

Title: Art Therapy to Uncover Trauma and Express the Inner Self

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Art Therapy is a health and human services profession that uses creative, experiential therapy to uncover trauma and express the inner self through non-verbal means. Art therapy facilitates a psychotherapeutic relationship between the therapist and client which provides beneficial emotional support. The therapist will typically ask the patient to express themselves freely and then ask questions about the meaning of the artwork. Many approaches to Art Therapy emphasize a playful, experiential approach in order to tap into the person's past childhood, present state and future dreams. Art Therapy is believed to be effective because it activates the right hemisphere of the brain which is responsible for visual-spatial and tactile-sensorimotor pathways. EEG testing, controlled prison studies and client case studies are all ways of conducting research in this field. Many approaches to art therapy and art including Gestalt, Bauhaus, and Outsider Art emphasize an untrained, playful approach to tap into the innate inner self beyond logic. It is believed that by engaging in a non-goal oriented and pure experience based approach, one can uncover the feelings and thoughts that lie in the unconscious, which can then be assessed with the help of a professional. Art Therapy has been found to be effective for trauma therapy when the patient is verbally non-communicative, using either visual arts or movement arts. It has also been found to be effective in prison population studies on schizophrenic patients in a study done in 2016 in China. There is increasing recent interest in its potential.

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