Move Your Body, Move Your Mind Transcript

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Introduction to Movement and Mindset

– Well, hi everyone. Welcome, thanks for returning to the Medicine of Mindset summit. I am Jana Danielson, your host for this full week of amazing speakers and now I have the pleasure of introducing you to Erica Hornthal. Erica is we're gonna be talking the topic that we're gonna be discussing today is something that is very near and dear to me, it's move your body and move your mind. So let me tell you a little bit about Erica, she is a professional counselor and a board certified dance and movement therapist, she's the co founder and CEO of Chicago dance therapy and I was telling her before we hit record that Pilates and movement literally was my medicine when I was getting out of my multiple year pain journey of which I was told at the end by my medical team, that the pain was in my head, but I was seeking attention and I should have a nice life. So I am so thrilled to have you here today, Erica to share your wisdom, your experience and I know that there are people watching today who you're going to be an answer to what they're searching for.

So welcome to the virtual medicine of mindset stage. – Thank you so much for having me. Let's start by having you. Just every like I always say in these, everyone has a story, they come to their area of expertise, usually because of something that has happened in their life. Give us a sense of how you landed in this space and how you serve, you know, your, your clients in your business. – So quite honestly, I think how I've arrived to where I am right now is more of the personal journey, but to become a dance movement therapist, it wasn't so much a wow, this is what's happened to me or allowed me to heal. I must share it with the world.

It was really for me the only way to marry my love for dance and my interest. And I guess passion for psychology, which I didn't think of it as a passion then, but I do now.

So um I wish that I could say, you know, I had this great healing experience or you know, I found dance therapy and then became one because I've heard that story too.

But for me, it was really just a, I need a career, I don't want to stop dancing. How do I put the two together? And just magically fell in my lap, somebody at the right place right time told me about it.

I switched my major undergrad to psychology and I was taking lots of dance classes already because I was kind of on the dance major track kind of switched things up and then went to get my Masters and dance movement therapy.

Erica Hornthalu2019s Path to Dance Therapy

So the career that I chose was again, following passion rather than purpose, but this the stage kind of the platform from which I speak now is very much from this place of realizing how dance for me kept me moving. When life circumstances would have kept me frozen. And I didn't realize the power that it had over me until maybe maybe five years ago when I started thinking about putting my experiences into a book and what would that look like and where is this coming from?

And realizing like, oh, I had a hardship and yet every time the consistent thing was actually going to the dance studio and what I talked about and what will probably go is challenging our body to move in ways that are either new or unfamiliar or even a little bit uncomfortable to challenge the status quo is what allowed me to continue to show up and be resilient and have agency. So that's from where I speak now.

Did I realize that dance therapy was doing that for me at the time? No, but I do now, and that's what I do, you know, for my clients. – Yeah. So let's, can you give us a sense of why you think it's important to redefine movement? Why is that why is that important for our body?

Why is that important for our mind? – Yeah, so originally for me, it was pretty clearly marketing because people

here dance and they hear movement and they hear therapy and they're confused. Some of them are just completely put off by it.

And so at first it was really me kind of having to redefine, what is dance? What is movement? Why is this so necessary? Because at the heart of it, we're actually doing it all the time. Dance does not mean does not have to mean professional artist, right? Does not have to mean performer dancer in those terms. For me, dance is a form of expression.

It's really the first way that we learned to express ourselves. It's from the beginning of time, it's how we celebrated. We grieved. We you know, expressed period.

So I started to break things down and I went, okay, so dance is kind of a tricky topic for some people. Well let's look at movement. And I just started to ask people, you know, like what kind of movement do you engage in?

And it was always centered on some type of exercise. And in reality, I mean, exercises such a small percentage of the actual movement at our disposal. It's been said, you know, all exercises movement, but not all movement is exercise. So it just kind of got me thinking it again through the book writing process. I thought, well, gosh, before we even get into what movement does and why it's beneficial in how it heals us. We should probably define it.

And then I kind of, you know, went a step further and I was like, let's redefine it because we have to talk about what it is, but we think it is the judgment we have over movement and then allow ourselves to redefine what movement is and honestly, movement. If you look it up on google to Wikipedia.

It movements just a change in position. It's just a change of posture. Maybe perspective. But nowhere in the definition doesn't say anything about the duration, the intensity, how high your heart rate gets.

Like it really has nothing to do with exercise. It's just changing something, changing how you move, looking in a different direction using our hands as we talk, blinking, breathing a shift or change in posh is all movement is and when we look at it, excuse me, from that perspective, it opens up this window of wow, how differently could I be moving and how could I use that movement to actually support my mental health? – I think you bring up a really important point because for many people I know that they default to you start talking about movement to them and they'll they'll default to like grade 10 phys ed class when they were like either the last person picked on the team or you know, movement wasn't positive because they think that it's being athletic or you know, being able to serve a volleyball or score a goal or you know, and it's it's so not that so I love how you frame that because it really is changing the entire operating system of what movement is because our body is built for it. – Yeah, it's interesting that you say that I actually posted something or put something up on social media not that long ago about how most of us treat our bodies like the kid that was picked last in gym class, you know, it's like we shame it, we blame it, we put judgments on it and um yeah, that's what people do with movement and sometimes it's an X excuse, it's like, oh, if I, you know, if I don't identify with it, then I don't have to do it when again we realize like actually doing it all the time so you may as well make it work for you, right? And, and the way I see it as like work for your mental health and it's not about adding movement into your day.

Sometimes it's just about recognizing what movement is even present or not present and how, how can we change our relationship to it? So honestly, if movement itself, if dance therapy was about exercise dance, if it was, you know, physical therapy, like I wouldn't be speaking from that platform because it's not really how I identify either. I like to move, I don't like the way I feel if I've been stagnant or kind of um not mobile, but for me it's always coming from that frame of mental health.

What is my mood today? How am I feeling and what do I need to be doing in my movement to help change that mood. So is that what you would define as the mind body connection? The mind body connection for me is just this relationship between what we think and how we feel.

I don't know if that's the formal definition, that's my definition. You know, and now like uh talks about the mind body unity which I really I really like I really enjoy that but I think we're so used to hearing mind body connection.

Redefining Movement Beyond Exercise

So yeah, for me, I really like to make it accessible and digestible. And I really like to say that it's really just recognizing that how the way we move and exist and what we feel sense wise in our bodies correlates to our thoughts and vice versa.

That is at the heart of it is it's a relationship, it's like it's a connection and we are not always aware of it. We don't know how they talk to one another.

It's not a relationship that we know to work on, right? And for many of us it's a relationship we abandon. – And so what have you come across in your practice around the disconnect of the of the body or the image of the body or the inability of the body to move or the pain the body is experiencing and mindset? Like you talked about, you know really marrying these two loves of psychology and movement.

Talk a little bit about in your practice, how you're pragmatically, what are you seeing and how are you helping the shift? – So I guess while there are a lot of commonalities, I definitely see the uniqueness right? In every every person, every session um you know, I don't work with just one.

We'll say concern or issue um and so everything always feels a little different, but what ends up happening right, is that how the person is moving is directly correlated to what they think and how they feel.

And so using that as kind of the foundation and the baseline, what I really enjoy is not only, you know, talking to my clients and hearing like why are you here? What's going on for you?

What's working? What isn't it's kind of taking them out of the mindset and saying, alright let's look at how you move, right? And I kind of bring them through some very pedestrian like experiential exercises if you will, but I'm not telling them how to move, I'm just guiding them right?

You know, move towards this direction, move towards that direction, expand your body, shrink your body kind of things. And what really happens is people start to very quickly not only identify how they move, but they start to make the connections and like whoa, this feels a lot like what I do at work or yesterday I was working with a client, we're talking about boundaries and just kind of this realization as we were moving our boundaries and kind of playing with the boundaries around us, you know, realizing that it comes down to how secure I feel, you know, or how confident I'm feeling for this person in particular and that instead of just accepting it or saying I'm terrible with boundaries, there are things we can do.

And if thought and mind set is too hard to change, which it often is. We can start looking at the way we move with regard to these issues. So it's not even like how aware my my body do I feel good about my body and my body positive.

I mean that comes with the territory, but we're not looking, we can accept and kind of understand, oh yeah, there's judgment, there were not even diving into that. It kind of comes up organically.

It's really just like, let's explore how we move and let's look at the different ways you can move and just talking about that, right? Like how comfortable with that for you.

How uncomfortable was that for you? It's such a spectrum, you know, and so it's it's always mind for me as the therapist, but also for the clients of kind of like, I've never really done anything like this before, but also the why haven't I done anything like this before.

– Yeah. So, you know, let's let's talk about that because, you know, inviting you here to share your knowledge was really important because I think that, you know, the specificity of the dance movement therapy, a lot of people would think like you kind of alluded to at the beginning.

Well, I'm not a dancer. Therefore this would not apply to me talk about how doesn't discriminate between age and

ability and and you know, dance experience or you know, if someone's watching you right now, how could they start to implement or learn more about this so that they can start to change some of the ways that their that their mind is, you know, seeing their body.

– So the beautiful part about movement, right? Whether you talk about dance movement, however you identify it, the beautiful part about it is that it's always present like before, before we're born, right? We are moving.

There is movement, whether it's our mothers that are moving us, right. Whether it's the digestive process, the burning process. All of that is movement, right?

All the way up until we take our last breath. Actually. Even there's research or there's there's um proof that shows like even after death there's still some movement. But Christine Caldwell is well known dance movement therapist wrote the book body fullness. And she always defines the absence of movement to be death. Right?

Death is the absence of movement. So we're always moving, right? We're always moving. And so that's kind of one of the ways I just start to break it down for clients.

It's very rare that I've had any clients that identify as dancers actually dancers tend to shy away or be almost like scared of dance movement therapy because there's kind of a threat to the livelihood, right? I don't want to change the way I move.

It's working for me. It's my bread and butter. I'll do that when I retire, right? So I think um sometimes what happens is, yes, people are looking for a dance movement therapist.

Maybe they've done research, but I'm also a thing that's paneled with insurance companies. And so if I happen to be in that person's area and they take their insurance, it's kind of just a bonus for them, right? And they don't really know what they're getting themselves into. But then they realize, wow, like this is really addressing where all of my communication is.

Like most of our communication is nonverbal. So why wouldn't we bring that into the room? So that is my goal, right? Is just to help validate support everything that the person brings into the room, help them kind of shed light on what they bring into the room and help them connect the dots. You know, like how is what you're doing with your body or what you're not aware of with your body right now, contributing again to these habits, these, you know, unhealthy behaviors or this idea of kind of feeling stuck.

You know, like we have nowhere to turn so with regard to, you know, what do people do? How can they start doing this on their own. Like honestly that's really one of the reasons I wanted to write my book, body aware was to help people who either didn't have access to this whether it's financial or geographical. And some people just I don't feel comfortable going to therapy, don't want to go to therapy.

Mind-Body Connection in Therapy

Again you can't afford therapy and these are things that we could be doing because we all have a body so why not better learn how to move with it instead of feeling like oh I only get access to it if I go see someone. So I always tell people there are three things that you can do to I call it a secure mental health.

So the A. Stands for awareness the C. Stands for challenge and the E. Stands for expand. So at any given moment especially when you start to really notice your mind, your mood, how things are feeling or how overwhelmed you.

Maybe draw attention to how your body is showing up in that moment. You don't have to change it. You just need to become aware of it right? Maybe it's a sensation. Maybe it's your posture.

Maybe it's a certain gesture or repetitive movement behavior but just notice, become aware of what's happening in your body in that moment and then finding a way to challenge it right? So if I'm showing up in my body right now is very tight and tense and maybe my arms were even cross the way that I could challenge this behavior, right? Or

this posture might be to increase it, right? Maybe I'm going to like squeeze it so tight until I really have nothing, no room to go and I have to relax, right? You can't hold that forever.

Maybe challenging it is just you know, dropping my shoulders, maybe I feel comfortable enough where I can open my arms small shifts, right? And then the expansion is really helping us move the mindset and so that would be, how much can I expand this new movement that I've, So my arms are open, my chest is open. Do I feel safe enough to take a big breath?

Can I stretch my arms and take up a little bit more space? Very simple ways to make, like actual change happen and you do this enough, you repeat it enough times, it starts to starts to set in, it starts to have permanent change becomes beneficial on a regular basis.

– So I want to ask you in a world where I believe we have become conditioned to remove or take away movement when our shoulder hurts, our back hurts. Or we, you know, we or we, you know, just take this over the counter medication to get rid of the pain, rest it, and then, you know, rest what it is painful and then resume life.

I'd like to know your your perspective on that because that is, you know, that's like the band and what you're saying Erica really is in through movement or what I'm hearing you say is in through movement, you're helping people get to the root of a lot of what is going on in their body. And it might show itself as physical, you know, physicality or emotionality. Whereas we've been conditioned to believe that because that commercial told me that that pain reliever works for 12 hours now.

I'll need to take two of those in a day and I'm covered. So instead of, you know, the people that are afraid of moving because of the pain, what do you say to them? – I get that a lot.

Right. I've I've seen quite a few clients, whether or not they come to me for this reason, it very quickly shows up as chronic pain, right? Actually, I've been in pain most of my life, right? Or I've I have this diagnosis, I stopped moving this part of my body because it has so much pain and that is the problem.

Right? Pain equals constriction. When we are in any kind of physical or emotional pain. Our bodies constrict and constriction does not help us loosen up, right, lubricate the joints. It just makes it harder to move.

So, while the answer is not throwing ourselves into the deep end and moving big and loud and fast. I like to look at it is there has to be some movement possible again, because the absence of movement suggests death.

So if you are alive, there has to be some movement happening and micro movements, right? It can be a very small movement, but once I have clients focus on a part of their body that they are able to move.

That perhaps doesn't bring either as much or maybe any discomfort at all. It just relaxes them, right? It's like all of a sudden I'm not focusing on the pain, I'm not focusing on the constriction and before we know it, the part of their body that is in pain moves and maybe it's not pain free.

But again, we can alleviate some of that pain again, because we're not fixating on it and causing more attention and more constriction, things loosen up.

And then it's like, oh, I haven't felt this free to move in a really long time. You know, then there's sometimes guilt or judgment of like, oh I'm gonna feel this tomorrow and surprisingly not necessarily right, It's like actually I didn't have any pain or the only pain I felt was, you know, there was some muscle fatigue because I haven't used this part of my body in such a long time.

So, again, I think we need to piece out that movement is exercised because if I haven't exercised or exercise is what causes pain, then I'm just always gonna equate it is bad, right? Something I can't do.

So I can't get healthy and again, we're constricting or limiting our movement, which limits our emotional capacity and limits our ability to just take on deal with overwhelm manage emotions. Like it just has a huge disservice all

around.

So, you know, does it take away the pain? Not 100%. But I've had people have much more success with pain in movement. Dance, movement therapy than taking that painkiller because we build a tolerance, right? Painkiller doesn't work after a while or it's not dealing with the problem.

Using Movement to Work Through Pain

It's it's a band aid, you know, so you can use movement which actually becomes the bomb, like the cell, the cell that actually like helps us feel better.

It is the medicine or we can continue to just patch it up, right? Kind of cover it with a band aid and feels fine in the moment, maybe taking that Tylenol or whatever, right?

That's what I always that's kind of my go to. But I guess people use, you know, prescription strength things, right? It's not helping you move, it's actually masking the inflammation and the pain that constricts your body. So again, it's like when you said we're kind of distracting ourselves, right? It's numbing the pain, which makes me think that I can move. But if you actually address the pain and need it where it is, you can move with it.

– Oh, I love that and you know, you mentioned a really important word that really, I just want to go back to, you talked about micro movements and you know what I think that some people don't realize is that breathing is like when you think about the act of breathing and just the movement of you know, the rib cage or the tissue of the diaphragm.

Like you don't have to go into an anatomy lesson. But those micro movements that you talked about are very powerful, I believe. – 100%. It's funny. I had a it did a workshop several months ago for a like training facility and one of the students that was participating said, oh, you know, the director told us to ask you about micro movements and I was like really, I didn't even realize how often I talk about them.

I mean I just kind of drop it when I talk, you know, I'm like, oh, micro movements. But I guess that for a lot of people that is that is a big takeaway for them. You know when I use that word because either they haven't heard of it before or they've never framed it that way.

And Yeah, I mean I like to think of it as so I worked with older adults for many years. So I worked with a little a little bit, I worked with kids, but my oldest client to date was 107. So I have a lot of experience working with older adults. And I remember, you know, most of them had some type of memory or cognitive impairment and I remember going through training and talking about steps you know that like think about how many steps it takes, you not physical steps like you know directive steps to brush your teeth for most able bodied individuals and mentally you know able individuals, cognitively able people.

We kind of think of like three steps, right? You're like put the toothpaste on the brush, brush my teeth, spit it out you know? But micro movements is looking at all of the steps that go into that right?

So first you have to open whatever drawer but first you have to walk to wherever the drawer is. You gotta open the drawer, take out the tube, twist off the cap, right? Wet your brush, get the brush but like there's so many steps that go into that that we take for granted if we are able bodied.

You know if we're cognitively able to take those directives. So I think as we lose the capacity to autopilot all of that is when we start to look at micro movements and sometimes it's too late.

You know sometimes it's like I don't have the capacity to train myself to do these movements. Someone has to help me with them now um it's to our benefit to really look at those micro movements you know and one it's it makes movement more accessible because I can start with the slightest smallest movement and build from there.

But it also helps us redefine movement, you know that we can break it down and simplify it and realize, you know,

oh yes I'm breathing. Oh I'm blinking you know?

And I took my older adult clients to tell me those things for me to even realize that you know when I started to ask them, how are you moving today and you know, I was like oh someone's gonna tell me they went to physical therapy or you know, they went shopping with their daughter and no they were like I sneezed, I coughed, I got dressed, I fed myself like yeah that's movement.

But the last time most of us did that was probably around two or three and we don't have great memories of that because our hippocampus wasn't intact.

So yeah, I think micro movements are just a great way to reframe what movement is possible at any given moment. – So continuing on with that kind of thought process. How do you think, how we move, influences how we think or feel? – Well the science behind it, right. That I mean I can't take credit for but a beautiful book that was written a few years ago, it's called molecules of emotion by Dr. Candace Pert talks about how we have these receptors all throughout our body that help us feel, right? These molecules of emotion.

They're not just in our brain there, you know, in our livers and our pancreas and our stomach and our spleen, like all over the body parts of our spine.

And so the way I see it is if we want to access those emotions, right, we want to be able to identify move through, just be with some of those emotions. We have to access the body, We have to move our body. And I think that's why so often when we're not used to moving certain parts of our body and we do emotions come to the surface.

So while there's ancient, you know, medicinal practices, right? Or meridians that talk about, you know, this side of the body is this part and this this organ is this part, I don't even go that deep. Like I don't even think we need to I think that's important. You don't have to understand all of that though to realize that your emotions are embodied. And when we move our bodies, we have access to those emotions. And when we don't move our bodies, sometimes we limit those emotions just because we're not moving them or relating to them doesn't mean they're not there. They kind of get stuck right there just there, just kind of there. And it's to our benefit.

You know, if we want to start moving expressing, like I thought about this the other day, you know, trauma right now is really trendy. We're talking about how we have to move the body body and trauma body and trauma, but even that comes from a head head space for a lot of people that's difficult and so you might notice that as you're healing yourself, your movement changes, but you can also use your movement to start healing, you know, change the way you move.

Micro-Movements and Emotional Access

Use your opposite hand, drink, you know, drink with your right hand instead of your left hand, Cross your arms a different way, brush your teeth with your non dominant hand, like just challenging our, you know, our our ingrained habits like the wiring in our brain. Another reason that it's connected to is like we we learn from experience, right? I argue that, I don't know how to argue it, but I would argue that movement came first, chicken or egg, right? That movement is what creates our experiences, that creates the thoughts, right? We don't think we don't have that capacity when we're born. We feel we sense, we cry when we need something, we laugh, we play like we don't have the capacity to say what we need and our thought pattern is not quite there. The thought pattern comes from how we develop mentally, move through our body. So again, if you want to change your mindset, we have to look at how they're ingrained, you know how they're in pattern, sorry, how they're patterned in our bodies.

You know, there's lots more around that. There's lots of books on the science behind it, you know, kind of going from a bottom up versus a top down approach.

Like it just to me it always makes sense to go back to those kind of primitive parts, which is where we started, you know, our our brains and our minds were developed through movement. So why wouldn't we want to go back to those movements to help re pattern these thoughts that are for some people debilitating.

– Brilliant, brilliant. I have to further questions for you. Erica the first one is in your area of expertise. What do you feel is not being talked about enough?

– Well, coming from the field of mental health, right? Just like this broad topic of mental health, I think this is what's not being talked about enough, right? That how we think has everything to do with how we move and vice versa, right? How we move has everything to do with how we think and not to say that it hasn't been taught before, it's not a mainstream conversation and that anytime movement comes into play, it's usually to release endorphins right?

To feel better to loosen up the body, it's not always coming from this, like how does our movement the way we move, support or perpetuate our own mental health from the perspective of dance therapy? That in itself is not being talked about enough.

I'm a huge advocate for our field because we've made a lot of strides and so many somatic practices have surpassed us with regard to visibility and understanding.

And so, I just want people to understand more about why a therapy like this can be so beneficial and can be the medicine that they've been looking for when all of traditional medicines have not worked. – Alright, so I'm going to ask you to give us a peek inside of your mind, it's a mess. So what are some of the, what are some of the mindset habits or rituals that you do in your own life to ensure that, you know, you can stay in that, you know, however you want to explain it like cup half full or you know what, you know the rose colored glasses because you are right, Like I find that people that hell can sometimes very often take on a lot of the energy of those who they are healing and so what do you do to, you know, to protect yourself from that so that you can show up for them but still show up for you.

– From a movement perspective, I find meaningful, mindful movement. So for me it is dancing, but it's not necessarily a technique, you know, it's not honing a craft, it's passionately and wholeheartedly and joyfully connecting to my body in a way that feels expansive and feels validating and like taps into me.

Like I feel most myself when I'm dancing and a little bit someone else sometimes, right? Like depending on the music or the choreography, but I just feel myself, like, I feel connected to myself.

And so, so that's a big piece for me. So that's not to say that people listening have to dance, but I would encourage you to find a movement practice that speaks to you.

There's so many out there again, they're not exercise based, there's so many different movement practices that you can try out or engage in um and see which one speaks to you. But the thing that I always come back to that I have to keep working on myself is checking in with my body, you know? Just the other day, I had an experience where I was with a colleague and doesn't usually wear a mask, but she had a mask on. And I didn't, I didn't say anything.

She actually said before, before I even went into, I was going into her home before I went into her house, she said, you know, yes, I'm wearing a mask.

You probably see, she's like, I, someone in my household has Covid and I said, okay. And I remember just kind of taking a pause because I could already feel my mind starting to freak out.

I get a little crazy when it comes to, like, health stuff. And so my mind was like, get out, get out, the red whites, the alarms were flashing and I didn't even do this verbally.

Like, it's just, it's just something I do, Like innately now I remember kind of going inward and I asked, I asked myself, I was like, what does my body feel right now?

Because my body alarmed because if my body feels threatened, then it's okay for me to say, you know what, let's take today, I'll see you next week, right, threat or not. If it feels threatening to me, I know that I'm not going to be in a great place to, to relate and move together and talk.

Movement, Music, and Daily Self-Check-Ins

And so I took that time again, it was maybe like three seconds because I've got it down to a science. I went, no, my body feels okay. I don't feel threatened.

There's, you know, yes, there's always risk, right? I guess in anything, I can wear a mask if I want to. You know, I can, I don't know, I have choices.

I have options. So that for me has been a big one. You know, it's not just teaching my clients to check in with their bodies. I have to do that too because I go to my head space immediately and I've been so conditioned to go to that place of anxiety of alarm, you know, that often my body is not feeling that anymore. It's an old mind habit.

So I go to my body, I ask what's going on, what do you feel? What's present and if, what I feel is calm and grounding and center, then I know that I can trust that. And if I don't then I can have choices.

I have options. It's not black or white, you know, it's not either I freak out or I don't, there's a spectrum. So I would say like, just kind of starting with the how I'm moving, you know, can I check in with my body? How well do I know my body right now?

And trying, trying, trying not to place judgment on the body. Like if judgment is present, that's the mind, the mind is having a field day. So if we're feeling shame, blame guilt, those big ones, right? It's the body might feel it, but those are definitely a construct of the mind. And then we can kind of come back to the body.

We can create space for alternative perspectives. – So, you made me think of one more question when you said, you know, you don't have to dance. That's kind of my that's my go to, right? But can you, and, you know, choreography or not, is music? Like, I just want to touch quickly on music and the rhythm music with movement in the body. It doesn't have to be like a choreographed piece. It could be just putting on your favorite song and like just touch on music a little bit before I ask you how people can find you, if they are wanting more information. – I'm so delicate with music because, you know, as a dance movement therapist, I work very closely with some music therapists.

And so, you know, I just always like to say like this is my connection as a dance movement therapist to music, as a dancer, to music. But music as I know it is a primer for movement, right? Whether you're making music movement is involved, right? Or if you yourself you're working with someone that is really, really physically stuck music is a great way to naturally bring in rhythm, which again facilitates movement. So if if we try not to look at it as I'm going to put on music and I'm gonna dance, right? But it's very hard or rare to find someone that doesn't doesn't connect to some form of music you put on a music or you know, maybe it's improvisational, maybe it's on your radio, maybe it's something that you have a lot of experience with. You put it on, I guarantee you a part of your body will be moved and that doesn't mean you're having an impromptu dance party.

It might just be, you know, I feel at ease, there's an opening, I've relaxed. Maybe I'm tapping my foot, maybe I'm wiggling my fingers. You know, again, notice what's happening. So I would say definitely use music if you feel like it's hard to initiate movement. Music can be a great way to initiate or create some momentum, which helps us, you know, start to move right bodies at rest, stay at rest bodies in motion, stay in motion. So yeah, I think music I use it in most, if not all of my groups with older adults that have some form of dementia or cognitive capacity. So it's super helpful and doesn't have to be words, you know, it can be classical, can be instrumental, but you know, we know music is powerful, right? It's it's processed universally in the brain and um yeah, helps us get into our bodies. And sometimes it's great because it helps you de focus from the movement right all of a sudden you don't even know you're moving and then it's like, oh, oh look at that, my arms moving, what else can it do?

You know, what other parts of my body can I move? Never underestimate the the connection of doing it with someone to, you know, if there's someone that you can listen to the music with or move with, that could be a great way to kind of get yourself going also.

– Thank you for that, and now if our audience members want to connect with you or learn more about you or you

know, the work that you've done, where can they find you? – On my website EricaHornthal.com or I tend to be really active nowadays on Instagram and my handle is the therapist who moves you.

So even if you just kind of google search the therapist who moves you tend to tend to pop up. But yeah, if you want to chat or connect, definitely reach out on social media um or my website, people can, you know, reach out through email.

– Erica, thank you so much for bringing into focus what I believe is an under under understood or under. Just tapped into source of mindset therapy through through movement. So thank you for your brilliance, thank you for presenting it in such, you know, easy to digest pieces.

I appreciate you and um everyone thank you so much for being here today with Erica and I, we will see you on the next session, have a great rest of your day.