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EXPRESSIVE ARTS IN OT

ENHANCING YOUR CLINICAL CREATIVITY

Presented by:

Bridgette Loiselle, MOT, OTR/L

Before we begin...

- We will be learning about various expressive arts techniques to supplement and enrich your OT treatment sessions.
- Many of these techniques have been developed, researched, and enhanced by professionals from other valuable disciplines. These individuals are remarkable members of the treatment team and are the experts in these fields.
- If your patient really enjoys a type of expressive art in treatment and may benefit from more in-depth expertise utilizing the technique, please strongly consider referring your patient to one of these certified professionals: Art Therapist, Dance and Movement Therapist, or Music Therapist.
- Contact and relevant referral information for each discipline will be provided at the end of this presentation.

About the Presenter

Bridgette Loiselle

I am an OTR/L who is passionate about combining creativity with evidence-based research for use in the clinic. Specialties include program development using expressive art and multi-sensory approaches. Now, let's talk art!



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Learning Outcomes

After this course, participants will be able to:

- After this course, participants will be able to name at least three therapeutic benefits of expressive art for patients.
- After this course, participants will be able to identify five forms of expressive art that can be used in an OT treatment session.
- After this course, participants will be able to explain how using expressive art might enhance your OT practice.

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Every child is an artist.
The problem is how to
remain an artist when we
grow up.

Pablo Picasso

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So, what is Expressive Art?

"Expressive Art is a process by which various art modalities are used as a catalyst for creative expression to enhance personal growth, awareness and healing." (13)

EXAMPLES INCLUDE:

- Visual arts i.e. painting, drawing, sculpting
- Drama and storytelling
- Dance and movement
- Writing
- Music



Q1 & Q2

6

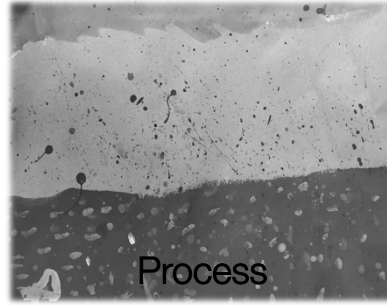
FINE ART



The focus is on the piece of art created.

VS.

EXPRESSIVE ART

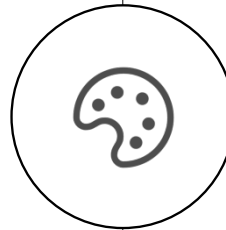


The focus is on experiencing growth and self-discovery through the creative process.

Q3

Visual Arts

- Painting
- Photography
- Drawing
- Printmaking
- Clay Sculpting
- Crafts
- Pottery
- Scrapbooking





Visual Arts

Supporting Evidence

- Increase sensory input (4)
- Activate areas of the brain that lead to motor development in children. (4)
- Improve patients' sense of self, hope for recovery, **self-esteem**, and perception of control over their situation. (6)

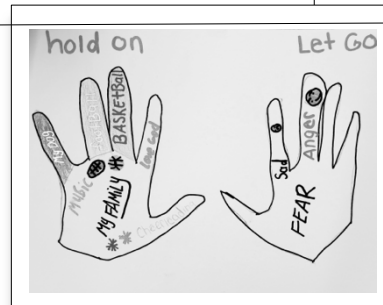
Q4

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Visual Arts

Supporting Evidence (cont.)

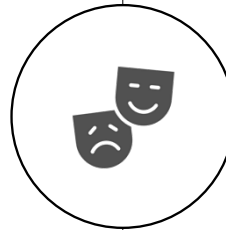
- Improve perceptual skills (4)
- Improve global cognitive function (1)
- Help to prevent cognitive decline and dementia (1)



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Drama and Storytelling

- Projective play
- Purposeful improvisation
- Performance
- Scripting
- Role-playing
- Multi-sensory storytelling
- Puppetry
- Rituals



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Drama and Storytelling Supporting Evidence

- Improvements in self-worth, overcoming self-imposed limitations, and in self-advocacy (6)
- Props are less antagonistic and threatening, and can aid in communication (5)
- Multi-sensory storytelling can be used to improve retention and recall for individuals with intellectual disability. (5)



Q5

12

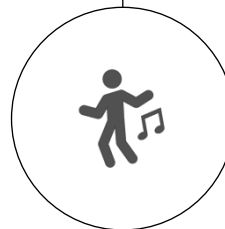


Drama Programs with the Elderly Population

- Provide a sense of mastery and connection with others (9)
- Reinforce positive coping strategies (10)
- Increase memory recall (10)
- Improve sense of vitality and regulated, relaxed breathing (10)

Dance and Movement

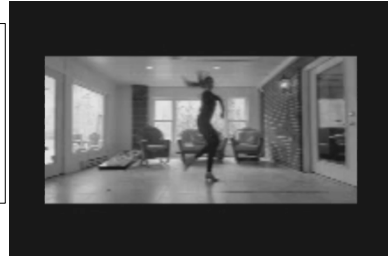
- | | |
|-------------|----------------------|
| ▪ Travel | ▪ Life's journey |
| ▪ Mirror | ▪ Simon says |
| ▪ Mirroring | ▪ Movement metaphors |



Dance and Movement

Supporting evidence

- Improves strength, balance, and proprioception with kinesthetic activity
- Reduces depressive symptoms
- Slows cognitive decline
- Activates motor neurological brain regions to improve muscle memory
- Reduces fall risk
- Stimulates communicative capacities through shared experiences in dance

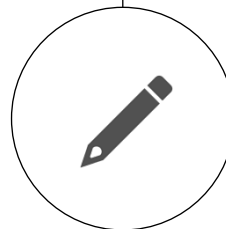


Above information from Reference Source #2

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Expressive Writing

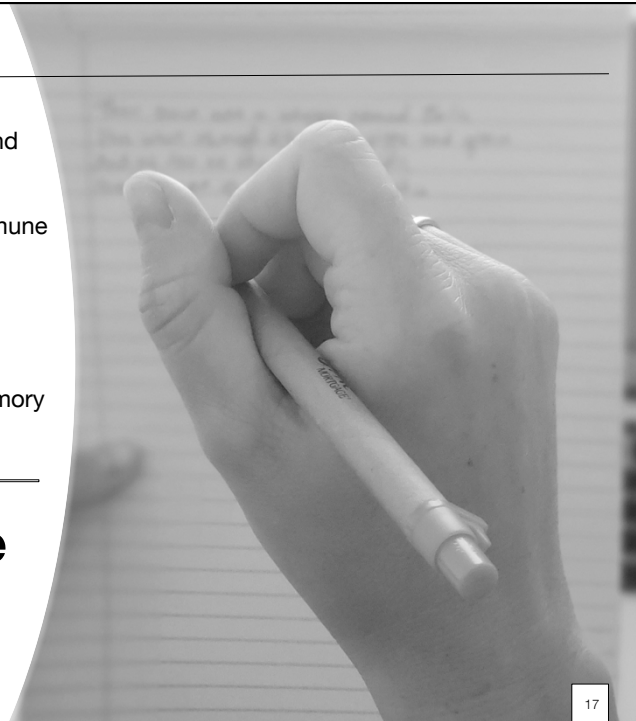
- Letters
- Poetry
- Phrases or mantras
- Timed writing
- Journaling
- Prompts



- Provides inspiration and “ego-support” (3)
- Shown to improve immune function (3)
- Reduces intrusive and negative thinking (3)
- Improves working memory capacity (3)

Expressive Writing

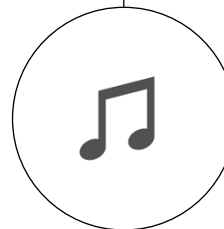
Supporting Evidence



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Music and Singing

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| ▪ Songwriting | Intonation |
| ▪ Playing instruments | ▪ Music reminiscence |
| ▪ Drumming | ▪ Singalong |
| ▪ Melodic | ▪ Music stimulation |
| | ▪ Lyric discussion |



Music and Singing

- Increase neuroplasticity
- Enhance alertness, leading to improved attention and memory (8)
- Decrease depressive symptoms and improve motivation (8)
- Activate multiple parts of the brain, fostering dendritic sprouting and synaptic plasticity (12)



Q6

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Clinical Utilization

How to use Expressive Art
in your OT practice



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Visual Arts

Indications and Interventions

CLAY SCULPTING

Targeted Skills

- Attention
- Grip strength
- Dexterity
- Emotional regulation

Activity idea:

- "Create your favorite animal."
 - ✓ Use with pediatric population to work on attention to task

- Discussion after task, especially beneficial in group setting

PAINTING

Targeted Skills

- Visual motor/Perception
- Grip strength
- Emotional regulation/Mood
- Proprioception
 - ✓ Adapted brushes, finger paints (sensory)

Activity ideas

- Paint a familiar photograph
- Paint mood
- Mural (group effort)

Q7

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Visual Arts

Indications and Interventions (cont.)



DRAWING

Targeted skills

- Dexterity/grip strength/B UE use
- Attention
- Emotional regulation/mood
- Sequencing

Activity ideas

- Draw repetitive lines & circles
- Draw self-portrait while looking in mirror/draw human figure
- Draw mandala

PHOTOGRAPHY

Targeted Skills

- Mood
- Memory recall
- Visual scanning
- Perception

Activity ideas

- Collage from magazines
- Historical photos for reminiscing
- Locate objects in pictures

Drama and Storytelling

Indications and Interventions



MULTI-SENSORY SESSIONS

Targeted skills

- Sensory modulation
- Attention/memory recall
- Mood/Emotion Regulation
- Sequencing
- Social skills /Communication
- Coping strategies

Activity ideas

- Essential oil diffuser
- Reminisce looking at old photographs
- Listen to music
- Sensory mats
- Sandboxes

ROLE-PLAYING & IMPROVISATION

Targeted skills

- Social skills/interpersonal relationships
- Confidence
- Mood
- Planning and sequencing
- Recall
- Empathy

Activity ideas

- Act out a social situation, like approaching a middle-school lunch table and asking to sit there
- Memorize simple lines of a play and perform it in front of an audience
- Reconstruct a past situation and act out a different end

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Drama and Storytelling

Indications and Interventions (cont.)

CREATIVE VISUALIZATION

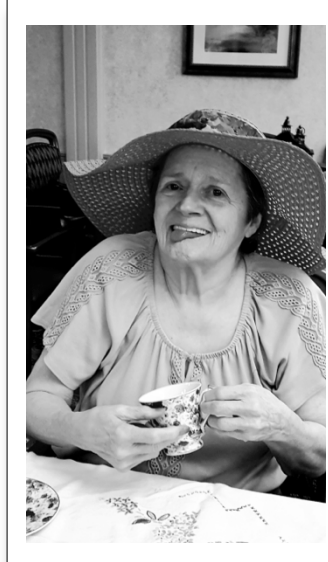
Engage as many senses as possible to visualize a situation

Targeted skills

- Sequencing
- Emotional regulation
- Mood
- Creativity
- Goal-setting
- Can be scripted or improvised

Activity ideas

- Visualize a future self, write down desired traits and goals to achieve
- Identify a habit to get rid of and describe life without the habit



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Dance and Movement

Indications and Interventions

■ MIRRORING

• Targeted skills

- Empathy
- Social interaction
- Emotional regulation
- Self-awareness
- Mobility (kinesthesia)

• Activity ideas

- Patient mirrors therapist and vice versa through sequence of movements completing a task – e.g. building a “castle” to signify a safe space
- Patient mirrors movements of therapist doing Big and Loud or PNF movements



Q8

Expressive Writing

Indications and Interventions

PROMPTS

■ Targeted skills

- Emotional regulation
- Grip strength/Handwriting
- Attention to task

■ Examples:

- Write about a time you felt angry with someone. What did that emotion feel like to you?
- Write about the happiest memory you can think of, then describe your environment, the time of day, and the people around you.

TIMED FREE JOURNALING

■ Targeted skills

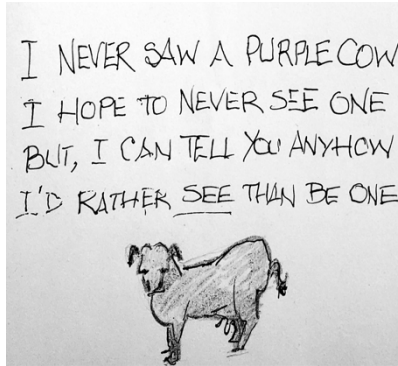
- Attention to task
- Emotional regulation
- Handwriting
- Mood

- **Description:** Have patient write in a journal for a preset amount of time with no direction – prompt patient to “not think about what [they’re] writing, just let it flow”

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Expressive Writing

Indications and Interventions (cont.)



PHRASES and MANTRAS

Targeted skills

- Self-awareness
- Emotional processing/regulation
- Motivation
- Self-compassion

Activity ideas

- Daily handwritten notes on goals/mantras
- Gratitude mantra – what are you thankful for?
- Multi-modal: write a favorite phrase or lyric, then draw an associated image.

POETRY

Targeted skills

- Emotional processing/regulation/Empathy
- Attention to task
- Expressive language

Activity ideas

- "Fill in the blank" – poem with blanks
- Sentence stem – start patient off with a stem, i.e. "If you knew me..." and have patient finish the sentence.

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Music and Singing

Indications and Interventions

“Singing for the Brain”

- Indicated for individuals with their caregivers (7)
- Group with musician leading participants in singing familiar songs
- Promotes acceptance of diagnosis, improved social relationships and **memory**, and decreased anxiety



Melodic Intonation Therapy

- Indicated primarily for individuals with nonfluent aphasia post neurologic injury (9)
- Uses words and simple phrases with melodic accompaniment and rhythmic tapping
- Appears to be most appropriate for individuals with an intact right hemisphere (e.g. left CVA)

Q9

Vocal Music Therapy

- Can be used with patients suffering from chronic pain (13)
- Uses music-guided breathing, toning and humming, discussion of somatic experiences and biological benefits of music, and instrument improvisation
- Decreases depression, improves self-efficacy and motivation, increases social connections

Deep breathing exercises set to music

- Patients of all ages and diagnoses
- Stress reduction, pain management
- Combine Big and Loud movements to music for treatment of Parkinson's Disease

Music and Singing

Indications and Interventions (cont.)



Multi-modal Approaches

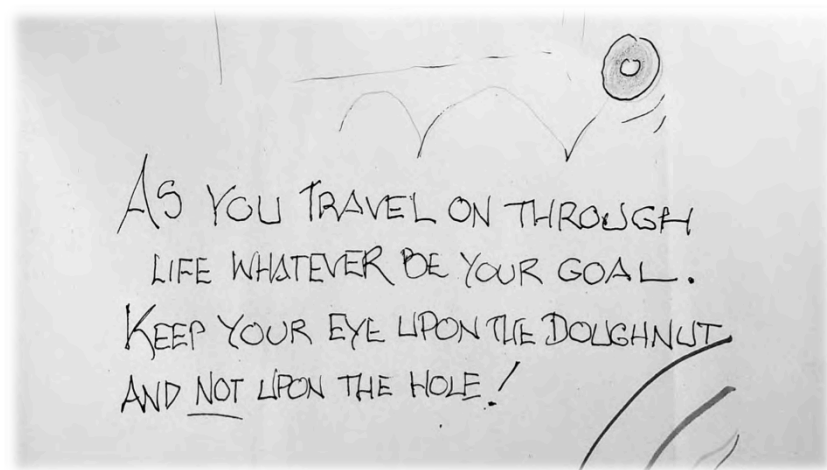
Shown to improve overall quality of treatment and goal attainment

- Approach to treatment: goal-oriented and problem-solving approach with guided discovery component (10)
 - Example: CO-OP approach, see reference source #13
 - Can be used with any patient
- Clay + Music: Play classical song, prompt with "Mold your clay into something representing an emotion that comes up during this song."
 - Optional: "close your eyes"
 - Indicated to treat depression, pain, sensory deficits, and FM impairments
- Combining stretching/yoga program with multi-sensory crafts (8)
 - Indicated to treat chronic pain in patients of all ages
- Deep-breathing to music + painting emotions + discussion
 - Indicated to work on emotional regulation, stress reduction, social interaction
 - Patients of all ages
- Listen to meaningful music while engaging in IADL/leisure tasks
 - Indicated to treat functional deficits, mood, anxiety, endurance, and memory

Referral Sources

- **Dance and Movement Therapists**
 - Find a Therapist: <https://adta.org/find-a-dancemovement-therapist/>
 - Main website of American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA): <http://adta.org>
- **Music Therapists**
 - Find a Therapist: <https://www.musictherapy.org/about/find/>
 - Main website of American Music Therapy Association (AMTA): <https://www.musictherapy.org/>
- **Art Therapists**
 - Find a Therapist: <https://arttherapy.org/art-therapist-locator/>
 - Main website of American Art Therapy Association (AATA): <https://arttherapy.org/>
- **Drama Therapists**
 - Find a Therapist: <https://www.nadta.org/membership/member-search.html>
 - Main website of North American Drama Therapy Association: <https://www.nadta.org/index.html>

And just remember...



Questions?

- Please feel free to contact me with any questions, tidbits, or just to brainstorm – I'd love to hear from you!
- E-mail: bloiselle23@gmail.com

Thank you!

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