

Studio helps clients move into a better place

Wife-and-husband team offers both services and courses in dance therapy

By NICOLE BRIAND

Fueled by Danielle Fraenkel's belief that there is something inherently healing about dance, Kinectons is helping individuals connect through movement.

The company provides clinical and educational services in dance therapy. Fraenkel, a certified dance/movement therapist, founded Kinectons in 1984. The company is at Imagine Square on University Avenue.

Kinectons offers what Fraenkel, 66, and Jeffrey Mehr, her husband and controller of the business, have classified as clinical services, coursework and creative services.

PROFILE Kinectons

"Not many dance therapists get the privilege of being able to run a private practice," Fraenkel says. "It's hard to get people to understand what dance therapy is about. People think you run around in little tutus."

Fraenkel, a licensed mental health counselor and creative arts therapist, specializes in eating disorders. Kinectons' clinical services include both dance/movement therapy and counseling. Individual sessions cost \$95 for 50 minutes; group rates range from \$25 to \$45.

"A lot of my clients are normal neurotics—people who want to come and add to their lives, to grow as human beings," says Fraenkel, who over her career has worked with more than 1,000 clients and students.

The array of courses that Kinectons offers cannot be found anywhere else in the world, she says.

In 1994, Fraenkel began offering the courses required to become credentialed in dance/movement therapy. Originally, the courses were sponsored by SUNY College at Brockport. The following summer, Fraenkel started offering them without the



Photo by Kimberly McKinzie

Danielle Fraenkel and husband Jeffrey Mehr anchor Kinectons in Rochester's Neighborhood of the Arts. The firm has clients around the world.

school's help, making Kinectons the only non-university-affiliated training site that offers all the required dance/movement therapy courses.

Fraenkel and Mehr, 52, are the company's only full-time employees. Kinectons often has visitors from all over the country to teach specialized courses.

"The upshot of it all is that we became the first institute not connected to a university that offers every single course required to become a certified dance therapist," Fraenkel says. "Other organizations have tried to do it, but nobody has had the tenacity to stick it through."

The third component of the business, the creative aspect, uses a process that evolved from Fraenkel's work with the Rochester Eating Disorders Organization. Fraenkel developed Living Dance, which uses natural forms of movement, including breath, body shape, beat and muscle connection.

In 1996, Fraenkel traveled to Greece to hold the first Living Dance workshop. Two years later, Mehr brought his musical tal-

ent into the experience. He began to play various instruments and improvise music with what was going on in the dance studio.

Living Dance Living Music combines dance, movement and music to increase body confidence and self-expression and to reduce stress. Introductory classes are offered every third Thursday of the month for \$25. Daylong workshops are offered on the third Saturday of the month for \$90. Individuals can participate in both for \$105.

Beginning in January, Kinectons will add Body Secrets classes. The idea behind Body Secrets is to give people an advantage in a job interviewing situation or in positions that require employees to think outside

the box, Mehr says.

Most Kinectons clients have been referred by health professionals or satisfied customers.

"As a business, what's different for us as opposed to other mental health counselors is that there is the opportunity for other ventures," Fraenkel says.

Prompted by the economic downturn, Kinectons has developed a sliding scale for students and people who cannot afford the full rates.

While coursework and speaking engagements are the largest source of revenue, Living Dance Living Music brings in the most income abroad. Indeed, Fraenkel says, Kinectons is better known internationally and nationally than locally. Classes have drawn students from Greece, Nigeria, India, Costa Rica, Nova Scotia and many parts of the United States.

"We are not a new business—we're 25 years old—but we are doing a new business in Rochester," she says.

Nicole Briand is a Rochester Business Journal intern.