to such themes as birth, death, and regeneration through dances for births, weddings, and harvests, which were manifestations of the divine. She notes: "When dance therapists today help participants rediscover the seemingly repetitive archetypal motions of scattering and gathering, of rising and falling, of stomping and clapping, they are reconnecting the person, through the movements, to a sacred perspective" (p. 67). Serlin also notes the use of circles and circular formations in DMT, and likens them to ring dances, which used circular patterns in religious dances of old (p. 67).

More recent research on the relationship of DMT to religion adds new dimensions through different foci. A thesis by dance/movement therapist Rakhi Rangparia (2011) shed some light on the connection between religion and dance in East Indian culture. Rangparia, who traveled to India to conduct her research, interviewed several dance/movement therapists practicing in Kolkata, Mumbai and Delhi on their experiences with DMT in India. In her review of the literature on Indian culture and healing, Rangparia references the practice of yoga, which, based on the mind/body connection, is often used as a form of meditation and communion with the divine (Chattopadhyay, as cited in Rangparia). She then makes reference to how many Indian dance forms draw their inspiration from religion and God, and how in many cases, spirituality is

expressed through movement. These movements are also said to have healing and therapeutic qualities (Singh, as cited in Rangparia). Bharatnatyam in particular is mentioned as a dance style that possesses such qualities, and is a combination of yoga and mantra shashtra, a religious book used for prayer (Sudhakar, as cited in Rangparia). Therefore, many of the dances that possess the qualities to heal the biological, physiological and psychological needs of an individual, have their roots in religion.

Rangparia goes on to discuss DMT techniques used by dance/movement therapists in India. In addition to many techniques common to DMT practice in Western cultures, Indian dance/movement therapists talked about using traditional dance styles, such as Bharatnatyam, in their work. Curiously, however, the same dance/movement therapists who were classically trained in and utilized Bharatnatyam, a dance form with deep roots in spirituality and religion, did not talk about religion in their practice.

Another source on the use of DMT in the treatment of cancer also recognizes the early connection between dance and religion, and the role they played in healing. Dance has long been a vital mode of self-expression, and has been used for many ceremonial and religious events. An example can be found in Native American culture, when medicine men and women used dance as part of their healing rituals. However, in the explanation given of DMT in its current state, no mention to spirituality or religion can be found (American Cancer Society, 2008, p. 1).

One further article by Iris Brauninger (2012) explores the effect of DMT groups on both short and long term quality of life. Two groups of individuals were given either 10 sessions of DMT or no treatment. Both groups filled out questionnaires on various measures of quality of life before treatment began to form a baseline, after 10 sessions of DMT to measure short-term effects, and six months after termination of treatment to measure long-term effects. Of the many measures explored in the study, all improved for the group receiving DMT treatment. Spirituality was used as one measure of quality of life, which showed improvement over the long term in the group receiving DMT sessions. The study concluded that there was a positive correlation between short and long term improvement of quality of life and DMT treatment (p. 300). Apart

from the correlation of overall improvement of quality of life and DMT, it is significant to note that spirituality was considered a measure, and is also positively correlated to DMT treatment.

The History of Religion and Spirituality in Mental Health

In 1813, the Philadelphia Quakers founded the first private psychiatric hospital in the United States. They believed that God dwelled in every man, and that those with mental disability could be cured when treated with kindness and respect. Their method was known as moral treatment, and signaled the beginning of what we know as modern psychiatric medicine in the United States (Price, 1988). Around the same time, the Quakers were also offering mental health care in Europe. Patients were offered places to carry out their daily activities in a comfortable setting that was at the same time religious. Core values of treatment included mildness, reason and humanity (Foerschner, 2010). It involved both the patient's spiritual and moral development, and meeting goals occurred through the patient's engagement in spiritual discussion. In addition, other religiously affiliated groups, such as the Alexian Brothers, offered, and continue to offer mental health treatment founded on religious life and values (Alexian Brothers, 2007).

We can look to more recent history to partially explain the current lack of religion in the mental health field. Historically, the relationship between religion and the mental health field has been spotty, with suspicion and estrangement coming from both sides (Bataille and Berkowitz, 2009). What, then, contributes to this uneasy relationship? Sigmund Freud (1961), father of psychoanalysis, influenced the course of psychology in the early 20th century with statements such as "Religion would thus be the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity; like the obsessional neurosis of children, it arose out of the Oedipus complex, out of the relation to the father" (p. 55). He further asserted that "Religion is an illusion and it derives its strength from its readiness to fit in with our instinctual wishful impulses" (Freud, 1966, p. 155). He finally said that "Devout believers are safeguarded in a high degree against the risk of certain neurotic illnesses; their acceptance of universal neurosis spares them the task of constructing a personal one" (Freud, 1961, p. 56) Albert Ellis (1980), who succeeded Freud in the field of

psychoanalysis, and pioneered the field of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, added: "For that again, is what all manner of religion essentially is: childish dependency. And that is what effective psychotherapy, along with all the other healing arts and informative sciences, must continue uncompromisingly to unmask and eradicate" (p. 18). Jung countered with his viewpoint that the majority of patients were being extricated from a spiritual standpoint. He recognized that we must not be indifferent to this worrisome phenomenon if we are the type of person who has internalized spiritual values (Jung, 1933). Mental health professionals are often trained and instructed to block out a patient's religious views when engaging in treatment. This often occurs under the pretense of professional boundaries, and is viewed as a taboo topic. In fact, many mental health professionals have been encouraged to view religion in the medical model framework, which suggests that spiritual belief might be a potential psychiatric symptom (Berkowitz and Bataille, 2009).

Abraham Maslow (1964), pioneer in humanistic psychology and self-actualization theory, further explained the consequences of dichotomizing science and religion:

> Science and religion have been too narrowly conceived…and separated from each other…they have been seen to be two mutually exclusive worlds…This separation permitted nineteenth-century science to become too exclusively mechanistic, too positivistic, too reductionistic, too desperately attempting to be value-free…Such an attitude dooms science to be nothing more than technology, amoral and non-ethical. (p. 11)

He sums up the plight of psychology and religion in two final paragraphs:

> Faith, which has perfectly respectable naturalistic meanings…tends in the hands of an anti-intellectual church to degenerate into blind belief, sometimes even 'belief in what you know ain't so.' It tends to become unquestioning obedience and last-ditch loyalty…It tends to produce sheep rather than men. It tends to become arbitrary and authoritarian.
>
> Religious quests, the religious yearnings, the religious needs themselves –

are perfectly understandable scientifically…they are rooted deep in human nature…they can be studied, described, examined in a scientific way…the churches were trying to answer perfectly sound human questions…The questions themselves were and are perfectly acceptable, and perfectly legitimate…Existential and humanistic psychologists would probably consider a person sick or abnormal in an existential way if he were not concerned with these 'religious' questions. (p. 14)

Psychology and Religion

In the literature reviewed, I found the most overlap between Christianity and therapeutic practice, although this does not imply that other religions are devoid of psychological or therapeutic ties. Overall, psychotherapy's relationship to God and religion has remained an area of intrigue, as the two entities do not often mix. This reveals a common mistake. We think of mental health and spirituality or religion as representing two separate entities with few commonalities, of interest to some, but certainly not all. We see religion as an extracurricular activity that is of little consequence to our daily lives. If we view religion in this way, it is easy to see why psychotherapy, and other fields beyond that, have ignored spirituality in their practices (Hart, 2002, p. 1). According to Hart, this extracurricular perspective has allowed many fields to strike spirituality from their practice, therefore divorcing two elements of human existence that are, for many, very much connected.

In his commentary on his own personal experience as a Christian therapist, Brad D. Strawn (2007) says: "I don't think I really believed that religion and psychology were two distinct things but I didn't have a model for bringing them together in a satisfactory manner" (p. 5). The importance of integrating these two realms is becoming increasingly evident though. Religious forms of coping have been positively correlated with many adjustment indicators,

including fewer somatic complaints and higher coping ability (Meichenbaum, 2008). He notes more specifically that many have noticed a positive correlation between emotion regulation and religion:

> Religious practices such as a) prayer which is an exercise in religious reframing,
> b) meditation and mindfulness activities that can reduce arousal; c) acceptance
> and forgiveness activities that control negative emotions like anger, guilt and
> shame, as well as nurture empathy, have each been found to help individuals cope
> with trauma. (p. 8)

Indeed, for many mental health practitioners, in addition to patients, religion provides a sense of connection and purpose towards ones work. It allows for mental health professionals to call upon God for guidance and intervention as they go about their daily work. This can be especially important when one is attempting to help others, and helps avoid the feeling of being entirely alone and vulnerable in one's work (Blazek, 2010). Blazek, a dance/movement therapist, further elaborates in a journal entry on the personal benefits of integrating one's beliefs into practice by saying "I'm attempting to stay in communication with God and stay aware of my body and brain as much as possible. So far, so good. Not perfect, but certainly better than previous months. I feel present and connected" (p. 36). Blazek focuses on how an individual's connection with God can serve as a source of strength when entering one's profession, but says little on how one's framework of beliefs directly affects the way one works with clients. In another journal entry, she again references the personal strength she received through her belief in God with the observation:

> Many of the therapeutic qualities I had been striving to embody on my own were
> now something that I could ask God to help me achieve. I wasn't giving up on

having to put my own effort into striving towards excellence, but it felt much

easier to do the necessary work when I knew God was my power source. (p. 60)

The notion that belief in God and a spiritual foundation can reinforce therapeutic practice

on an individual level is evident in Blazek's work. Belief in God can also be observed in the

societal dimension. We must not only call upon God for our own personal benefit, but must also

consciously integrate it into our interactions with the rest of society. As Bahá'ís, we must study

and apply Bahá'u'lláh's teachings in our daily lives, as well as in our family interactions, our

professions, and in the wider community. In this way, the Bahá'í Faith grows in capacity as we

learn to collaborate in efforts to effect constructive societal change (Lample, 2009).

The influence of the divine in societal interactions is also supported by DMT. After

noting that circular dances, traces of which are found in present day DMT, arose from

connection to divinity, Serlin (1993) noted that circular dances also promote preventive health

for the community. Groups with a sense of cohesion can form circles, and often do so

spontaneously in DMT groups, whereas groups that are fragmented cannot. The ability for a

group to form a circle, a throwback to sacred movement rituals of the past, signifies the health of

a community (p. 67). "Sacred healing dance connected the individual to the larger context of the

community and the gods, helping to bring a sick person back into harmony with tradition, social

order, and the cosmos" (p. 75).

As Bahá'ís, we are called upon to have a profession. "True reliance is for the servant to

pursue his profession and calling in this world…(Bahá'u'lláh, 1988). As noted by Lample

(2009), we strive not only to exemplify, but to apply Bahá'í teachings in all avenues of life:

Bahá'ís contribute through their work and professions to the generation and

application of knowledge in various disciplines. We contribute to the social and

economic development of our communities by carrying out specific projects that

benefit the general population in their immediate surroundings (p. 112)

The Bahá'í Writings themselves attest to the importance of integrating one's beliefs and values

into one's profession, and of engaging in work that benefits humanity. Every individual is under

the obligation to work, or engage otherwise in some form of profession. If work is performed in

the spirit of service, it is elevated to the station of worship (Effendi, 1973).

This statement is congruent with much of the research recently done in the arena of

integration between religious practice and psychotherapy, mostly in the realm of Christianity.

Gary Moon, in his 2002 article "Spiritual Direction: Meaning, Purpose, and Implications for

Mental Health Professionals," portrays a vision of spiritually sensitive psychotherapy, and

explains that it offers the possibility to integrate spirituality and resources into professional

practice as a psychotherapist in an appropriate manner. This allows for experimentation and

different vantage point while remaining within the bounds of professionalism. Indeed, the

failure to integrate ethics and morals with psychology has led to the degradation of moral and

ethical standards, and has led increasingly to disintegration and chaos, violence, and ignorance to

the role of values in one's life (Radpour, 2001). It is difficult to avoid integration between one's

religious values and profession, where values play an integral role in healing. Blazek again

reinforces this idea when she references Case and McMinn (2001) by explaining that "the

authors point out that for religious people, God and spirituality are not necessarily emergency

buoys used only in times of crisis, but rather a constant frame of reference for all aspects of the

person's life" (Blazek, 2010, p. 18). The Bahá'í perspective echoes the role that framework plays

throughout all aspects of our lives. In a quotation from the 2012 document *Discourse and Social

Transformation: Achieving Coherence*, the authors write:

We all live with various degrees of internal contradiction in our individual and collective lives. However, one thing that helps us achieve greater coherence is making more explicit the elements of a conceptual framework that can guide all of our individual actions and collective efforts. (Institute for Studies in Global Prosperity, p. 2)

Research Connection

This research aims to explore the interrelation between my profession as a dance/movement therapist and service based on Bahá'í principles within a neighborhood setting. Specific questions include: what are the specific commonalities, in DMT terms, between service and my profession? Based on Bahá'í literature, as well as more recent documents on the emerging culture of integration between psychotherapy and religion, this arose as an integral question to answer through research. The ongoing push towards coherence begs the question of how one specifically addresses the roles of DMT and one's experience with service, using language that that can translate to both fields. There is a noticeable gap in the research binding DMT and religion, and it is an area that must be explored further if integration is to have far-reaching effects on these two facets of life.

A further question to be answered is: how do DMT techniques play out in Bahá'í service, and in turn, how does involvement in the Institute Process (See Appendix A) and core activities inform interventions within an inpatient adolescent behavioral health unit? The connection between these two areas of endeavor has been noticeable in my own life for some time, and forms the reason, in part, for entering the field of DMT. It is important to shed light, with increasing intentionality and focus, on the specific points of transference between these two fields. "…The articulation of observations and conclusions should be presented in precise and dispassionate language, that progress in every area of endeavor is contingent upon the creation of an environment where powers are multiplied and manifest themselves in unified action…"

(Office of Social and Economic Development, 2012, p. 12). In this way, the unconscious process of correlation between sets of activities gradually becomes conscious and repeatable in diverse circumstances.

Another question I explore in this research is: what does integration feel and look like on an artistic, movement level? I came to this question for many reasons. In addition to heuristic research, I wished to explore my research questions through movement, as this is a deeply personal and telling form of inquiry for me. I figured it would offer yet another perspective to the study, and would offer insights not as easily uncovered if left only to written material. I also tend to think that it is important to experience things on a movement level, as my profession is movement-based, and offers another way to understand and synthesize information.

The overall purpose of my research is to delve into the conscious integration between two deeply personal yet universal aspects of life. In the continuum between profession and service, certain elements surface as common factors. I will analyze these factors with the goal of deepening my understanding of the mutually reinforcing nature between work and service, as these two arenas strengthen each other and exert a reciprocal influence. A concept common in the Bahá'í Faith, as previously mentioned, pertains to the continuity between being and doing. When one's inner life is mirrored forth in his outer life and actions, it is indicative of cohesiveness. In light of this concept, I intend to distinguish what elements of my career and religious affiliation affect the other and promote conscious coherence in my life. As is visible in the above review of the literature, the area of research devoted to integration between religion, spirituality and therapy is limited, and comes from a primarily Christian, psychotherapeutic approach. Although the Baha'i Faith, and quite likely other of the world's religions, incorporate psychological elements, they were not as readily apparent in the literature. This remains an area to be further excavated.

To gain a holistic perspective between the faculties of the mind and our human religious experience, we must explore the topic in more depth, and from different points of reference. This research will provide one individual's personal experience with coherence and integration between two areas not previously correlated in current research. It will help broaden general perspective on the scope of the relationship between religion and therapy, and will add increased vision of the evolving conceptual framework we work within as therapists, individuals and societies seeking God, and as human beings.

Chapter Three: Methods

Methodology

As a clinician starting out in the profession of DMT, many elements influence the theoretical orientation in which I work. Previous experience working under a Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) framework, mixed with my training in the more improvisational Chacian approach and an underlying spiritual foundation based in the Bahá'í Writings guide my approach to therapy and research. My theoretical orientation, both to clinical work and my process as a researcher, can be summed up in another statement from the Universal House of Justice (2011) that describes the Institute Process (See Appendix A) by saying **"**it necessitates a logical progression but admits, when needed, related lines of exploration" (p.2).

I conducted my research using a combination of heuristic and artistic inquiry approaches. This allowed me to explore my research questions in two mediums. As I delved into my individual experience, a heuristic approach seemed appropriate. Clark Moustakas wrote about heuristic research, explaining that it involves a direct and personal experience or interaction with the entity under investigation. The researcher experiences the phenomenon in an intense and full manner, and has been completely present throughout the process. This form of research demands maturity, honesty, and a sense of integrity (Moustakas, 1990). Moustakas further explained "heuristics is a way of engaging in scientific methods and processes aimed at discovery; a way of self-inquiry and dialogue with others aimed at finding the underlying meanings of important human experiences" (p. 15). This research methodology attracted my attention, as I believe the individual must first know him or herself before being able to fully relate to others. I knew from the outset that the topics discussed in this research felt like they needed more clarification before I would be comfortable directly involving others in the research process. With this in mind, a personal encounter with the theme of integration seemed to be in order.

Artistic inquiry also seemed equally fitting as a way in which to explore and express my findings, as it was yet another deeply personal way to investigate two deeply personal parts of my life. In the book *Artistic Inquiry in Dance/Movement Therapy*, Lenore Hervey (2000) defines artistic inquiry in three parts. She explains that it "uses artistic methods of gathering, analyzing, and/or presenting data…engages in and acknowledges a creative process…and is motivated and determined by the aesthetic values of the researcher" (p. 7). As stated, I chose artistic inquiry as my second methodology based on its ability to touch those who witness the finished product in a manner that goes beyond the scope of words, and augments the breadth of the research's influence by providing a broader, more comprehensive medium for understanding integration.

There seems to be a fitting connection between heuristic research and artistic inquiry, as Moustakas explains "the deepest currents of meaning and knowledge take place within the individual through one's senses, perceptions, beliefs and judgments" (1990, p. 15). This correlates to Hervey's quote, above, as one's creative process is in turn shaped by one's senses, perceptions, beliefs and judgments. It supports the artistic tendency to experience the world through sensory means, rather than strictly cognitive standards.

As a dance/movement therapist, I find more often than not that artistic measures are an instant inroad to those deep currents of meaning and knowledge that Moustakas speaks of. To my mind, the two separate research methodologies of artistic inquiry and heuristic study are stronger together than apart, as each complements and adds depth to the other. One's individual artistic expression is deeply personal, and is rooted in such things as life experience, training, and those deep reservoirs of thought, curiosity and wonderment that run through our artistic veins and spur us on to create. In my case especially, few are invited into this personal space of creativity, and few witness the outcomes of my creative process. To be able to share research in

this way seemed challenging yet, it seemed like the most authentic and genuine way to come to the truth from the questions I raised.

Participants

I, a twenty-seven year old, Caucasian female, was the sole participant in this study. As part of a heuristic study, I decided to use myself as the only research subject, so as to view experience from the vantage point of personal transformation, rather than looking through an alternative, societal lens.

According to Douglass and Moustakas (1985), "heuristics is concerned with meanings, not measurements; with essence, not appearance; with quality, not quantity; with experience, not behavior" (p.40). In keeping with this method of qualitative research, I wanted data collection to reflect meaning, essence, quality and experience, which I believe can occur in a variety of settings. This provides reasoning for the way I went about collecting data. These characteristics, although simply representing another side of the coin that includes measurement, appearance, quantity and behavior, provide a certain lens through which to view research, which comes with its own set of expectations and values. Therefore, I was more concerned with what was conducive to finding meaning, essence, quality and experience. What was to be measured was determined by where I found meaning based on experience, and not the other way around. Experiential learning was not confined to interviews with participants or any other demarcations, but rather was determined by my own experience, which, within the parameters of my study, could happen in various locations.

Procedure

At the beginning of my process of data collection, I mapped out a period of six weeks during which I would write a journal entry every weekday. Three of these entries, on Monday,

Wednesday, and Friday, would represent my experience with DMT in my professional setting in an inpatient adolescent behavioral health unit. I wrote the majority of these entries while at work, either directly after a group or completing patient charts. The remaining two entries, written on Tuesday and Thursday, focused on how DMT and my experience at work affected my experience with Bahá'í service in a neighborhood setting based on core activities. These entries were written mainly at home in the evening. At the end of each entry, which was about a third of a page, typed and single spaced, I re-read the entry and picked out salient keywords and concepts. These salient words and concepts were chosen for a variety of reasons. Often, they reflected the main concept that I wanted to highlight in the entry. The words and concepts were always present in the entry itself, but may not have represented the mode, signifying a key difference between qualitative and quantitative research. Naturally, the words and concepts highlighted at the end of each entry *were* repeated several times throughout the entry itself, as there was a correlation between the main concept of an entry and the number of times certain words and phrases having to do with that concept were used. I also chose key words and concepts at the end of each entry in an effort to summarize my experience in order to simplify data analysis.

I wished to distil the essence of my entries so that I would be able to see the most meaning in the least amount of words when I went back to analyze my data. Key words and concepts were written in bold directly following each entry. At the end of each week, I took these key words and concepts, and created movement in response to them. Movement was always improvised. The process surrounding movement became that I would read over all bold words and concepts at the end of the week, usually on Saturday, and then, with these concepts in mind begin to improvise movement. Due to the fact that I was the only participant in my study, I

was able to remain very flexible with the locations in which I created movement. For the most part, I moved in my living room, although there were times when I utilized other spaces, including my work office and the dance studios at Columbia College Chicago.

Before improvising, I took steps to enter the process in an objective manner, so as to minimize observer bias during data analysis, which is influenced by body knowledge and body prejudice (Moore & Yamamoto, 1998). These steps are further discussed in the data analysis section. Improvisation was done without music, so as to minimize factors that may influence movement. I also tried to remain mindful of my movement affinities, so that I would not automatically and subconsciously fall into them. This data served as a movement synopsis of my experience of the week, and offered me another medium through which to experience the words on the page. I recorded my movement phrases, which were largely improvised, with a camera, for further personal analysis. Movement data also served the purpose of providing a foundation for choreography that would become my final artistic presentation, fulfilling the artistic inquiry aspect of my research project.

Ethical concerns were very minimal due to the heuristic nature of my study, in which I was the sole participant. I did not include anyone else's opinion but my own in my data, and all data was truthful to my own experience.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed in several ways. I found myself following Moustakas's (1990) outline of a method of heuristic data analysis – immersion and incubation, illumination and explication, and creative synthesis. As an initial step, I first gathered and organized all data in one place before delving further into it. In other words, data was always kept in one place, and was constantly being organized. I then immersed myself in the data. Through reflection on each

journal entry, essential qualities and salient themes were illuminated and discovered. These themes and words would become the basis for my choreography phrases at the culmination of each week of entries. Explication took the form of pulling out the key words that repeated several times throughout an entry, in order to become a way of identifying the overall tone of the entry and provide a concrete and concise platform from which to improvise. With these concepts in mind, improvisation became much easier and less abstract. After analyzing data in this way, I took a step back from it to allow for new insights to arise before returning to the data. After synthesizing written material into movement improvisation at the end of each week, I did not return to individual entries until the end of the data collection process. According to Moustakas, time spent away from the data, the incubation phase, is a necessary part of data analysis that allows for fresh perspective (1990).

When I returned to my data at the end of the dual collection and analysis process, I placed all of the previously explicated words and concepts in chronological order, one above the other, in order to more clearly see the progression of thoughts. I was able to notice trends over the six weeks of data collection, which led to a general count of how many times each word was placed in bold over the course of data collection. Once this information was found, I plotted the information on several graphs, showing the usage of certain words over the six week period, as well as a general bar graph of the number of times each word was used. Through the repeated process of immersion into my data, incubation to let it take shape in my mind, and illumination and explication of essential themes, creative synthesis was able to occur simultaneously throughout the data collection and analysis process, giving birth to movement.

Movement analysis. Analyzing improvisational movement took on a bit of a different form. After each week, I watched the recording of my movement and made a note for each time I

observed a particular effort element. I also took note of whether or not I felt integrated or whole at the time of watching myself move. For example, if I had a subjective experience of integration while watching the video clip of my movement, I made a note of that subjective feeling. In addition to improvising itself, the process of observing my own movement was also influenced by my body knowledge and prejudice. This presented me with the challenge of having both improvised and observed my own movement through a certain lens that included a propensity towards indulgent qualities. When observing movement, we take on different, changing roles. At times we may are spectators, while at others, participants who are engaged in observation and action at the same time (Moore & Yamamoto, 1998). I found myself in the role of both active participant and observer, which affected my movement analysis by adding more kinesthetic input and factors to the process of observation. When I watched myself improvise, for example, I attuned to my own movement, rather than someone else's process. Awareness of my intimate connection to both the movement and observational experience helped me to remain mindful of creating structures within which to record my analysis. Using the same format for documenting my analysis was one such method to systematize experience (See Appendix C). Selection of movement parameters to observe was also an important aspect in minimizing observer bias. Had I not demarcated certain elements to focus on, namely LMA effort elements, I may well have had a broad spectrum of observations, making intra-rater reliability even less probable.

As stated above, I also made note of my own feeling of wholeness and integration after watching myself move. These were peculiar parameters to quantify. How did I know I felt whole and integrated after improvisation? What was the deciding factor that finally told me yes or no? Certainly, some of it must have had to do with how unconsciously or consciously integrated I felt throughout the rest of the day prior to improvisation. Had I had a hectic or dis-regulatory day at

work, it was my guess that the resulting improvisation might have yielded a less integrated feeling that could be attuned to and re-experienced during a review of the movement. Somatically, a feeling of integration was the result of free flow and successive phrasing. Although not falling into the Effort category, I noticed these elements in correlation to a feeling of wholeness after re-watching movement. Curiously, as learned throughout my coursework at Columbia College Chicago, these two elements are found under the Body category in LMA, and represent adjacent body parts that move one after the other (Konie, 2011). After improvisation came either an unsettled, restless feeling, or a satisfied, calm feeling of completion. If I felt satisfied and calm, most of the time it was due to the feeling of having had an integrated moving experience. Unsettled and restless were normally associated with having had a less integrated moving experience.

In all, my findings resulted in a deepened understanding of integration, something I have long-striven to understand. To minimize observer bias, I remained aware of the ultimate purpose of my research, which resulted in creation of repeatable structures in which to record observations. I also kept in mind my dual role of observer and participant, which provided insight into why I may have interpreted certain movements in a certain manner. While some aspects of my research gave way to results I had expected, others came as a surprise from which to glean further insight about my experience as a dance/movement therapist and in offering Bahá'í-inspired service in a Chicago neighborhood.

Chapter Four: Results

In this heuristic artistic inquiry, I set out to explore the relationship of integration to two large facets of my life: my professional career as a dance/movement therapist, and my involvement with specific acts of service in a Bahá'í-inspired context centered on the concept of community building. I ventured to hypothesize that I would find profound commonalities and further ways to integrate both parts of life; in short, to see the DMT in service and service in DMT.

As humans are wont to fragment the plethora of activities they are involved in, I decided instead to focus on the fluidity and seamlessness that could be found if one chose to focus their attention thus. Another conjecture I had, based on my understanding of current messages from the Universal House of Justice and my experience so far working as a dance/movement therapist with adolescents, was that I would observe a special emphasis on or need for fighting effort qualities in both avenues of life. I further hypothesized that my data would yield greater understanding and insight through choreography and movement done in light of the data itself.

This research aimed to answer the questions: how does DMT affect service in a Bahá'í context, and what elements of service are woven into my work as a dance/movement therapist? How do the specific effort elements of space, weight, time and flow factor into both arenas of life? Finally, what is my overall experience of integration between these two areas, and how does it manifest in movement performance?

My findings more than answered the questions I had originally conceived. They illuminated the answers and provided added insight that only comes as a result of a process of systematic planning, action and reflection, combined with reliance on that process itself. Looking over my data after the six weeks it took to gather, I noticed several qualitative and quantitative

points, as well as trends over time. Choreographic data provided yet another inroad into the process, and added perspective which deepen what was already taking place.

Journaling

   Trends across time. As noted in my procedures, I kept a running written log of my experiences with coherence and integration both from a professional and service perspective. At the outset of my written journey, language took on a more rigid tone qualitatively, as I struggled to assimilate the concept that this was *my* experience I was chronicling, and not a journal article to become a part of someone else's meta-analysis. Entries were clearly marked work day or service, which I was later to realize was a subtle form of fragmentation in itself. I also now recognize the role of fragmentation, possibly better-termed systematization in this case, for our brain to organize and make sense of the world. I believe there is a difference between the two that lies in our level of awareness and ability to reflect on their implications.

   The trend of labeling the days continued throughout the majority of the 6-week data collection process. I also kept track of the quality of language used in my entries by combing through my writing and picking out salient words, or phrases that seemed to sum up the tone of the day. These words and phrases were then put into categories. Some words and phrases were quite obviously DMT words, while some were distinctly service words. As I write this, it is accompanied by a somewhat sarcastic inner monologue, due to the fact that with time, it became increasingly difficult to segregate language into distinctive categories. What defined what was this, and not that? After all, was not the point to find the underlying interconnectedness of all things? Initially, I defined DMT words as those I had learned while in my masters level classes at Columbia College Chicago. For example, the words direct and deceleration were words learned in association with Laban's effort elements, which by default made them DMT words. Words

such as justice and mercy I associated more with service, as I associate these words with many of the Bahá'í Writings. However, during data analysis, it quickly became apparent that this was a false dichotomy that would not serve my purposes. It is more correct to say that there are different lenses though which to view any of the words written over the six weeks of data collection. Words such as direct and deceleration could be viewed through either the lens of DMT or the lens of service as much as mercy and justice could be viewed through a DMT lens.

By the end of the data collection process, I had stopped labeling the days as either work or service. I found myself writing more about my experience as a human being, operating under the same conceptual framework in different settings. The experience of writing became more relaxed, accompanied by a sense of free flow, and was perhaps a more accurate reflection of reality than at the outset, when the process felt more anxious and frenetic. Which lens I was operating through on any given day was apparent in my writing, but not overly emphasized. Although I continued to color code words as either DMT or service words, this, too, was a minor feature of my entries, and only served to remind me of the lens I was using at the time of writing them.

Specific data points and salient features of language. On a slightly more quantitative level, I found it intriguing to witness the shift of word usage over time. I counted the number of times certain words were used throughout my entries, and noticed shifts in word usage over time. The word used most often was direct, occurring eleven times across thirty one entries. Second was free flow, occurring nine times across thirty one entries. Both words appeared fairly evenly across the 6 weeks, with direct appearing twice in week 1, once in week 2, four times in week 3, twice in weeks 4 and 5, and zero times in week 6. Free flow occurred once in weeks 1 and 2,

twice in week 3, once in week 4, twice in week 5, and once again in week 6. These figures can be seen in Appendix B.

Other words most frequently used throughout my entries included compassion, understanding, and acceleration, each with five occurrences. The words bound flow, structure, and capacity-building each occurred four times, and increasing pressure, assumptions, and sustained each occurred three times. All other words did not appear with any marked consistency.

I found Bahá'í concepts present in every one of my workday entries, and DMT concepts in every one of my service entries. In short, concepts from both facets of life were present and influential in every single entry. There was never a point at which the two were not mutually reinforcing each other. A breakdown of the concepts found in each entry is given in Figure 1, in Appendix B. Please note that, as mentioned earlier, it became difficult at times to separate which concept belonged to each category; however, an attempt was made to remember the frame of mind the concepts were written in order to accurately portray the lens through which I was writing at the time.

One can see clearly that both conceptual lenses factor into the experience between service and professional life as a dance/movement therapist. If we analyze further, we can see the connections between the concepts in the Bahá'í (service) category and the work category. For example, in entry 11, which happened to be a workday, the concepts in either category reinforce each other. Salient words in this entry included structure, focus, pattern, heart to heart connection, goals, and compassion on the service side, and directing spacing, bound flow, and sagittal plane in the work column. To enable focus, structure and patterns, it is helpful to use directing space and bound flow. Perhaps heart to heart connection and goals correlate to

advancing in the sagittal plane, where one must reach out toward goals, as well as towards people in an attempt to form relationship. The intervention used on this particular day was a direct result of Bahá'í-inspired materials related to the perception of justice and beauty in the world.

One of my hypotheses starting my research was that I would discover more importance placed on fighting qualities within LMA effort elements. In an analysis of the above words, words describing fighting qualities (directing space, increasing pressure, acceleration and bound flow) occurred more than words describing indulgent qualities (indirecting space, decreasing pressure, deceleration and free flow). Words directly describing fighting qualities occurred twenty-nine times, while words directly describing indulgent qualities occurred sixteen times. In entries where indulging qualities did not appear explicitly, there still appeared words I would normally associate with indulging qualities in the service section. For example, in entry 2, the words in the DMT column are decision, fighting qualities, and time. There are no specific indulging qualities present. However, in the service column, the words justice, compassion, urgency, and calm determination appear. I associate justice and urgency with fighting qualities, but compassion and calm determination with indulgent qualities, which are absent in their explicit form in this entry.

My associations of certain non-LMA associated words, such as justice, to their LMA equivalents, merits an explanation. To associate words such as justice, compassion, and urgency to LMA terms is in no way an objective fact, and should not be treated as such. Compassion, for example, is not inherently connected to any one indulging quality. My associations are colored by my world-view, which has been molded by nearly three decades of life experience. My experience of compassion, for example, brings to mind the qualities found in my mother, which

in turn make me think of decreasing pressure, deceleration and free flow. Similar associations were made, based on my own personal experience, for other words such as justice and calm determination. The process of determining what words and phrases meant one thing, and not another, was heavily influenced by observer-bias, my own experience of these words, and my movement affinities, and would not necessarily be replicated across others' experiences.

Other examples of non-LMA words continue to show how I associated certain words with certain LMA terms. In entry 14, the DMT column indicates the fighting qualities of directing space and acceleration, while the service column shows challenge, education, understanding, nobility, and motivation. I associate the words challenge, education, and motivation with the words directing space and acceleration, while I do not associate the concepts of understanding or nobility with either fighting or indulging qualities. In entry 21, the DMT word free flow appears, with associated service words being creating space, capacity building, discovery, and relinquishing control. I associate creating space, discovery, and the abandonment of control with free flow, while I associate capacity-building more with fighting qualities. In entry 17, DMT words include the indulging quality sustained time, while service words are identity, coherence, and focus. I recognize a connection between sustained time and coherence, as coherence is a process, but do not as readily see the connection to focus, which I associate more with directing space.

Over time, and with increased depth into my experience reflecting on coherence, the occurrence of both indulging and fighting qualities dwindled, and were replaced by more universal, less specified words. The tendency to say what was one thing but not another lessened, and in my last three entries, there was a complete lack of effort element words. Broader effort categories began to appear, as in entries 25 and 26, where the words time, flow, and fighting

qualities appeared, but not specific polarities of these elements. My last three entries also introduced the body category within the LMA system, which includes body, effort, space and shape qualities. Within the body category we find the concept of core connectivity, which specifically addresses the natural integration and coherence of the body on a physical level. Once the categories of work and service fell away from my writing, the concept of bodily integration and connection surfaced; an entity on its own that made sense on an intuitive and objective level. It was in correlation with this broader body based category that the word integration began to manifest more frequently in the service category, occurring four times in the last four entries, and only once in the entries preceding. I found the word coherence with increasing frequency as my writing advanced as well, in entries 15, 17, 20, and 29. Other words that characterized my later entries were body, mind, spirit (entry 26 and 29), soul and synthesis (entry 29) and empathy and shared understanding (entry 27). None of these words occurred in entries prior to entry 26.

Moving

Movement improvisation. At the end of each week of journaling, I read over my entries from the week, and then improvised movement. Although I read through the entries, as well as the salient words I had bolded at the end, I tried not to fixate on direct translation of the words into movement, and rather let movement arise as a reaction to, or result from, what I had read. Movement improvisation lasted between two to five minutes, and was always done without music or other outside sound, so as to minimize extraneous influences to the data. Movement improvisation was recorded on a simple point and shoot camera. Being able to synthesize the more intellectual and heady part of my data in an artistic manner provided increased insight and offered another perspective on the research. In addition to the results gleaned from journaling, several interesting phenomena occurred over the six weeks of movement.

I did not re-watch the recordings of my improvisation until the end of the six-week period of data collection. While watching, it became apparent early on that improvisation and integration were linked. I felt as though I was watching a whole body moving, and not just the integers. Over time, just as my journal entries became more fluid and true to my actual thought process, my movement, too, became a more true expression of my experience of integration. At the end of six weeks, I filled out a simple movement assessment coding sheet for each recording, in which I simply made a note of various effort elements and other movement elements when I observed them in my movement. I invariably observed all of the effort elements that I listed in my journal entries, as well as those not as apparent in my writing. For example, I mentioned above that fighting qualities were slightly more prevalent than indulging qualities throughout my journal entries. However, this was not the case when re-watching my movement. Rather, I found that there was a much greater balance between effort elements observed. In my fourth movement recording, which correlated to the fourth week of journaling, I wrote the words free and bound flow 2 times each. Other words included directing space, used 4 times, indirecting space, used 2 times, increasing pressure, used once, decreasing pressure, used once, and sustained and accelerated timing, used 2 times each. Also, beginning at the end of the fourth week, when core connectivities and the Body category of LMA began to make more of an appearance, I began to notice these things in my movement more readily. This trend continued for the fifth and sixth weeks of movement, with more emphasis placed on bodily integration rather than effort elements only. An example of the notes I took on movement improvisation can be found in Appendix C.

Overall, as the lines became more blurred between work and service in my entries, my movement improvisation clips, as well, began to look more integrated to my eye. With more moving experience in relation to my thesis came more comfort and an increased improvisational

spirit. True, I had been improvising since the beginning, but the amount of mental activity surrounding improvisation was altered. A sense of intuition and instinct replaced the conscious thinking that had previously impinged on movement. Bound flow no longer implied a bound mind during the process, whereas, at the beginning of the process, this was more the case. I believe that a fuller understanding of integration achieved through experience, reflection, movement and journaling was reflected through my improvisational endeavors.

MOVED thesis performance. To fulfill the artistic inquiry component of my thesis, and as a portion of my results, I performed in the annual DMT student-run dance show, MOVED: Still Moving, which took place on November 30, 2012, in the Hamlin Park Field House in Chicago. A DVD of the performance is attached.

I performed a six-minute solo, *In-te-gral,* which consisted mainly of structured improvisation. I was accompanied during the first half by my husband, Sana Rezai, who read excerpts from Baháʼí-inspired materials relating humankind to the human body. The excerpts are given in Appendix D. This first half represented the various components of bodily integration, namely, Hackney's core connectivities of breath, core-distal, head-tail, upper-lower, and body-half. The second half of my piece, danced to *Downstairs* by Hey Rosetta!, reflected the last and most developmentally advanced core connectivity, cross-lateral, in which movement and extremities cross the mid-line of the body. This part of the piece was entirely improvised, with its only structure coming from the words integrated, improvised, and cross-lateral. I realized during the process of performing that improvisation and a feeling of integration are very much connected for me. In the process of synthesizing choreography, I had difficulty choreographing repeatable steps that also felt integrated and cohesive. When I slipped into improvisation, I felt very complete and whole. Repeatable, choreographed movements felt mechanical, lifeless. My

subjective experience of improvisation was present and congruent. Improvisation happens in the entirely in the present. It does not exist outside of the moment, either in the past or future. Whether or not it is re-created is based on conscious effort. In my experience, it was not entered with the intention of re-creation. I allowed my body to inform my mind, rather than my mind influence the course of my steps, which resulted in a kind of freedom and congruence of motion that allowed the various parts of my body to coalesce into collective effort towards movement.

The ability to watch the recorded version of the performance offered another perspective. I was able to witness the outcome of a process that felt integrated, but did it appear integrated to my eye? Did it relay integration to the audience? Watching a piece is always different from the experience of moving itself. Re-visiting *In-te-gral* as a spectator naturally elicited a different mental response, which was slightly critical in nature. Improvisation is not perfect. It leaves room for both error and experimentation. It allows for lines of exploration that choreography rejects. Watching myself improvise on stage was at first a bit shocking, as I did not have a good mental map of what had actually occurred on stage, and then humbling, as I realized that what I witnessed as I stared at my computer screen was not my choreographed interpretation of integration, but the embodied experience thereof.

Had I choreographed integration, my performance surely would have looked different. Watching my performance helped me realize that our mental interpretations of things are not always congruent with the stories our bodies tell through movement. The way in which we see our own actions is not always the way they are relayed to the outside world. In the case of my performance, I had a choice to make after viewing what felt integrated at the time of performance, but did not measure up to what I would have choreographed had I been given the word integration as a prompt. Was what I witnessed in the recording in fact not integrated?

Should I reject what internally felt integrated on stage for what I thought integration should look like? Or rather, should I change my mental interpretation of bodily integration to fit what I had just witnessed? Perhaps my embodied performance of integration was a more true representation of integration than anything I could have choreographed. These were points of discovery and questions I had not anticipated at the beginning of my research, and provided ample material to ponder over the coming weeks while I began my writing process. The continuation of this pondering, and the implications of my results are further discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion

I had several questions and hypotheses guiding my research. I wondered what integration looked like between my profession as a dance/movement therapist and living a Bahá'í life. I wondered how activity in one area affected activity in the other, and how each played out in the context of the other. I hypothesized that service, guided by the Bahá'í Writings, within the context of a neighborhood, would influence my outlook on work within a behavioral health hospital with adolescents. I also surmised that my DMT training used within the context of a behavioral health hospital would influence the lens through which I view service.

What Does Integration Look Like?

My findings shed light on all of these questions, and illuminated areas for further exploration. The question of what integration looked like between my profession and service guided by the Bahá'í Faith was answered through my journaling experience as well as through improvisational experience collected throughout the six weeks of data collection. Integration looked like balance between Effort elements, with no one grossly outweighing the other. It looked like a gradual shift from detailed, fragmented categories to a more universal understanding. Categories became broader and mental boundaries were slowly replaced by a more open landscape. In my writing, the countries of acceleration and deceleration became the continent of time.

Along with an increased understanding of coherence came a decrease in specificity. Other categories shifted entirely. I found connections between the LMA category of Effort and the category of Body. If my research had gone further, I wonder what the implications would be for the other LMA categories of Space and Shape? The fact that my perception shifted during the research process furthers the notion that higher degrees of integration, or a deeper understanding

thereof, was achieved. When one understands something at a deeper level, ones frame of mind changes. It can be said that a paradigm shift has occurred. One can see the bigger picture, or describe the same thing in different ways than they could previously.

  Fragmentation, systematization, integration and coherence. In Chapter 4 of this thesis, I briefly explored the subtle differences between fragmentation and systematization. I posited that fragmentation may at times be confused with systematization, which our brains need in order to function properly. If our brains did not systematize, we would have a continuous, overwhelming barrage of input and information flooding us at all times. Perhaps, then, the difference between fragmentation and systematization is that systems recognize the interconnectedness, or coherence, between the parts. Systems realize that at times, one part may be in higher demand, while another part takes a backseat for the benefit of the whole.

  If we view fragmentation and systematization thus, it would seem that integration may not be used as I intended it in this thesis. If integration is the complement of fragmentation, it may simply mean that all the parts are together, yet not interdependent. Coherence, on the other hand, if seen as the complement to systematization, would imply a harmonious interconnectedness, which captures the essence of this thesis.

  This concept manifested in my research in that coherence still retained systematic organization. Although categories such as work day and service fell away, and the LMA effort elements gave way to a different LMA category, organization and systematization remained. Coherence was achieved in some small way, where the parts were still present within a systematized structure, and it was evident that they supported and interacted with each other. At the same time, the evolution of certain elements did not signal their fragmentation, but rather their journey toward coherence.

How Does One Area of Life Influence the Other, and Vice Versa?

As to the interplay between both areas of endeavor in my life, this too was explored and answered through my research findings. I found that, overall, these two facets of life were inseparable. In my journal entries, I realized that concepts associated with service played out in my writing about DMT, and vice versa. Sometimes I became alarmed that many of the DMT concepts explored, especially at the beginning, were indicative of fighting qualities within the LMA category of Effort. This was what, of course, I thought I might find when I first set out to research integration. I felt I would find a special emphasis on fighting qualities, although perhaps somewhere in my subconscious I had hoped I would find more of a balance, as my movement is affined toward indulging qualities. I also believe, however, that as a result, I looked for fighting qualities more than I normally would. I tried to limit this bias as much as possible by being conscious of it while writing and moving, and by trying as best I could to objectively look at, and consider all sides of situations. Fighting qualities also constitute a theme in my life, as my affinity is toward the indulging qualities of decreasing pressure, decelerating in time, free flow and indirecting space. I have always been conscious of the development of my fighting qualities, due to my own recognition of the need for balance and at the suggestion of others. Logically, I recognize the need for the moderation of both fighting and indulging qualities.

When faced with the findings, I began looking for indulging qualities in my writing as well. I came to the conclusion that, oftentimes, they were expressed through the concepts addressed in my writing about service. For example, in my first entry, I wrote about both mercy and directing space. If I were to give an Effort quality to mercy, it would certainly not be directing spacing. Again, this is based on my individual interpretation of mercy. For another individual the connection between mercy and directing space might be a very natural one. This

realization led me to another thought. Perhaps the Effort polarities were more connected than I previously thought. I previously thought that indulging qualities led to concepts such as mercy and compassion, but my findings rather showed that fighting qualities were often correlated. Therefore, perhaps mercy has a direct quality, or compassion an element of increasing pressure.

Another option was that these concepts, such as mercy, compassion, etc, included elements of both fighting and indulging qualities, and that I had simply written in favor of one. After all, my foray into improvisation had shown me that my movement indicated the use of both fighting and indulging qualities on a fairly balanced level. It could not be simplified as I had originally tried to do. I also recognized that I did not write as much about indulging qualities, most likely because of my own bias towards fighting qualities. It is quite possible that had I been more honest with myself while writing, I would have placed more objective and realistic emphasis on indulging qualities. Again, my movement favored both indulging and fighting qualities, which I found interesting, as I believe movement often tells the story our conscious mind does not. Going forward, I would like to investigate the roles of both fighting and indulging Effort elements in the conceptual framework constructed by the Bahá'í Writings.

In continuation of the discussion of the effect of Bahá'í concepts and DMT concepts on each other, I oftentimes noticed that Bahá'í concepts seemed to affect my work more than DMT concepts affected my service. This could be due to several things. First, the amount of time I have been conscious of service within the framework of concepts shaped by the Bahá'í Writings has been much longer than my time as a dance/movement therapist. My framework for action and lens through which I look are guided by these concepts, rather than the concepts of weight, space, time and flow. Secondly, my original conception for this research stemmed from my involvement in service, and a desire to research its effects on all aspects of my life. Not only did

this research project result from a desire to experience higher levels of integration, but my choice to study DMT in the first place also came as a result of involvement in service. Therefore, my conceptual framework and all decisions made therein have revolved back around to a connection to the Bahá'í Writings.

Ironically, it has always been challenging for me to connect with my body, and live with increased awareness of my own movement patterns and those of others. I have always been attracted to movement, and come from a movement background in ballet. I can connect with my body in the sense that I can tell when I am holding my breath, and can be acutely aware of the technicalities and consequences of muscle movement while dancing. I believe this still represents only the surface of body connection. Although I am often aware of what my body is doing or not doing, I am not always so in tune with the implications of movement, either for others or myself. For example, I may notice I am holding my breath, but may not always make the further connection that it is because I am anxious. I normally live in the realm of thought, and at times miss the subtle cues and inroads offered by the body. In the future, I would be interested to shift my research focus even more to concepts found in DMT and observe them in various settings.

While the Bahá'í Faith certainly influences practice as a dance/movement therapist, what I learned through movement throughout this process surely arises in service. Improvisation, which became an integral aspect of my thesis, is found within the structures and systems set forth in the Bahá'í Faith. Earlier in this thesis, I explored the implications of Abdu'l-Baha's quote explaining that we must be aware of the needs of the time and situation in which we live. This calls for a conscious response to the need for flexibility and improvisation. Within the systems and structures that help service in a neighborhood reach its fullest expression, improvisation is used daily. Just as my journal entries evolved over time, and allowed room for flexibility while

remaining organized and structured, so too does service allow for the same levels of improvisation and flexibility.

Although themes of structure may have been spoken of largely in light of service, and improvisation attributed to movement, we find room for these two elements in both DMT and service. In both, there is need for structure. Pioneers in DMT had frameworks under which they operated, which led to specific methods and approaches to treatment. In the same way, the Universal House of Justice provides an evolving framework for action under which service is carried out. In both DMT and service there is also need for improvisation, and real time analysis and response to situations. DMT groups must remain sensitive to the needs of clients, just as a Bahá'í children's class must remain vigilant to the needs of the children. Structure does not come at the expense of improvisation and adaptability. They work together in both arenas of activity to bring about the fullest expression of progress for humanity, whether in a Bahá'í activity, or within the context of a DMT group.

Implications of the Performance

My performance possibly shed the most light on my entire research experience, as it resulted in a realization outside the original scope of my project. The performance itself gave me an opportunity to experience what integration looked and felt like on an embodied level. The realization came upon finding that integration was not choreographed; rather it was improvised. Coherence was not something I could rehearse methodically over and over again. It was something that was guided by concepts, but not a prescription.

My piece evolved over time, much as my work and service do based on the needs of the situation. There were common threads throughout my piece while practicing it over several weeks before the performance, and there were certain movement motifs that appeared often and

with increasing regularity, but there was also room for flexibility within the structure. At one point in the performance I came close to falling. Had this been a choreographed piece, I would have had to quickly choreograph around it, or admit my error and leave it to the audience's scrutiny. Because this piece left room for flexibility, however, it was integrated and assimilated into the piece itself. The Universal House of Justice (2010a), in a message dated 28 December, 2010 to the Bahá'ís of the world, asserts that "Progress is achieved through the dialectic of crisis and victory, and setbacks are inevitable…Temporary imbalances…are intrinsic to the process, and they can be adjusted over time" (p. 4).

How does this discovery of improvisational integration translate to my workplace? The difference between planning and improvisation has long been a topic of thought for me. The notion that improvisation under a set of concepts can actually provide more comfort and coherence for me comes as a welcome and long over-due display of something that was always implicitly, and a bit sub-consciously, known to me. I have seen it play out in my workplace, yet was not always able to consciously reflect on it. I believe that continuing to hone this ability and reflect on its effects will be of vital importance as I delve further into my work as a dance/movement therapist.

The ways in which I have experienced improvisation in my work place so far have been many and varied. On a general level, I notice I have far less anxiety over walking into a room full of patients when I have broader concepts leading my thinking, rather than a detailed plan. When working with a high level of nuanced detail, there is more room for things to not go as planned. As is inevitably the case, when something does not go as rehearsed, it is much harder to recover, as I have spent the majority of the time planning and less on the ability to adapt to circumstances.

There is also a level of laxity that leads to anxiety when entering a group session. If there is no plan whatsoever, the framework fades away, and there is no concept to guide the group towards anything productive. I have therefore found that improvisation within bounds seems to allow for the highest level of efficacy. This is especially true with patients that I see in individual sessions. The ability to improvise and cater to the needs of the day have proven very important, and also allows for a higher level of attunement with patients not as easily attained when I have my own agenda.

In service, improvisation plays out similarly. There is always a framework to guide action; there are always concepts governing service, such as participatory learning and capacity-building in order to take charge of ones own learning process. "Of particular significance is its [the institute process] organizing principle: developing capacity to serve the Cause and humanity in a process likened to walking a path of service. This conception shapes both content and structure" (Universal House of Justice, 2011, p. 2). Furthermore, the concept of community-building, and the diffusion of knowledge to the grassroots, is key to the process of growth within a neighborhood or community. This cannot be achieved without improvisation. "Content and structure must emerge out of continued collective experience in the field, an experience that is not haphazard or subject to the forces of personal preference…" (Universal House of Justice, 2011, p. 2). Therefore, it is impossible for one person to make all the plans. Service is a collective endeavor, guided by the concepts found in the Bahá'í Writings.

Connection to the Literature

Hart (2002) stated "one of the most common mistakes we make where religion or spirituality are concerned is to think of them as a realm apart…an extracurricular activity without vital bearing on the practical business of daily living" (p. 1). This notion was specifically

explored through my research. I wanted to find out how this notion did not complete the whole picture. My purpose was to find my religion's connection to the practical business of daily living; to show that they are very much a part of the same realm. I found that they were inextricable from each other. One cannot have a framework of beliefs that lives separate from daily life, as those beliefs, in fact, guide daily life. Even if a therapist claims not to introduce religious belief into their profession, I ask the question: why did the therapist initially choose the profession? I know that, personally, it was due to my belief.

By the end of my research, I found that these two separate realms that Hart mentions became more the expression of one realm than I had originally thought. Strawn (2007) asked the question as to how to integrate both religion and psychology. While my research may not provide quite the model he was looking for, I believe that it sheds further light on the idea that both fields influence each other on quite a profound level. However, my study was on my own experience. It highlighted an implicit and personal process of illumination and discovery, and to make this experience explicit might necessitate the model Strawn so desired. I also believe, however, that the model is often already at work; we must only strive to make it known to ourselves and others. What many of us are often so scared to admit within the walls of our professions, that we secretly derive inspiration, strength and meaning from our soul's connection to God as we meander through our work day, is only veiled by the omission of words we dare not speak: God, religion, prayer. Actions, on the other hand, reveal that the model referenced by Strawn is alive under the surface. If it was nurtured more, what limitless potential might be released?

As we know from Foerschner (2010), mental health was intimately associated with religion at one point in time. Many of the practices and models we promote today have their

basis in early forms of mental health, all tracing back to the Quakers in the early 1800's. With his strong views on religion, (1927), Freud may have discouraged the language of religion from mental health practice, yet religion's influence remained. Maslow (1964) noted the validity of both science and religion working together in the field of psychology. Were I to leave behind the framework of the Bahá'í Faith, or the scientific advances made in the field of DMT, I certainly would not be the same therapist I am now. I cannot conceive of therapy without religion, as many of the values already well-esteemed in therapy are common to religious practice. For example, the concept of unconditional positive regard (See Appendix A) can be seen in Abdu'l-Bahá's quote "show forth love and affection, wisdom and compassion, faithfulness and unity towards all, without any discrimination" (as cited in Bahá'í International Community, 2001, p. 13). Empathy may be understood in light of such Universal House of Justice quotes on the nature of conversations, describing them as occurring "between two souls…distinguished by the depth of understanding achieved and the nature of the relationship established" (2010, p. 1). My research showed quite clearly the blurring of lines between work and service, especially in the concluding weeks of data collection. By the end, it made less and less sense to fragment the two areas of life. They seemed only to be different lenses through which to view one reality. There was a dynamic interplay between the two; they exerted influence on and molded each other.

My discoveries on integration itself were also corroborated by the literature I found. Hackney (2002) makes the link between living life effectively and the connectivity of the body. In my research, I found this very much to be true, although not until the final stages of data collection. As an eventual and organic outcome of my explorations into integration, I naturally landed upon the integration of the body as an underlying basis for any effective means of life integration. Abdu'l-Bahá's (1921/1978) quote stating that a sound body is requisite for a sound

mind also wrung true to my research process. My body found soundness in improvisation, which is where my mind also found a sense of quiet and balance.

Another area of my research had much to do with fighting qualities, as discussed earlier in this thesis. It connected to the literature on fighting qualities in many ways, but also highlighted a gap in the literature I had previously chosen. I focused mainly on fighting qualities in the initial parts of my research, as I supposed these to be more salient than indulging qualities. I minimized indulging qualities as I figured they would not play a large role in my research, a large misconception on my part. I did find much in my study to support literature on fighting qualities. After all, there were whole sections in Universal House of Justice (2010) messages that addressed the need for intensity, coordination, organization, and systematic action. I found that fighting qualities factored into my six weeks of data collection as well, and were, in fact, very necessary. In my performance, fighting qualities can also be found, and of course add to the notion of integration within movement.

The gap comes in the literature on indulging qualities, which are also highly important. What does it mean to have fighting qualities without their counterpart of indulging qualities? In my data collection phase, I felt that indulging qualities were more apparent in my movement phrases at the end of each week than in my writing. Even when improvising with words such as justice, which I would normally associate with fighting qualities, many indulging qualities showed themselves. In the Bahá'í Writings, there is a strong connection between words I would normally associate with fighting qualities, such as justice, and words I would naturally associate with indulging qualities, such as mercy, although this was absent from my initial foray into the literature. If we delve a bit further, however, we find that in the example of justice, many writings list mercy not far away. "The Kingdom of God is founded upon equity and justice, and

also upon mercy, compassion, and kindness to every living soul" (Abdu'l-Bahá, 1982b, p. 158). I believe that, although my mind was focused very much on the quest for fighting qualities, my movement told a more integrated and full story. Perhaps it is easier for the body to integrate than the mind.

Limitations of the Research

Naturally, limitations to this research project were identified throughout the process. The foremost limitation was the lack of research participants other than myself. Due to the design of this research project, data and outcomes were based on my own subjective experience, something I have traditionally been trained to steer clear of, as it is not scientific. Qualitative research allows the opportunity to experience something from a different perspective, that being, the experience itself. The limitation in the case of qualitative research is, then, that every individual experiences the same phenomenon differently. There can be no standardized account of any one experience. In the methods section of this thesis, I briefly addressed the fact that this was a heuristic study, taken from the perspective of one individual. Although it does not necessarily represent a universal experience, the value of this research lies in its ability to shed light on one individual's journey, which may offer insight into that of others.

A multitude of life experiences, accumulated from the time of my childhood, contributed to my bias as a researcher. I mentioned at one point that my affinities within the Effort category heavily influenced my experience of movement and intervention within my profession. At another I determined that the Bahá'í Faith has influenced the framework through which I think, speak and act, and it is impossible to write or view this thesis without adding the qualifier that it is from a Bahá'í standpoint. This can definitely be viewed as a bias, as it influenced every aspect

of my thesis. Of course, my movement background and training in DMT also influenced the entire body of research, although it is through a spiritual lens that I view movement as well.

I believe that one of the largest confounding factors to my research were represented by both my body knowledge and prejudice. Body knowledge includes what we know about movement, and is based on the generalizations we make based on our own movement experience. Body prejudice, on the other hand, involves the application of negative or positive regard for certain movements. It may lead to the projection of meaning onto certain movements, regardless of context (Moore & Yamamoto, 1988). In this case, my body prejudice positively favored fighting qualities, and viewed my affinity for indulging qualities in a negative light. Because of this, the concepts of integration on a body and mind level were influenced, and I placed more emphasis on the development of fighting qualities in order to achieve integration. The only way to approach integration on a pure level, in my opinion, would be to conduct this study having had no previous movement experience, which is, of course, nearly impossible. Everyone has a different relationship with movement, and all have movement affinities, or effort elements they favor or gravitate towards. What is important is to be aware of affinities, and how they affect our world-view, when entering into research that specifically addresses integration of all affinities.

My body prejudice against indulging qualities most certainly affected how I collected data, both journaling and moving. Integration in my writing first favored fighting qualities, and favored them slightly throughout the duration of my research. As someone who has constantly gravitated toward indulging qualities, I tend to downplay them, always seeking that which I do not possess: in this case, affinity towards fighting qualities. I realized after my journaling process that fighting qualities were spoken of more often, and often in a more favorable manner, than

indulging qualities, although integration itself does not favor one over the other. Rather, I believe integration calls for equal strength in all effort elements, and wisdom to discern when one is necessary over another. There is no effort element that is inherently better than another, for all can form the basis for either constructive or destructive behavior.

My effort affinities also colored how I conducted research while reviewing related literature. I found myself looking for fighting qualities within some sources, especially in the case of Bahá'í literature, where I have noticed a plethora of language describing fighting qualities. With this insight, I re-examined the literature on a closer level, and found that in reality, there was fairly equal use of language supportive of indulging qualities, although not always in the way I had traditionally thought of them. I realized that I often think of indulging qualities in a negative light. When I hear the term indirecting space, the word scattered instantly comes to mind. In the Bahá'í Writings, however, there are many references to the favorability of indirectness when the situation calls for it. Sustained time, or deceleration, was also something I was sure I would not find in the Bahá'í Writings in any kind of positive light yet, upon closer examination, realized that there were, indeed, references to marking time, and to multiple processes that evolve over long periods of time with sustained effort. Therefore, my foundation of literature was viewed through a certain lens. Luckily, I realized this before completing my review of the literature, and was able to address some of the holes in my review. The realization that my own body prejudice shaped my ability to remain objective was humbling, and will no doubt encourage me to investigate the realities of things on a deeper level in the future.

There are, of course, a number of confounding factors and limitations that may be mentioned in this research project. Another has to do with the general setting in which research took place. Although I focused on my experience with integration, it would, invariably, have

looked different had I been working or serving in a different setting. The settings I was writing and moving about were fixed and specific, and reiterate the fact that this research highlights only a small sliver of human existence under the category of integration.

One last aspect that may be viewed as a limitation was the space in which I performed. I danced as part of a larger, student-run dance show, which, although highly convenient, minimized the emphasis on the research nature of the piece. It placed the piece in a broader context, so that it did not stand alone as a thesis performance. Although I do not view this as having had a major impact on my performance, I do believe it changed some factors. Had I been able to control all aspects of the performance, it would have been longer, first and foremost. I would have had the opportunity to speak with the audience and answer questions, which may have deepened my own understanding of the performance. I would have been able to explain where the idea for the piece originated, and in general would have had the opportunity for more dialogue with others directly about the piece, which I believe would have furthered the amount of learning around the performance.

Additional Considerations

There were several aspects that were not originally conceived of at the outset of this process. I originally approached this thesis on a somewhat cerebral level, believing that I would research integration on an informational and mental level. Movement was simply another means of collecting data, and more meant to corroborate written information. I was moving and writing *about* integration, rather than moving and writing with integration as my guide. It is a subtle difference, but one that I believe made a profound mark on the way I went through the process. Had I gone through this research with the thought that I would explore integration in an

integrated manner, I believe the outcome may have somehow been different, or more informed, from the outset.

Another realization coming out of the experience was that I did not have an informed idea of how the length of the data collection phase should be determined. I decided on a six-week period of time rather arbitrarily, and gleaned insight from previous research projects on approximate lengths of data collection. In retrospect, I feel I could have relied more on experience in other endeavors more familiar to me for clues as to how to set time parameters for my thesis. There are examples both in service and my professional setting of data collection, and both are guided by certain approaches to time. I could have looked for indicators in the areas I was researching to guide more aspects of the research process itself.

As mentioned earlier, improvisation consciously emerged as a strong theme toward the end of the thesis. I believe it was there from the beginning, as well as before the project started, but moved into my conscious at a later time. The link between improvisation and integration can be explored extensively as its own entity, and was an unexpected, though not altogether surprising, outcome of research.

Summary

This thesis answered the questions: what are the specific commonalities, in DMT terms, between service and my profession? How do DMT techniques play out in both Bahá'í service, and in turn, how does involvement in the Institute Process and core activities inform interventions within an inpatient adolescent behavioral health unit? Finally, what does integration feel and look like on an artistic, movement level?

These questions resulted in the realization that the lines between work and service are more blurred than anticipated, and in reality provide different lenses through which to view one reality. Movement patterns in both settings are similar, and both settings require the integration

and mastery of both indulging and fighting qualities. Overall, language related to fighting qualities was more present, although words associated with service elicited indulging qualities in movement during data collection, and mentally brought to mind indulging qualities as well. The elements of weight, space, flow and time all played an important role, and became salient at different points throughout the study. Flow and space appeared the most, but eventually, the LMA category of Effort was replaced by the Body category. Core connectivities and bodily integration increasingly became a focus towards the end of the study.

These findings have several implications for the field of dance/movement therapy. They place the already rare research on the relationship between psychology and religion in the context of movement, which gives a different and unique perspective on an arena that is gaining momentum in the minds of many religiously-minded psychologists. It further brings the conversation into the specific field of DMT. It also helps to further expose DMT and the theories of movement into a broader spectrum of human endeavor, and creates another avenue for outward looking growth of the field. If both areas of life are seen as mutually beneficial to each other, this allows for further work to be done by dance/movement therapists specifically in collaboration with religious communities.

Implications for Future Research

The questions that guided this thesis arose from my experiences with DMT and the Bahá'í Faith. This research, in response to these questions, provided a further body of knowledge and experience, from which can be gleaned further questions as the cycles of knowledge generation and diffusion continue to propagate themselves. Therefore, in addition to answering many of the original questions that spurred on the research, this thesis has served as a jumping off point for future potential research.

What is a community's experience with integration? After exploring my own endeavors, I am curious to know how others experience integration, both on a movement and intellectual level, and how the two correlate. Can exercises in core connectivities, both on an individual and community level, lead to an increased intellectual awareness of integration between diverse areas of life? How do improvisation and integration connect to each other for other people? How is this phenomenon experienced on an individual and societal level, and further, how often *is* it experienced? What are specific models for integrating belief in God with DMT, and what does it look like to create interventions and programming for faith-based groups or individuals? Finally, how would different research methods, other than heuristic and artistic inquiry, influence and lend themselves to future studies on the topics mentioned?

From a Bahá'í perspective, how can we further integrate our professional careers and service? What types of professions seem to lend themselves more readily to an integrated lifestyle? In other words, what professions and careers are already highly affined to the concepts and teachings of the Bahá'í Faith? How can the concepts found in therapy be beneficial in the field of service, and add yet another lens through which to view relationship building?

It is my hope that this body of work will stimulate further thought and questions from various communities in the ongoing quest to advance knowledge. I specifically desire further questions to arise from the fields of DMT, clinical counseling, psychology, and the Bahá'í community itself, in the hope that they will contribute to the advancement of knowledge and discourse within these fields surrounding the topics covered in this thesis.

Yet another limitation of the study has to do with the fact that the "aha" moment of my research came toward the end of my data collection. Had I been more consciously focused on bodily integration for a longer duration, I believe my project would have looked different and

had more depth. Termination of this research project felt like a bit of a cliffhanger to me, and left

me wanting more. Luckily, this realization also leaves room for further research to occur.

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Appendix A

Definition of Terms

Abdu'l-Bahá

Abdu'l-Bahá was the eldest son of Bahá'u'lláh, named in Bahá'u'lláh's will and testament as His successor and head of the Bahá'í Faith after His passing in 1892. Abdu'l-Bahá was known as the perfect exemplar and Center of the Covenant, which ensured the unity of the Bahá'ís and upheld the integrity of Bahá'u'lláh's teachings (Bahá'í International Community, 2013a).

Bahá'í Faith

The Bahá'í Faith is based on the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, the newest of the world's independent religions, a faith focused on building a just, peaceful and sustainable world (Bahá'í International Community, 2011b).

Bahá'u'lláh

Bahá'u'lláh is the prophet-founder of the Bahá'í Faith, and declared His mission in 1844 (Bahá'í International Community, 2011c).

Bartinieff Fundamentals

Bartinieff Fundamentals is an approach to basic body training that deals with patterning connections in the body according to principles of efficient movement functioning within a context which encourages personal expression and full psychosocial involvement" (Hackney, 1998, p. 31).

Core Activities

"Children's classes, junior youth groups, devotional meetings, and study circles have been designated by the international governing body of the Bahá'í community as the core

activities that every Bahá'í Community should try to provide as fundamental building blocks of community life, open to all people living within a locality"(Bahá'ís of Canada, 2010).

Effendi, Shoghi

Also known as the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, Shoghi Effendi was the great grandson of Bahá'u'lláh, and grandson of Abdu'l-Bahá, who assumed leadership and responsibility for the affairs of the Bahá'í Faith upon the passing of Abdu'l-Bahá, who named him His successor and interpreter of the Bahá'í Writings in His will and testament in 1921. He was largely responsible for erecting the administrative structure of the Bahá'í Faith and working towards the election of the first Universal House of Justice in 1963 (Bahá'í International Community, 2013b).

Effort

"[F]low, weight, time, and space…are the fundamental building blocks of Laban's effort taxonomy. Effort is volitional, thus each motion factor represents a different sort of inner intent" (Moore, 2010, p. 55).

Institute Process

The Institute Process is a local, collaborative, self-directed learning process being undertaken by Bahá'í communities around the world. It is comprised of study circles based on individual and collective transformation, and community-building practices, including devotional gatherings, children's classes and junior youth groups (Bahá'í International Community, 2011b).

Laban Movement Analysis (LMA)

LMA is **"**a mechanism for systemic, objective analysis of human movement, which describes movement both quantitatively and qualitatively" (Bergin, 2000, p. 13).

Ruhi institute

"The units of the Ruhi Institute aim, in their entirety, at achieving three overall objectives: providing insights into spiritual matters, imparting knowledge about the [Bahá'í] Faith, and helping to develop skills for specific acts of service" (Ruhi Institute, 1987, p. 1). It "carries out action and research in the field, in order to develop programs and materials that enhance the capacity of individuals and communities to serve humanity," and is comprised of eight study and action-based books (The Ruhi Foundation, 2011, p. 1).

Unconditional Positive Regard

"…where parents, significant others (and the humanist therapist) accepts and loves the person for what he or she is. Positive regard is not withdrawn if the person does something wrong or makes a mistake" (McLeod, 2007, p.1).

Universal House of Justice

The Universal House of Justice is the administrative body, instituted by Bahá'u'lláh, which guides the activities of the global Bahá'í community (Bahá'í International Community, 2011a).

JOURNAL ENTTRY KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

Entry	Bahá'í (service) Concepts	DMT Concepts
1 (work day)	justice, mercy, reading reality	directing space
2 (service)	justice, compassion, urgency, calm determination	Decision, fighting qualities, time
3 (work day)	Reliance on God, testing assumptions	Increasing pressure, intention, time, decision
4 (work day)	Coordination, structure, rigidity vs. flexibility	Bound vs. free flow, direct vs. indirecting space
5 (service)	Relationship, understanding, capacity-building	Boundaries, unconditional positive regard
6 (work day)	Observation, maintaining focus, ability to analyze	Glide, sustained, directing space, light weight, bound flow
7 (service)	Humility, flexibility, capacity-building	Free flow, direct space
8 (work day)	Consciousness, action, urgency	Time, sudden/sustained
9 (work day)	Compassion, sacrifice, detachment	Near, mid, far reach, start/stop, acceleration, deceleration
10 (service)	urgency, rest, motivation	Fighting qualities, speed, polarization, quick/sustained
11 (work day)	Structure, focus, pattern, heart to heart connection, goals, compassion	Directing space, bound flow, sagital plane
12 (service)	Learning, reflection, knowledge generation	Advance, retreat, hollowing, negative space
13 (work day)	Understanding, motivation	Free flow, directing space, effort modulation
14 (work day)	Challenge, education, understanding, nobility, motivation	Directing space, acceleration
15 (service)	Continuum, assumptions, coherence	Breath, retreat, spreading
16 (work)	Foundations, responsibility, preparation	Increasing pressure, grounding
17 (service)	Identity, coherence, focus	Verticality, sustained time
18 (work)	Rigidity/flexibility, exigencies, reflection	Bound/free flow, movement phrase

19	Inertia, comfort, complacency	Sustained, weight, direct, advance, accelerate
20	Integration, adaptability, coherence	Core connectivities
21	Creating space, capacity-building, discovery, relinquishing control	Release, free flow
22	Consistency, pattern, structure	Pattern, re-pattern, direct, free flow, accelerate
23	Empathy, compassion	Free flow, acceleration, directing space
24	Crisis and victory	Increasing pressure, acceleration
25	Effort, response to exigency	Mobility, mobile state (time, flow)
26	Body, mind, spirit, respect	Fighting qualities
27	Empathy, shared understanding	Mirroring, flow, boundaries
28	Learning, integration, intuition	Improvisation, free flow
29	Body/mind, integration, synthesis, coherence, soul	Connectivity, body knowledge
30	Integration, exigencies, shared understanding	Effort elements, attunement
31	integration	Body-awareness, attunement

Appendix C

MOVEMENT DATA

Week 4:
Free flow, Directing space, Cross-Lateral, Acceleration, Bound flow, Deceleration, Indirecting space, Directing space, Deceleration, Increasing pressure, Free flow, Decreasing pressure, Core-Distal, Indirecting space, Acceleration, Directing space, Bound flow, Directing space

Appendix D

EXCERPTS READ DURING THESIS PERFORMANCE

Beyond the need for patience, we encourage you to learn not to measure things in terms of success versus failure, of perfect versus imperfect. We urge you to embrace a growth- oriented perspective. At times, we may all find your performance wanting. It is important to be aware of such shortcomings but it is useless to focus on them. What you are being asked to concentrate on as you evaluate your own performance is movement. Are your understanding, your powers of expression and your ability to act greater today than yesterday? (Fundacion para la Aplicacion y Enseñanza de las Ciencias, p.2, 2012).

There is, indeed, no other model in phenomenal existence to which we can reasonably look. Human society is composed not of a mass of merely differentiated cells but of associations of individuals, each one of whom is endowed with intelligence and will; nevertheless, the modes of operation that characterize man's biological nature illustrate fundamental principles of existence. Chief among these is that of unity in diversity. Paradoxically, it is precisely the wholeness and complexity of the order constituting the human body -- and the perfect integration into it of the body's cells -- that permit the full realization of the distinctive capacities inherent in each of these component elements. No cell lives apart from the body, whether in contributing to its functioning or in deriving its share from the well-being of the whole. The physical well-being thus achieved finds its purpose in making possible the expression of human consciousness; that is to say, the purpose of biological development transcends the mere existence of the body and its parts.

What is true of the life of the individual has its parallels in human society. The human species is an organic whole, the leading edge of the evolutionary process. That human consciousness necessarily operates through an infinite diversity of individual minds and motivations detracts in no way from its essential unity. Indeed, it is precisely an inhering diversity that distinguishes unity from homogeneity or uniformity. What the peoples of the world are today experiencing, Bahá'u'lláh said, is their collective coming-of-age,…(Bahá'í International Community, 1995, p. 7).

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