



Art-Therapy

Dora Dragoni D*

Bologna Alma Mater University

***Corresponding author:** Dora Dragoni Divrak, Bologna Alma Mater University, E-mail: doradragonidivrak@virgilio.it

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Abstract

Art-therapy, being graphic arts expressions, music therapy, dance therapy, is basis to improve body mind equilibrium. We can apply it to patients (cancers, psychological diseases, dementia, rehabilitation context, trauma) or to people willing to feel better.

Introduction

We can define many kinds of art-therapy: graphic art therapy that are the main techniques of which i will talk, but art therapy is also music therapy and dance therapy. All of them date back to the origin of human kind history, with prehistorical people drawing hunting scenes to improve themselves in strength, or music therapy to escape from fears of battles for example. More recently theatre in the Ancient Greek world is a great kind of art therapy where catharsis took place talking about the main human topics like love, war, politics, fears, power, beliefs, needs. But modern art therapy starts with Adrian Hill, who in 1938 could express his artistic gifts only in a Sanatorium due to tuberculosis: he helped the other patients to feel better with drawings and paintings.

What is basis for art-therapy is the fact that it helps at the same time the body-mind unity, that it sees the patient as a person, that it helps expressing deep feelings, and in this way it reduces stress. Graphic art therapy techniques can be: drawing, painting, self-portraits, creating collages, producing boxes with small important objects to talk about them-selves or to express some feelings, not free but guided drawings like representing a bridge, symbol of our life vision or a person picking fruit from a tree representing projection of them-selves too, painting what a person likes, or digital art-therapy. Colors can express feelings: blue means lack of energy, red and hot colors

referred to injuries and burn tissues, black to death and negativities (relatively to cultures), always to adapt to every case.

There are also some tests symbolic of person's inner self, they are drawings: of a person, of a tree, of a house, of a family... every part is symbolic and the wideness also expresses strength and belief.

Art-Therapy With Children

Art therapy is a lot applied with children, since their language is verbal but also very emotional, and since their feelings are strong and can impact in many ways into their life and future: so regulating emotions with arts and their expressions is basis to elaborate and direct in a correct way lots of situations.

One of the main domains in which art-therapy is applied is pediatric oncology: fortunately children respond in a positive way to chemotherapy, but art-therapy is used also in those dramatic cases in which life is at its end. In all cases art is a way to feel the child emotions directly into paper or collages, and to evaluate how the toddler or kid is elaborating its disease. Moreover art is a way to put out all the tensions developing by pathology and by therapies, and in this way the child feels free and stronger.

Even dystrophy affected young people can get benefits from art: they can paint their perceptions given by their disease and express their future beliefs (since often these patients lives last until 25 years more or less).

Other categories of young patients are epileptic children and asmatic kids: both can represent in visual ways their symptoms during crisis, during a seizure like fire or like a bang or like thunders or in similar ways, and even asma can be represented in drawings with a sense of compression in the chest.

It is important to say that there are also two advantages: (1) with art-therapy people meets people in similar condition and it is a way to face better to the problem (2) after some sessions of art-therapy children feel improved, more self-conscious and even after some time they are stronger even in health parameters.

Even digital art-therapy can be a good way to express: digital photos, or also sharing materials via social network can help the young people in overcoming any negative phase finding in this way a good life equilibrium.

Art-Therapy with Adults

Even with adults like we said we have the expression of inner self, of private feelings and emotions, of personal perceptions, particularly during a disease phase, in the case of chronic pathology or even when a person wants to improve his features, in business also.

There are many examples of diseases we can give: cancer patients and survivors, hiv-aids patients, sufferers of chronic diseases like autoimmune or psychological, dialized people, in case of rehabilitation, with trauma, in dementia and Alzheimer cases.

In all those examples art-therapy, particularly if in group, but also in single multiple sessions, helps socializing,

seeing themselves stronger, overcoming better the disease, expressing pain and stress with a global better outcome.

Art Need and Conclusive Perspectives

Many studies prove that art is a need: both if we observe art as an aesthetic experience, or also if we produce art ourselves. Infact it activates reward system, the visual cortex or auditory one, vta in midbrain and links to all the reward pathways, until our emotions place (lymbic system) and so on.

I can conclude by saying that art is a need and is basis for a real global health: it improves expressing ourselves and our feelings, with a resultant reduction of pain and stress and so we feel healthier and we see life in a good way living it better in quality and quantity. Art therapy is already part of clinics care plans, and it should be cultivated by all of us, so to have a happier and stronger society and World [1-5].

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