

NCB Webinar June 2010

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Expressive Arts Therapies with Survivors of Torture

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My goal today

- Is to endorse the use of expressive arts therapies with survivors of torture through an increased understanding of the theory and science that supports their use; indications and examples of how they have been used; and, to share at least one way in which you can apply an expressive arts therapy method in your own work.

Discussion Point: What do we mean by Expressive Arts Therapies?

Key Premises of Expressive Arts Therapies

- The human process (in particular, the developmental process) is a creative process;
- The Expressive Arts Therapies acknowledge the role of the physical and sensorial body in healing.

- The creative arts therapies engages the pre-verbal, nonverbal, metaphorical, symbolic, and right-brained processes essential to our humanity and necessary to aid the amelioration of traumatic symptoms.

Quick review of some of the Expressive Arts Therapies:

Movement:

Develops sensori-motor
awareness and skills;
reconnects with developmental
progression of physical
and human expression.

First or primary language.

Dance:

An ancient form of physical expression and creativity; release (catharsis).

The psychotherapeutic use of movement as a process which furthers the emotional, cognitive, physical and spiritual integration of the person (ADTA).





Music:

“The universal language”

Music Therapy is the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program.

AMTA Website

Rhythm (Music):

The most fundamental
experience of life.

Restores internal connections.



Art:

Giving form to internal chaos.

Non-verbal expression can be less threatening.

Art therapy is a mental health profession that uses the creative process of art making to improve and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals of all ages. It is based on the belief that the creative process involved in artistic self-expression helps people to resolve conflicts and problems, develop interpersonal skills, manage behavior, reduce stress, increase self-esteem and self-awareness, and achieve insight.

AATA, 2009





A drawing on a white background. At the top center, there is a small blue figure of a person. Below it, a large group of red figures, also of people, are arranged in a cluster. The entire scene is enclosed within a green rectangular border. A red line runs diagonally across the right side of the drawing.

Drama:

Creative & social communication;
social discourse; transformation;
collective expression

Drama therapy is defined by the National Association for Drama Therapy as "the systematic and intentional use of drama/theater processes, products, and associations to achieve the therapeutic goals of symptom relief, emotional and physical integration and personal growth." Drama therapy is an active approach that helps the client tell his or her story to solve a problem, achieve a catharsis, extend the depth and breadth of inner experience, understand the meaning of images, and strengthen the ability to observe personal roles while increasing flexibility between roles.

NDTA, 2010

Poetry

Poetry Therapy, or poetry which is used for healing and personal growth, may be traced back to primitive man, who used religious rites in which shamans and witchdoctors chanted poetry for the well-being of the tribe or individual.

NAPT, 2010

REFLECTION

- In the stillness of the nature,
 - In the blowing of the wind,
 - In the water ripples,
 - In the interval of the birds winged,
 - I saw a change
 - When sun sets
 - I leave all uncertainty
 - Meeting the darkness and little change
 - Darkness in the heart
 - Darkness in the nature
 - Darkness in the soul
 - Darkness in feelings
 - Dark and dark....
-
- When will lights be?
 - Who knows.... Or perhaps..
 - I will wait with a hope
 - in a reflection...

Games:

Teamwork,
Cohesion,
Community.

An opportunity to renegotiate
and succeed.



Research

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- Terr, L. C. (1990). *Too scared to cry*. New York: Harper Collins.
- van der Kolk, B. A. (1996). The complexity of adaptation to trauma self-deregulation, stimulusdiscrimination, and characterological development. In B. A. van der Kolk, A. C. McFarlane, & L. Weisaeth (Eds.). *Traumatic stress, 182-213*. New York: Guilford Press.
- van der Kolk, B., & M. Greenberg. (1987). Retrieval and integration of traumatic memories with the "painting cure." In van der Kolk, B. (Ed.), *Psychological trauma (pp. 191-215)*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychiatric press.

Bruce Perry

- “Somatosensory” Sound Bath
- Facial Expression
- Synchrony of verbal and non-verbal communication
- Pleasure
- Curiosity
- Play
- Rhythm

Alan Schore

- Early abuse negatively impacts the developmental trajectory of the right brain, dominant for attachment, affect regulation, and stress modulation, thereby setting a template for the coping deficits of both mind and body that characterize PTSD symptomology.

Stephen Porges

Porges (2004), based on his research of the Poly Vagal Theory and Social Engagement Systems, has developed interventions that are behavioral in nature and biologically based that improve social behavior, a common symptom of trauma secondary to interpersonal abuse or violence. These interventions provide acoustic stimulation that systematically modulate the neural regulation of the middle-ear muscles, muscles that need to be regulated during listening and that are linked to the nerves and muscles of the face and head involved in social behavior. Interventions that exercise neural regulation of this social engagement system, theoretically, can elicit positive social behavior. The use of rhythm, sound and movement, which provide both acoustic and motoric stimulation, may provide a direct link to the neurological underpinnings of human action, behavior, verbal communication skills and cognitive processing.

Gray, 2005

Theory

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- Scott, E. H., (Speaker). (2002). Expressive arts therapy: The seven essential processes. On *Mind-Body Conversations (CD No. 2)*, Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Associate Fellowship in Integrative Medicine.
- Scott, E. H. & Ross, C. (To be published 2006). *Integrating the creative arts into trauma and addiction treatment: Eight Essential Processes*. In Psychological Trauma and Addiction Recovery. New York: Haworth Press.

Eight Essential Processes of Art Therapy

- Authenticity
- Catharsis
- Projection
- Sublimination
- Balancing Locus of Control
- Identification of Developmental Ego States
- Integration
- Transcendence

Scott, E.H., & C. Ross(2008).

Healing Processes in Group Dance Therapy

- Synchrony
- Expression
- Rhythm
- Vitalization
- Integration
- Cohesion
- Education
- Symbolism

Schmais, C. Ph.D, ADTR, (1982)

Rudolf Steiner

“The task of the educator is not to fill up the child, but to draw forth from the child his/her wisdom and experience...children come into this world full.”

Moving towards treatment: Indications & Contraindications

Clinical Considerations

- Ego Strength
- Boundaried-ness vs. Defensiveness
- Age & Developmental Stage
- Culture
- Context (historical, cultural, socio-political, developmental, etc.)

Clinical Considerations

- Education
- Context for Healing and “Therapy”
- Traumatic Exposure
- Complex Trauma

Development & Evolution The Creativity and Communication Continuum

Movement
Symbolic
Spoken Language
Technological

Moving towards treatment

Case Vignette

When the Flute Speaks

When the flute speaks, I soften.

When the flute speaks, join life.

When the flute speaks, I feel the snake dance.

When the flute speaks, it complains to go back to what it once was.

When the flute speaks,

Sweetness,

Mourning,

Emptiness,

Sweetness.

When the flute speaks,

It brings calm to the soul.

**“Sometimes our light goes out but is
blown into flame by another human being.
Each of us owes deepest thanks to those
who have rekindled this light.”**

Albert Schweitzer