

- ❖ “Art therapy is an established 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” (www.arttherapy.org).
- ❖ Art therapy is used in a wide variety of populations and supports the belief that all individuals have the capacity to express themselves creatively. Like other forms of psychotherapy and counseling it is used to enhance personal growth, increase self-understanding, and assist in emotional reparation. It is a modality that can help individuals of all ages create meaning and achieve insight, find relief from overwhelming emotions of trauma, resolve conflicts and problems, enrich daily life, and achieve an increased sense of well-being (Malchiodi, 1998, as cited in Malchiodi (Ed), 2003, p.1)

❖ **Art as Therapy:**

This view involves the belief in the inherent healing power of the creative process of art making. Under this view art therapists believe the process of making art is therapeutic. Furthermore, art making is seen as an opportunity to express oneself authentically, and spontaneously, an experience that, over time, can lead to personal fulfillment, emotional reparation, and transformation. This view also holds that the creative process can be a growth-producing experience and health enhancing (Malchiodi, 1998, p.5).

Art Psychotherapy:

Under this view the definition of art therapy is based on the idea that art is a means of symbolic communication. This approach emphasizes the products (drawings, paintings, 3-D productions, and other art expressions) as helpful aides in communicating issues, emotions, and conflicts. Psychotherapy is essential to this approach, and the art image is used to enhance verbal exchange between the therapist and the client and to achieve insight (Malchiodi, 1998, p.5-6).

* *The above definitions are two general categories art therapy can fall into although in reality most therapists who practice art therapy integrate both art as therapy and art psychotherapy in varying degrees.*

The History of Art Therapy

- ❖ In the early 20th century, psychiatrists became interested in the artwork created by their patients suffering from mental illness. At around the same time, educators were discovering that children's art productions reflected developmental, emotional, and cognitive growth. By mid-century, hospitals, clinics, and rehabilitation centers increasingly began to include art therapy programs along with "traditional" talk therapies." At this point a largely independent assortment of individuals began to use the term "art therapy" in their publications to describe their work with clients. Because there was no formal art therapy training to be had these early writers were mentored by psychiatrists, analysts, and other mental health professionals.
- ❖ **The Four Leading Writers universally recognized for their contributions to the field of Art Therapy.....**

Margaret Naumburg:

More than any author Margaret Naumburg is seen as the primary founder of American art therapy. She is frequently referred to as the "Mother of Art Therapy". Her early work was done in Walden School (a school she founded with her sister Florence Cane), and later she conducted more work in psychiatric settings. She was very familiar with the ideas of Freud and Jung and conceived her "dynamically orientated art therapy" to be largely analogous to the psychoanalytical practices of the day. She viewed her client's art expressions as symbolic communications of unconscious material in an uncensored, and concrete form that she argued would aid in the resolution of transference (Vick, as cited in Malchiodi(Ed) , 2005, p.9)

Edith Kramer:

Edith Kramer adapted concepts from Freud's personality theory to develop her explanation of the art therapy process she used. Her "art as therapy" approach emphasizes the art making process and the central role the defense mechanism of sublimation plays in the experience. (Vick, as cited in Malchiodi(Ed) , 2005, p.9)

Elinor Ulman:

Elinor Ulman founded The Bulletin of Art Therapy in 1961 (now The American Journal of Art Therapy since 1970) when no other publication of its kind existed. She also published the first

Book of collected essays on art therapy. Ulman is also credited with precisely writing the essay “Art Therapy: Problems of Definition.” In this particular essay she compares and contrasts Naumburg’s “art psychotherapy” and Kramer’s “art as therapy.” (Vick, as cited in Malchiodi (Ed) , 2005, p.9)

Hanna Kwiatkowska:

Hanna Kwiatkowski made major contributions in the areas of family art therapy. She also brought together writing on her various experiences with psychiatric patients. She wrote a book on her experiences that became the foundation for working with families through art. She also coauthored a book that helped introduce the field of art therapy to the general public. (Vick, as cited in Malchiodi (Ed) , 2005, p.9)