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## The impact of regular dance classes on self-image and emotional state of demoralized female adolescents

**Abstract:** Article present the possibilities of use dance classes and psychosocial factors in a specific environmental associated with among demoralized adolescents. In this paper presents research conducted on a group of adolescents whose behaviour is characterized by demoralization and whose commitment of criminal offences resulted in them becoming the subject of an confinement corrective measure, i.e. being placed in a youth educational centre. The Adjective Check List ACL created by H.G. Gough and A. Helibrun, as well as the Profile of Mood States (POMS) developed by McNair, Lorr and Droppleman were used in the research. After twelve weeks of systematic dance classes, the test was repeated and noticeable changes in self-perception of the surveyed girls were observed. The average values of 14 out of 37 scales of the ACL questionnaire after the end of the project differed significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) compared to the results before the start of the project. Moreover, after each week of the project, a comparison of the survey results with the POMS questionnaire was carried out in terms of the severity of individual moods. The analysis shows that the subjects successively had a significant decrease in the level of all five negative states and an increase in positive mood

**Key words:** dance therapy; art therapy; physical activity; adolescent; self-image; emotional states; resocialization; insulation

## Introduction

During the adolescence period, all biological changes are accompanied by intense mental development processes related to intellectual and emotional functioning, motivation, adaptation to the environment, personal contacts, self-image, value system and shaping the concept of one's identity. An adolescent is intensively seeking understanding, support and acceptance. Literature shows that the experiences of a young person play a very important role [1-8]. During this period of their lives the tendency to self-control is still weak, which is why their surroundings and controlling of complicated emotional experiences is of utmost importance. These social experiences are accompanied by shaping both the sphere of feelings and motivations, which are characterized by intensity and lability in adolescence. Thus, the effects of coping with the dangers and difficulties that occur during this period affect the shape and course of later developmental stages. The problem is even greater when minors come from educationally troublesome families, which results in their failure to fulfil their schooling obligation and conflict with the law. Minors from such families display a very wide range of behaviours that indicate social maladjustment that result from a malformed identity. It causes that the problems regarding behaviour, self-image and perception of the surrounding environment are severely stronger. This leads to demoralization to such an extent that it is necessary to use corrective didactical measures. These means can be divided into two categories: non-custodial, which assume undertaking appropriate actions in the juvenile's natural environment (admonition, commitment to a specific procedure, parental responsibility, supervision of a probation officer, partial withdrawal of rights); and custodial, which require a change in this environment (placement in a foster family, youth educational centre, sociotherapy centre, juvenile detention centre).

In this paper presents research conducted on a group of adolescents whose behaviour is characterized by demoralization and whose commitment of criminal offences resulted in them becoming the subject of an confinement corrective measure, i.e. being placed in a youth educational centre. The main task of such facilities in Poland is "to eliminate the causes and manifestations of social maladjustment, prepare juveniles for social reintegration, professional independence and to live in accordance with generally applicable legal and social standards" [9] (p.50). The implementation of these tasks is ensured by organizing various classes (didactic, resocialization, therapeutic, preventive-corrective) and broadly understood support for juveniles in acquiring skills enabling them to function normally. Institutions dealing with the resocialization of young people must constantly improve their methods and forms of work with them, as well as adapt to the constantly changing social conditions. Considering the low effectiveness of tra-

ditional forms of social resocialization, in which education is based on discipline and punishment, one may consider the need to change these tendencies. While looking for effective methods supporting the process of resocialization, the broadly understood art therapy [10-16] and the concept of “creative resocialization” [17-19] were appreciated. The primary objective is to unblock the internal inhibitions of the individual, shape their personality, and develop unrealized abilities, which leads to changes in their behaviour. The value of art therapy is also demonstrated in its expressive character, which allows releasing negative emotions and transform them into positive energy. Therefore, it can play a particularly important role during adolescence, due to the multifaceted changes taking place in the body and mind of teenagers. Participants of such classes learn primarily to master and control their own body as well as their own emotions. This is possible because physical effort is conducive to both somatic fitness and personality formation, by shaping character, increasing emotional balance, resistance to stress, and social competence. It supports the harmonious development of the whole body, as well as allows raising or maintaining full performance, enables effective rest, abreaction of experienced tensions, and is a source of well-being, personal satisfaction and entertainment. Complex development processes of this period are most often analysed in several perspectives of reinforcements obtained by pupils: biological (improvement of physical condition and mobility), psychological (modification of self-esteem, equalization of the level of emotional excitability), intellectual (change in solving problem situations), spiritual (re-evaluating life and setting priorities) and social (finding your place and role in the environment) nature.

Dance Movement Therapy (DMT) is a form of art therapy, which is a method of treating many diseases, mainly neurological and psychological ones, that is reimbursed in the west. This method uses dance and movement as a tool allowing the individual to fully engage in the process of integration in the emotional, physical, cognitive and social spheres. Therefore, its purpose is to reach certain experiences and feelings that are inherent to them, but are difficult to verbalize [20]. The aim of the whole process is above all transformation, changing the existing ways of acting, thinking or being in relations for those that will ensure better functioning. DMT has no choreographies learned or specific guidelines for movement. This method is based primarily on improvisation and natural movement, which allows participants to experiment and experience new ways of functioning. The dance therapy is based on the assumption that each person's movement reflects their individual way of experiencing emotions and thinking, and thus makes the individual aware of themselves. The music used is of great importance, which in psychoanalytical orientation constitutes a means of strengthening experiences, as well as allows the pupil to experience the reality that cannot be rationally recognized, arouses strong emotions, and thus helps relieve tensions that are the cause of neurotic symptoms and pathological behaviour. Properly selected music can change the mood, cause anxiety or aggression, as well

as can encourage action and introduce order and harmony in order to gradually reconstruct personality. Music therapy can stimulate the psychomotor development of juveniles, meet their emotional needs, strengthen self-esteem, as well as reduce anxiety and muscle tension [21-24].

The project uses elements of DMT, music therapy and dance teaching exercises. These were not typical non-choreographic classes, but a hybrid of exercises involving the reproduction and creation of steps and figures. Therapeutic dance methods were used, i.e. according to Isador Duncan (for example: “childhood”, “solar plexus”, “sea wave”, “hero”, “heart feeling”, “physical body instruments”, “temple of beauty” etc.) ), according to Ruth St Denis (for example: “text-based creation”, “expression of intentions”, “relaxation and fine-tuning”, “child’s dance”, “dance breath”, “my space”, “gravity”, “radiance “Etc.), according to Graham Wallas (stages of the creative process), according to Simone Forti, Anna Halprin, Steve Paxton, Yvonne Rainer (improvisation practices), the method of 5 rhythms, 8 elements, the tarantella process and elements of dance theater – the Grotowski paratheater. In addition, to learn how to establish and care for interpersonal contacts in the right way, and to develop not only creativity but also physical and cognitive fitness, the project included classes with elements of ballroom dancing (english and viennese waltz, samba, cha cha, rumba, jive, salsa, bachata), contemporary dances (jazz and lyric jazz) and modern dances (disco dance, video clip dance, street dances). By listening carefully and recognizing music – so as to dance to the rhythm, and learning choreography – remembering steps, the human brain is constantly working at a higher speed. Mixing together non-choreographic therapeutic methods with methods of teaching dances with choreographies, was holistic and provided a wide variety of stimuli, preventing weariness, stagnation, boredom and discouraging girls from some forms of work. Classes were held alternately, three times a week for 1.5 hours.

Among the many developmental tasks mentioned above, the acceptance of one’s own appearance and effective use of one’s body deserve special attention. Changes in physical appearance have a number of consequences, such as the need to assess oneself, one’s gender, and accept one’s body. Therefore, learning about the specifics of teenagers’ functioning, and thus self-image, needs and ways of responding to various situations, will provide professional and competent support in coping with difficulties, setting goals or motivating, as well as will help during social adaptation.

## Materials and Methods

The study involved 19 teenagers staying at a youth educational centre, where they were placed by the decision of the district court, Family and Juvenile Division. The residents of the centre were between 13 and 18 years old. In exceptio-

nal situations, when an individual shows a very high degree of demoralization, individuals as young as 10 years of age are placed in such centres. It is also possible to extend the stay to 21 years of age, however this happens only in particular and thoroughly justified cases [25]. Among the respondents, there were two girls who were 19 and one who was 20 years old.

The representativeness of the sample is low because only (or even) so many girls stayed in this center and were eligible for research. Due to the lack of staff with pedagogical and dance education at the same time, it was not possible to organize research in similar centers at the same time. This article is intended to encourage others to do so.

The Adjective Check List ACL created by H.G. Gough and A. Helibrun, as well as the Profile of Mood States (POMS) developed by McNair, Lorr and Droppleman were used in the research. The first tool is a questionnaire method, based on self-description, used to measure personality traits. The subject's task was to choose from among 300 adjectives that define them. The study used a version consisting of 37 scales, which are organized into 5 groups:

1. Modus operandi scales – 4 scales performing the function of control keys: No (total number of selected adjectives), Fav (number of positive adjectives), Unfav (number of negative adjectives), Com (typicality).
2. Need Scales – 15 scales that examine personality correlates of specific psychological needs related to observable behaviours that are responsible for human behaviour: Ah (need for achievement), Dom (need for domination), End (need for endurance), Ord (need for order), Int (need for understanding yourself and others), Nur (need for nurturance), Aff (need for affiliation), Het (need for heterosexuality), Exh (need for exhibition), Aut (need for autonomy), Agg (need for aggression), Cha (need for change), Suc (need for succorance), Aba (need for abasement), Def (need for deference).
3. Transactional analysis scales – 5 scales according to Berne's theory, which states that human behaviours (transactions) are considered the effect of three basic ego states: parental, adult and child. All ego functions are included in every transaction and play a role in the adaptation and social efficiency of the individual: CP (critical parent), NP (nurturing parent), A (adult), FC (free child), AC (adapted child).
4. Origence/intelligence scales – 4 scales according to the Welsh concept, which regards creativity and intelligence as structural dimensions of personality: A-1 (high origence, low intelligence), A-2 (high origence, high intelligence), A-3 (low origence, low intelligence), A-4 (low origence, high intelligence).

In the presented research, the ACL Adjective Test was used to obtain the characteristics of a real self-image of adolescent girls staying at a youth educational centre.

The other tool used in the research was the Profile of Mood States (POMS), also called the Mood Questionnaire, which assessed the emotional state of the

surveyed teenagers at the end of each week of the project (12 times in total). This test consists of 65 adjectives describing different emotional states and moods. Respondents defined them by answering on a 5-point scale (0 – definitely not to 4 – definitely yes) to the question: “To what extent did you experience this feeling last week?” The results are presented in the form of six scales:

1. Tension – Anxiety — is defined as muscle tension, sometimes invisible in observation; it is a generalized state of discomfort.
2. Depression – Dejection — is defined as a mood of sadness with a sense of inadequacy. Guilt and emotional isolation from others, a sense of less value.
3. Anger – Hostility — is defined as anger and aversion to others, malice, irritability, rebelliousness, bitterness and deceit.
4. Vigour –Activity — is defined as a state of high energy, constant readiness for action and revival, a cheerful mood. This scale negatively correlates with the other five.
5. Fatigue – Inertia — is defined as a sense of inaction, wariness and low energy levels; slowness and exhaustion.
6. Confusion – Bewilderment — is defined as a state of confusion, intricacy, difficulty concentrating attention, forgetfulness and a sense of inefficiency in action.

For assessing mood we used only the POMS falls due to the group’s specificity. Isolated girls, in a center where no extracurricular activities are conducted, are initially reluctant and even aggressive. They feel they are treated as “experimental mice” and do not believe in the good intentions of others. In addition, they can focus their attention for a short time. Therefore, after consultation with the center’s educators and psychologists with whom the project team cooperated, it was decided to use only this form. This is treated as the first step. Beginning of further research in other centers by various researchers.

## Results

Tests using the Adjective Check List tool were carried out twice: before and after the project. The distribution of values in the modus operandi scales in the studied group was as follows:

On a total scale, the number of selected adjectives (No.Ckd) was relatively even, indicating that the studied teenagers were distinctive individualities, on the one hand open to the surrounding world, and on the other capricious, selfish, unstable and showing low responsibility. The results regarding the scale of the number of positive adjectives (Fav) indicate that the subjects were not willing to choose positive adjectives (medium and low scores prevail in the group, while there are no high scores). This may mean that the subjects were harrowed by internal contradictions, afraid of the future, overwhelmed by the changeability

of life and easily broke down, and thus had difficulty adapting. The subjects obtained average and high results on the scale of the number of negative adjectives (Unfav). This indicates the pessimism of the respondents in relation to the future, self-image and motivation to change. They doubted themselves and were overwhelmed with bitterness, which made them hostile to others and easily judged them, claiming that the successes and happiness of other people were undeserved and unfair. They were not trustworthy and got easily offended.

The distribution of values in the scales of needs in the studied group was as follows:

In terms of needs supporting creative implementation, i.e. the need for achievement (Ach), domination (Dom), endurance (End) and order (Ord), more than half of the respondents obtained average results, while the other – low. None of the girls scored high. This indicates a lack of readiness to make effort due to low motivation. They were fickle and easily abandoned the direction taken. They acted inefficiently due to a lack of perseverance, which is closely related to a lack of confidence. Although they often hid it, they were worried about the disapproval of their surroundings. In terms of social needs facilitating contacts with other people, over 80 percent of respondents obtained low scores (0-39 stens) in the scales of need: understanding themselves and others (Int), caring for others (Nur), affiliation (Aff), heterosexual contacts (Het), changes (Cha) and deference (Def). This indicates that the respondents avoided close relations with other people. They made contacts carefully, doubted the intentions of other people, and exhibited defensive attitudes. They kept their distance in interpersonal contacts, tormented themselves with the meaning of relations with other people, complicated them and were afraid of emotional involvement. Full participation in social contacts was difficult for them, thus they withdrew and limited themselves to a narrow repertoire of roles. They looked for stability and continuity that they lacked as well as showed stubbornness and impulsiveness, which often led them to conflicts with the environment. On the other hand, the subjects obtained high results (over 60 stens) in the scales of need for attention (Exh), autonomy (Aut), aggression (Agg), succorance (Suc) and abasement (Aba), a fact which indicates the demand for attention by the questioned teens. They showed impatience with adversities and delays in satisfying desires. Had an inclination towards extortion and manipulation. They did not care about feelings of other people, were perceived as selfish and stubborn. They treated others as rivals that should be overcome, assuming in advance that the other people were stronger, more effective and deserved more than them – hence the tendency to rivalry and aggression. They reacted strongly and impulsively, often without proper control. They expressed aggression regardless of social requirements. They felt helpless in dealing with stress and crises, and their interpersonal relations aroused fears and bad feelings.

The distribution of values in topical scales in the studied group was as follows:

The subjects obtained low scores on the following scales: self-control (Scn), self-confidence (SCfd), personal adjustment (PAAdj), ideal self-scale (Iss), creative personality (Cps), femininity (Fem). This indicates problems in terms of self-control and being driven by impulses. Although it was difficult for them to mobilize their resources and take action, the relations of the respondents with their environment constituted a series of breaking the rules, failures, conflicts and quarrels. They felt permanent tension, were nervous, had mood swings and poor morale. Therefore, it was difficult for them to define and achieve goals. They were perceived as critical, fierce and unreliable. They valued independence (deceptive) and separation. They were not very distinctive and expressive, therefore they were reluctant to take action in complicated and indefinite situations. On the other hand, the subjects obtained high scores on the scale of *counselling readiness* (Crs). This indicates the dissatisfaction of the respondents with their situation and questioning the possibility of getting help from the surroundings. They did not believe in the good intentions of others, so they themselves did not arouse protective feelings, which provoked rejection and disapproval.

After twelve weeks of systematic dance classes, the test was repeated and noticeable changes in self-perception of the surveyed girls were observed. The average values of 14 out of 37 scales of the ACL questionnaire after the end of the project differed significantly ( $p < 0.05$ ) compared to the results before the start of the project [Table 1].

Table 1. Changes in self-perception based on the ACL questionnaire

Name of ACL scale	First measurement		Second measurement		r	p
		SD		SD		
No.Ckd	49.58	12.16	53.32	12.14	0.96	$p < 0.001$
Fav	42.63	6.30	47.32	8.69	0.66	$p = 0.002$
Ufv	56.58	7.13	52.53	9.28	0.74	$p < 0.001$
Ach	44.11	6.98	54.26	7.91	0.79	$p < 0.001$
End	43.74	8.24	56.42	8.37	0.50	$p = 0.030$
Ord	45.00	9.05	52.68	10.58	0.77	$p < 0.001$
Aff	40.16	8.19	51.26	9.19	0.70	$p = 0.001$
Def	37.47	7.95	47.00	11.76	0.80	$p < 0.001$
Agg	64.74	3.66	48.26	8.99	0.68	$p = 0.001$
Suc	62.79	5.23	56.58	7.91	0.58	$p = 0.009$
SCn	38.79	9.13	46.95	8.04	0.72	$p < 0.001$
SCfd	38.95	7.16	48.74	7.44	0.74	$p < 0.001$
Cps	44.32	10.82	60.05	7.91	0.88	$p < 0.001$



Fem	43.53	11.68	54.53	9.23	0.70	$p=0.001$
CP	61.11	7.77	53.58	9.23	0.93	$p<0.001$
A-2	47.89	8.41	60.37	7.37	0.89	$p<0.001$

Among the modus operandi scales, higher values were recorded on the scale of the number of adjectives used (NoCkd), which may suggest that the studied teenagers changed their attitude towards the surrounding world due to dance classes. Although they were unstable or even capricious in their reactions, they more easily came into contact and were enthusiastic about action.

In terms of the scales of needs after the project, higher values were noted in: achievements (Ach), endurance (End), order (Ord), affiliation (Aff) and deference (Def). This suggests that the respondents were highly motivated to cope with tasks and were ready to make effort, more willingly engaged in work, setting and achieving goals. They were not discouraged so quickly, were more meticulous, attentive and easier to adapt to changing group situations, and had greater confidence in themselves and others. On the other hand, the values obtained after the project were significantly lower in the aggression (Agg) and succorance (Suc) scales, i.e. they showed greater patience and self-control. They tried to avoid conflicts, without giving in to doubt in hard times.

On topical scales, the subjects obtained significantly higher results after the project on the following scales: self-control (SCn), self-confidence (SCfd), creative personality (Cps) and femininity (Fem), which indicates a control over their behaviour. The girls were already trying to “think first and then act”. They began to show creative ideological fluidity, being more sensitive to beauty and more expressive. Thanks to the acquired sensitivity, they began to have regard for the environment, began to empathize with what others may feel and establish cooperation.

On the transactional analysis scales, significantly lower values after the project were obtained on the critical parent scale (CP). This result suggests that the respondents less often became angry and irritated, stopped opposing everything, strived to unite in a group.

On the intelligence-origence scales, the subjects obtained significantly higher values after the project on the scale of high origence and high intelligence (A-2), which means that the subjects began to show aesthetic sense, were characterized by a stronger will and a more unconventional way of thinking.

Moreover, after each week of the project, a comparison of the survey results with the POMS questionnaire was carried out in terms of the severity of individual moods. The analysis shows that the subjects successively had a significant decrease in the level of all five negative states and an increase in positive mood [Fig. 1].

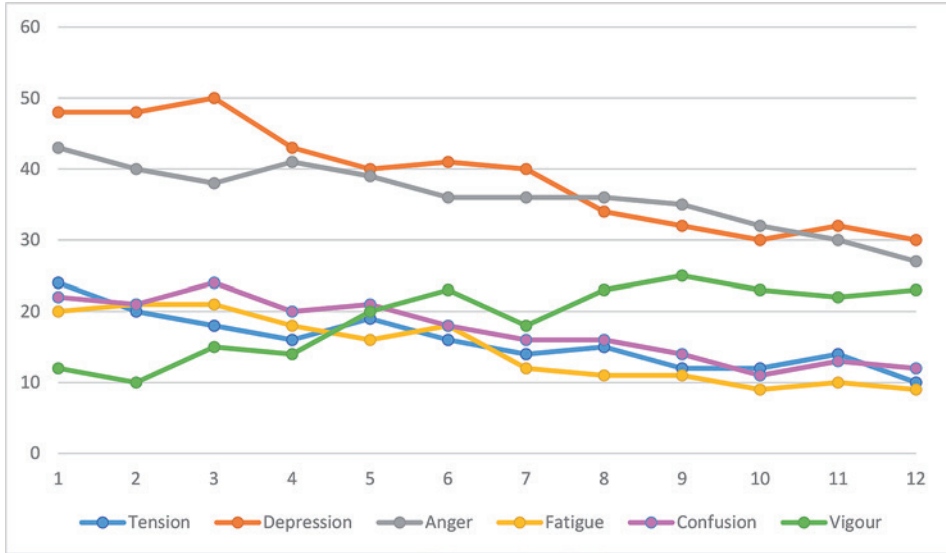


Fig. 1. Results with the POMS questionnaire after each week of the project.

This demonstrates the positive impact of dance classes on the emotional sphere of teenagers staying in the educational centre. Considering that this test requires an indication of a specific word or statement of how the respondent felt in the last week, including their mood on a given day, the formulation of conclusions had to consider the influence of other factors on the test result. Cognitive dissonance mechanism could take place here. As the individual invested their efforts, energies and attention, more or less consciously, they expected benefits also in the form of improved well-being. If they did not experience them, a strong dissonance would arise with the accompanying negative emotions and they would definitely give up participating in the classes. In no case did this happen, however there were times when individual girls rebelled in the form of an absence from the class – but only for a moment.

## Discussion

The results of the conducted research seem to confirm that the dance therapy used in the youth educational centre supports the process of change, which is evident in the observed differences in individual aspects of the teenager’s personality structure before and after the project. These results are consistent with previous reports on the effectiveness of therapeutic interventions undertaken on addicts entering the centres of the Youth Movement for Drug Abuse Prevention (MONAR), as well as on prisoners addicted to alcohol and drugs [Augustowska 1988; Hollo-

way et al., 2005; Roberts et al. 2007]. This seems to confirm the postulate about the effectiveness of art therapy interactions undertaken against people in isolation [Merriam 1998; Cleveland 2000; Clements 2004; Ezell & Levy 2003; Ferszt et al. 2004]. The premise to include art therapy in the context of important methods of social resocialization of young people entering into conflict with the law are research reports on a decrease in the percentage of recidivism in people subjected to art-therapeutic activities [Gendreau, Little, Goggin 1996; Cleveland 2000; Ezell & Levy 2003], which is consistent in with the idea of prevention recommended in the legal approach to resocialization.

However, in this study there were observed isolated cases that did not develop as expected in the course of the dance therapy. Perhaps the reason for the lack of reaction of these people to the therapy was the high ego-resiliency defined by Block and Block [1980] as internal mechanisms that reduce the susceptibility to external influence. These people, in their sense of relatively well functioning in society despite being qualified for confinement, may have not realized or did not accept the need to change their behaviour. This explanation seems to be confirmed by interviews with child care centre teachers, who perceived a similar attitude in their students on a daily basis. These observations are difficult to consider a proof of the thesis, however they should be kept in mind, as the research results were influenced by various factors, not only the conducted dance classes. However, It is worth noting, that during the project there were no other therapeutic classes (apart from standard meetings, so-called “chating” with educators and social work, which constitute the core curriculum of the unit).

One of the important elements was the relation between the personality types of the subjects and their responses to therapeutic interactions. This conclusion is in line with the theory formulated by Asendorpf and Aken [1999], who, based on long-term studies conducted on youth in Germany, showed that people representing individual personality types develop in a different, foreseeable way, regardless of external influences. Akse made a similar conclusion [Akse et al. 2007] claiming that the tendency of youthful depression and aggression is strongly correlated with personality. Other therapeutic experiences show that people change and mature to therapy at different moments of their lives and it does not depend strictly on their characteristics, but on the developmental moment they are in [Wampold 2001; Druss et al. 2007; Minami & Wampold 2008; Duncan et al. 2010; Ehlers et al. 2010]. Failure in therapy could also be caused by failure to adapt to the specific conditions of the secure institution and the needs of individuals placed there. [Neale, Robertson, Saville 2005]. This indicates a significant need for further research to determine therapeutic methods with the highest efficiency in these specific conditions. This would allow for a significant increase in the effectiveness of these interactions and greater benefits for adolescents staying in such centres. Nevertheless, the presented results and empirical findings show a very significant resocialization dimension of the dance therapy. This is associated with two types

of effects: therapeutic – referring to the cathartic impact of art, and educational – related to the development of the individual.

By practicing dance, one can experience changes at the physical, emotional and spiritual level. According to the presented research, dance supports the process of transformation and development at various levels. It helps open the mind and get out of one's behaviour patterns and ways of thinking. Moreover, this process helps make contact with one's inner potential and intuitive wisdom, even if, as in the case of isolated girls, it is disturbed. This confirms the reports of Professors Leseho and McMaster [2011], stating that as a result of dance changes occurring at the body level lead to further, deeper changes manifested at the level of life energy. Holding back emotions and suppressing their expression can lead to internal tension and many illnesses. Demoralized youth choose the wrong ways to react, thus dance becomes for them an alternative and a possibility to properly discharge bad emotions. It is a non-verbal language of movement, body, gestures and rhythm. It allows eschewing definitions and concepts, yet provides the opportunity to contact and communicate. What is the relation between movements specific for a particular dance and typical body gestures and postures from the everyday life of the people who perform it? As Boas [1944] wrote, gestures and body postures in everyday life certainly express a person. In a stylized, intensified and increased form, as it happens during dance, they are associated with a person's specific character and nature. The results of this study seem to show how far-dominant body kinesthetic awareness is associated with psychological factors. Each exercise used in the project was designed to unlock emotional blockages and psychosomatic work. For example, the exercises "childhood" and "child's dance" were a form of establishing contact with one's inner child and returning to the time before the girls stayed at the detention centre. It taught innocent natural spontaneity and honesty. Exercises such as "solar plexus", "heart feeling", "breath dance" showed the exercisers that the lack of contact with the heart and soul is the primary cause of losing purpose in life and contact with oneself and other people. It helped to get better acquainted with one's body and act in an authentic way. To make it easier for the girls to open to this movement and get used to the space, the exercise "my space" was used. Thanks to it, they learned to discover and improve their way of moving in space. This exercise showed them limitations, but also possibilities to overcome them. In order for adolescents to learn to focus and formulate clear intentions of their actions, the exercise "expressing intentions" was used. It helped adapt the movements to individual conditions and possibilities. It shaped the belief in the exercising girls that focusing on good practices helps achieve better results of each activity. Through exercises such as "gravity" and "glow", girls were made aware of failures, unfulfilled plans and dreams, and the possibility of falling more than once. On the other hand, they were shown that "every cloud has a silver lining". They were taught humility and hopefulness, as well as the strength to accept the parable of life. While working on the possi-

bility of overcoming life obstacles, the girls were introduced to the tarantella process, which is a form of healing dance. Although it does not have such power in our reality as among African tribes or communities from before Christian Europe, it was used to create an interesting therapeutic process. It is to facilitate the fight against adversity that appears in life in various forms. The exercise “hero” gave the opportunity to express solemn feelings and put subjects in a sublime mood. It reminded girls of those moments in their lives when they felt strong, not by displaying aggression, but nobility and good. It showed them that each of them has a good soul that got lost, and that every problem could be resolved. The exercise “physical body instruments” helped regain contact with one’s internal rhythm, which favoured a return to mental balance. Many traditions and cultures around the world describe dance as moving in accordance with an external rhythm that makes it possible to return to harmony with one’s internal rhythm and contact with something much deeper. The benefits of “temple of beauty” type exercises allowed recognizing and expressing beauty, which is always relaxing, therapeutic and supports personal development. To develop the girls’ imagination and ability to improvise and be creative, the exercises “sea wave” and “relaxation and tuning” were carried out. Expressing one’s imagination by dance relaxed the girls, gave them a sense of rest and peace, as well as was an opportunity to experience and express various internal states. The commonly known exercises “5 rhythms” or “8 elements” are the practice of element dance. Each element is a metaphor for a process that occurs in a person or their environment. It was performed to transform pathological behaviour patterns of demoralized girls and open them to new solutions, strengthen and balance them by establishing relations with the forces of nature. This training was designed to assimilate four strategies for dealing with stress: 1. water (learning flexibility, sensitivity, empathy and joy); 2. fire (learning dynamics, assertiveness, passion, pursuit of the goal, reaching and taking, the ability to refuse and set limits, strength and power); 3. air (learning transcendence, breaking free, distance and intelligence); 4. earth (science of grounding, stability, balance and boundaries, body awareness) [Wiszniewski 2016]. In order to awaken the mind and transform the current state, various improvisation techniques were used. They freed from tensions and blockages through conscious work with the body. They taught how to breathe freely and focus on what is happening here and now. Exercises regarding mindfulness and concentration increased the quality of improvisation, which required quick responses to current events. It was a process of working on awareness, feeling and expressing emotions. The research results indicate the validity of Adler’s theses [1999], stating that improvisation is a deep and transformational experience of oneself, touching the body and soul at a level much deeper than the level of reason and intellect. In the area of therapeutic and development activities, improvisation in the form of performance was also carried out. The audience’s presence was to give teenagers a sense of the existence of witnesses to the creative process. Para-theatrical experiments according to Grotowski’s

philosophy, which focused on presenting various forms of human expression in action in relation to other people, were also carried out. Nevertheless, no outside audience was introduced, as this could disrupt the internal process of adolescent girls who needed an atmosphere of security and trust. Therefore, they only appeared in their own circle, which served as a means to discover themselves through action and experience.

Exercises conducted on the basis of choreographic dances served mainly as a form of physical recreation of the examined adolescents. They served many functions. These classes were treated as activities aimed at providing pleasure and relaxation, and thus served entertainment functions. It was a kind of biopsychic renewal of the forces necessary to function in the environment, the regenerative function of which was appreciated by the girls claiming that through dance classes they broadened their horizons and discovered new, previously unknown talents. Establishing interpersonal contacts based on passion and free time shared with each other integrated the girls. Dance performed a socio-ideological function shaping individual attitudes as well as collective consciousness in teenagers. As due to these classes, it has become easier for the subjects to adapt to new living conditions, increased tension and effort, we can confirm their adaptive function. Through physical activity in the form of dance, various deficiencies and defects were balanced, thus indicating its compensatory function. Dance not only improved physical condition, but also developed brain function. This emphasizes the stimulative function of dance classes that stimulated and intensified mental and physical processes. Choreographic dance required concentration, focus attention, memorizing the sequence of steps and figures, synchronizing with the external and internal rhythm. Despite the fact that we do not live in Ancient Greece, still a large part of people can experience the once common catharsis, which cleanses the mind and soul through artistic experiences, as it was also the case with the girls. The psychological complexes that disrupted ego functioning were mainly overcome. Thanks to the creative function of dance, the girls could begin to fulfil themselves in spheres that were neglected or often hidden. Dance freed teenagers from formulas of social relations, dependencies and the domination of patterns. This emancipation gave a substitute for freedom that adolescents in isolation still strive for.

The results of the research clearly indicate how powerful a therapeutic force dance can be. I conclude that this is due to the experience of beauty in dance, which opens and transforms both the dancer and their surroundings. Changes can affect many different areas of life, from the most obvious to the more subtle.

## Conclusions

The results of the conducted research indicate a significant impact of the dance therapy on selected aspects of the personality structure of juvenile girls staying

in a closed youth educational centre. In the course of the effects of the dance therapy, the scale of needs: achievement (Ach), endurance (End), order (Ord), affiliation (Aff), deference (Def), aggression (Agg), succorance (Scu), the topical scales: self-control (SCn), confidence (SCfd), creative personality scale (Cps), femininity (Fem), the transactional analysis scale: critical parent (CP) and the high origence and high intelligence scale (A-2) changed significantly. These changes can be considered developmental, leading in the desired direction, i.e. towards coming out of pathological behaviour, ways of thinking about oneself and one's life, increasing motivation, faith, openness to knowledge and experience, and better communication. Furthermore, due to the regular participation of girls in dance classes, there was a gradual decrease in the level of all five negative states and an increase in positive mood. Therefore, the presented dance activities give the opportunity to achieve the stage goals of resocialization, including the change of defective personality structures responsible for pathological behaviours. Striving to rebuild the system of values and norms is of key importance here. They are favoured by identifying and eliminating false beliefs that lead to a misconception of the social world and oneself, shaping moral values and raising cognitive and emotional competences.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding

**Conflicts of Interest:** The author declare no conflict of interest

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