



**Devika Mehta Kadam: 'Kalpa' - Folk Rituals: Tapping into
Community-Based Indigenous Rituals as a Pathway to Developing the Self**



Devika is a Dance Movement Psychotherapist who has integrated indigenous practices and movement forms with psychotherapy and neuroscientific evidence. She is also the co-founder of Synchrony, an organization that provides mental health services and training through creative arts. Explore with her the world of movement and rituals as tools of development.

TOP EMBODIMENT TIP: Don't forget to play. The only way to go from one season to another is through your body.

Sakhya: Coming together in a community

- **Folk** means 'of the people'.
- **Folk forms:** "*rhythms of a million rural feet*" (Khokar, 2003). In folk forms, people don't dance for an audience. Here, dance doesn't have a performative quality but instead serves as an expression of life's transitions and nature's cycles (seasons), and as a prayer to nature and the gods.
- Dance is more about the collective, not the technique. The focus goes towards connection, to the **collective experience**.

Dance Therapy Aspects:

- **Symbolism:** Movement represents something to each person (eg: being barefoot as a connection with the earth, or as an invitation of the divinity towards the movement that you are doing).
- **Intersubjectivity:** Getting to know who we are by movement (the social self) and the socialization of our experiences.
- **Creation:** Of movement, community, and who we are in the community.
- **Translation into everyday life:** Connection with the pose, and usage of resources acquired in therapy, to cope.

Kalpa (rituals): Meaning and components

- Ritual doesn't necessarily have to do with religion, but with symbolism.
- Components: **rhythm** (brings safety), **repetition** (gives regulation), and **play** (allows you to be in the present moment; spontaneity is the key to tap into vitality and life form).

Dance Movement Therapy (DMT): Dancing as a tool for personal development

- Dance by itself creates spaces for healing, but DMT adds some psychological components:
 - 1) Sharing experiences / symbolisms in the group to help people process their experiences.
 - 2) A psychological comprehension of emotions.

Sharirbhavati (Reflection and Embodiment): Structure, Creation, and Embodiment

- There are many unconscious biases that we are conditioned to follow, and our constant work is bringing those biases into awareness so that we can work with them.

Resources

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