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ART AS A TOOL IN THERAPY: THE NATURE AND UTILITY OF ITS IMPLEMENTATION

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ART AS A TOOL IN THERAPY:

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by

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ABSTRACT

The general focus of the following paper will primarily address itself to the nature and utility of art therapy in a counseling/psychological context. The manner in which this topic is introduced essentially consists of an explanation as to what art therapy actually is. The term "art therapy technique" is defined, and a discussion as to what art therapy ordinarily encompasses follows. Next, material pertaining to the beginning developments of art therapy is presented. This exploration of both relevant background and historical information will not only strengthen one's understanding as to what art therapy is all about, but will also aid in bringing about an awareness as to how art therapy and art therapy techniques have evolved.

Included in the final section of this paper, is a more in-depth investigation of the different art therapy techniques practiced today. A look at some of the various views as to what art therapy can or cannot offer is also presented. Hence, an overall perspective as to the various functions and applications of art therapy is discussed. By taking into account not only the values of art therapy, but also the limitations, I hope to demonstrate that they

are of as much importance, and therefore, just as necessary to be made aware of.

In the remaining pages, the overall progression and successes of art therapy will be considered. Re-examining the accomplishments of art when it was first implemented in therapy, and then reconsidering its later stages of development, will greatly heighten one's understanding of its current functioning. Moreover, one can begin to realize the immense value and worth of this tool as used in therapy today, as well as foresee the great potential for its implementation tomorrow.

CHAPTER I

The Definition of Art Therapy

A Counseling/Psychological Technique

Various counseling/psychological theories and procedures are continuously being developed within the field of mental health. Among the many new therapeutic approaches, art therapy has gained a position of considerable respect. According to Kwiatkowska (1978, p. vii), "Art therapy has withstood the test of time and has grown to be recognized as a major therapeutic and diagnostic tool in working with a wide spectrum of pathologies."

Art therapy is a relatively new profession. The extent of its possibilities and limitations are not yet completely known. The general notion as to what art therapy ordinarily encompasses is not even fully understood by many.

Nevertheless, there does seem to be tremendous value in art therapy. The utilization of this tool also seems to be flexible enough to be incorporated into any of the various psychological orientations. Implementing art in therapeutic settings can serve to enhance a therapeutic process in a number of ways, and in addition, can provide a vast

amount of information for both client and therapist. This can lead to an increase in self-discovery on the part of the client; and ultimately, can further facilitate both growth and change.

The employment of art in therapy is well on its way to become an established serviceable procedure. The growth of interest in this field has increased significantly, and the use of art as a therapeutic aid has become more widely accepted (Naumburg, 1953). Yet, in spite of this, art therapy's particular identity continues to be misunderstood.

What exactly is art therapy? How can it be understood as a technique in a counseling/psychological context? Is the application of art actually useful in therapeutic environments? In order to gain a meaningful perspective, it is perhaps necessary to begin by first inquiring into the component words of the term "art therapy technique."

A brief discussion of "art" is probably quite suitable, and very much appropriate, as an initial starting point. However, the general concept of "art" apparently presents some difficulties. As Francis Reitman (1951, p. 2) points out, "The definition of art has always been elusive for art critics and art historians, aestheticians, philosophers and psychologists." As to a likely explanation, it is entirely possible that such a consequence as this is largely a result of the great effort and struggle in providing precise meanings; especially those that are total and all encompassing.

Dictionaries often define "art" with a synonym such as "skill" or "application of Skill." Webster's Dictionary (1974), for example, characterizes "art" as skill acquired by experience or study...the use of skill and imagination in the production of things of beauty; works so produced." Descriptions such as these are adequate, but they do not entirely clarify the exact meaning of "art." As it seems, the rather broad nature of "art" has to do with such things as originality, uniqueness, creativity, spontaneity, risk taking, options, and imagination.

On the other hand, the word "therapy" suggests taking care of, waiting, attending, healing, moving toward wholeness, growth-producing, human interchange, and understanding. According to Webster's (1974) definition, "therapy: is a "remedial treatment of bodily, mental, or social disorders or maladjustment." Although the meaning of this concept seems clear, there is perhaps a problem with respect to its connotative meaning. In the words of Evelyn Virshup:

> The word "therapy"..., gives a medical connotation to art therapy implying that one would have to be "ill" to need art therapy. For me, and for many other humanistically-oriented art therapists, this is simply not true. Art therapy does not have to be reserved for those who are emotionally disturbed or "mentally ill," or for those who are out of the mainstream of our culture. It is indeed valuable for those people, but the techniques of art therapy developed while working with them have also proved useful for the

> "normal and well adjusted," and can improve the quality of life for all of us (1978, p. 30).

The final item which remains to be mentioned concerns the conceptualization of a "technique." Although it may be difficult to state just what a "technique" specifically means, the term has some very definite connotations. Among them are orderly arrangement, organization, calculation, and reasoning. In returning once again to Webster's Dictionary (1974), it is found that a "technique" is "the manner in which technical details are treated or basic physical movements are used." Perhaps implied in both Webster's interpretation, and the above mentioned connotations, is the idea of a mechanical operation or action.

In the book Creative Art Therapy, Robbins and Sibley (1976, p. 210) state that "An art therapy technique is a concrete implementation of theory introduced by the art therapist, at the appropriate time, to facilitate creative and therapeutic change." The American Art Therapy Association, on the other hand, has given the following definition for art therapy:

> Within the field of art therapy there are two approaches.
>
> The use of art as therapy implies that the creative process can be a means both of reconciling conflicts and of fostering self-awareness and personal growth.
>
> When using art as a vehicle for psychotherapy, both the product and the associative references may be used in an effort to help the individual find a more compatible relationship between his inner and outer worlds (Fender, 1981, p. 59).

According to Georgina Jungels, a chairperson for the American Art Therapy Association:

> Art Therapy is a human service profession providing opportunities to develop physical, emotional, and/or learning skills through art experiences. It provides for the exploration of personal problems and human potential through both verbal and non-verbal expression (Conference on Creative Arts Therapies, 1979, p. 20).

Judith Aaron Rubin (1978) offers another way of looking at art therapy. Her own particular view of art therapy is that it generally relates to understanding and helping an individual through the use of art. Furthermore, she believes that the role of art therapy encompasses an extensive variety of dimensions. "These include," she writes, "the integrative aspects of the creative process itself, as well as the use of art as a tool in the service of discharge, uncovering, defense, or communication" (p. 17).

In explaining the function of art therapy from a different perspective, Edith Kramer (1972, p. xiii) puts great emphasis on "...the idea of 'art as therapy' rather than on psychotherapy which uses art as a tool" Her understanding of art therapy is stated as "...primarily as a means of supporting the ego, fostering the development of a sense of identity, and promoting maturation in general." Works of art, according to Kramer, serve as a method of communication, and are valuable aids in both diagnosis and therapy (1973). She views all art to be therapeutic "...in the broadest sense of the word" (1973, p. 6).

In her two earlier books published in 1958 and 1971 (Art Therapy in a Children's Community and Art as Therapy with Children), Edith Kramer presents her theoretical conceptions of art therapy. In addition, she discusses her idea of the functions of an art therapist while working with disturbed children. In the preface to Art as Therapy with Children, Kramer describes her own position as follows:

> My point of view is that of a practicing artist and educator who combines professional skills in the field of art with general knowledge of normality and pathology in childhood. The theoretical framework of my understanding of child psychology is based in the main on Freudian psychoanalytic thought...while the "therapeutic approach" is based on the awareness of psychic processes that include the unconscious, the "therapeutic maneuvers"...do not depend on the uncovering of unconscious material or interpretation of unconscious meaning.
>
> ...its main function is seen in the power of art to contribute to the development of psychic organization that is able to function under pressure without breakdown or the need to resort to stultifying defensive measures. So conceived, art therapy becomes both an essential component of the therapeutic milieu and a form of therapy which complements or supports psychotherapy but does not replace it (Kramer, 1971, p. xiii).

In her first book, which is entitled Art Therapy in a Children's Community, Kramer defines art therapy as a way to make "available to disturbed persons the pleasures and satisfactions which creative work can give," and through insight on therapeutic skill, allowing such experiences to be meaningful and most valuable to the total personality. In considering these two statements, it may be suggested

that "...Kramer's idea of art and the creative process involves a complex comprehension both of the physical handling of art materials in order to form them so that they serve as symbolic equivalents for human experience and of the psychic processes that motivate creative work" (Kramer, 1979, p. xxviii).

In contrast to Kramer, Margaret Naumburg views the creative act itself as being of secondary importance. Many practitioners, such as Naumburg, use the visual symbols mainly to replace or supplement the spoken word in the interchange between the therapist and client (Naumburg, 1950). This form of art therapy, according to Kramer, "...must be practiced only by the professionally trained psychotherapist or by the art therapist who works under close psychiatric supervision" (Kramer, 1971, pp. 25-26).

Both Kramer's and Naumburg's approaches seem to have value in the therapeutic environment. Perhaps the same therapist may employ either approach. Yet, it's important to keep in mind the demands and needs of each particular situation when deciding which approach would be most suitable.

Victor Lowenfeld uses art as a tool in education. He believes that such a tool can provide a way in which to evaluate creative products in terms of child growth (Lowenfeld, 1957, p. x). In fact, he emphasizes his strong belief in his book, that "...art is entwined with a child's

creative and mental growth" (Lowenfeld and Brittain, 1970, p. 413). He understands the function of art to be a manner in which to provide the opportunity for growth, in ways that other subject matter areas in education cannot. He and Brittain further elaborate that:

> Growth is not achieved by the development of intellectual capacity alone. The confident, creative child who is eager to express his thoughts, who is sensitive to people and things around him, who is a responsive, productive individual, is much more the concern of the art program. We cannot do this developing for him. Every individual has a potential that is greater than what is realized. Art should provide the impetus for constructive action and the opportunity for each individual to see himself as an acceptable being, searching for new and more harmonious organizations, developing confidence in his own means of expression. The most essential ingredient in an art program is the child, and art education has a vital role to play in his growth (1970, p. 413).

Similar to Lowenfeld's beliefs as to the function of art, Evelyn Virshup perceives art therapy to be useful as another language; a language in terms of allowing people to understand their own beings. According to Virshup, "...all the marks we make on paper, all the colors and graphic gestures we choose and use are extensions of ourselves and what we are thinking and feeling" (1978, p. 19). As a result of this, Virshup believes that any drawing could be used as a projective measure. By having an individual draw, and then having him or her describe what is seen in the drawing, is in a very true sense, a depiction of how

they perceive their own being and the world around them. To quote Evelyn Virshup:

> I believe that all the marks we make on paper, all the colors and gestures we choose to use, are extensions of thoughts and feelings going on inside of ourselves. Therefore, our drawings and what we write about them are, in a very real sense, a description of how we perceive ourselves on an unconscious level. By drawing this way, we are able to make our unconscious more conscious. As Freud described dreaming, drawing is another "royal road to the unconscious" (1978, p. 13).

There seem to be several significant interpretations of the way in which an art therapy technique may be understood. Perhaps the wide diversity of backgrounds and psychological orientations among practitioners that use art in therapy explains the wide range of definitions. Edith Wallace, a Jungian analyst, spoke at the 1976 AATA (American Art Therapy Association) and stated that "the beauty of art therapy is that in the last analysis it is not definable, in the same way that the creative process--no matter how much we can say and do about it--is ultimately a mystery" (Wallace, 1977, p. 89).

Nevertheless, according to Elaine and Bernard Feder, in their book entitled <u>The Expressive Arts Therapies</u>, implied in a great number of the definitions is the agreement that the field of art therapy has to do with both "creative impulses" and "emotional expression" (1981, p. 60). The Feders seem to believe that the debate in this

field comes from two directions. Further, they say that "the two directions from which art therapists approach the discipline--"art" and "therapy"--and the emphasis that practitioners choose to put on one of them, help to determine the functions of art therapy for the individual practitioner" (p. 60). Perhaps the functions of art techniques in therapy are two fold: offering both diagnostic and therapeutic value.

CHAPTER II

Beginning History of Art Therapy

"The very fact that art came into being in the first place and has survived all these centuries, supports the fact that art has therapeutic value to both the artist and the observer, and that the average man has the capability of both producing and appreciating a work of art" (Pasto, 1962, pp. 248-249). The notion that art can have significant value for the emotionally disturbed has developed largely since the early 1940's. Mainly, it was an outgrowth of an interest in the works of art produced by children, primitive peoples, and adults.

From the time of the cave man through the "Sunday painter," normal people in ordinary settings have often used art for personally helpful reasons (Rubin, 1978, p. 206). The general notion of expressing oneself through the use of art seems to be very old. It can be seen in the rituals of primitive man, and its use can also be noted by the Egyptians, Hebrews, and Greeks (Feder, 1981).

Both Fleshman and Fryrear (1981) place art therapy in relation to the history of and different branches of psychology. Margaret Naumburg also attempts to do this. Essentially, each distinct branch consisted of the intrapsychic

school (those associated with psychoanalysis such as Freud, Adler, Jung, etc., etc.); the behavioristic school (those associated with B. F. Skinner, Hans Eysenck, Albert Bandura, Wolpe, etc., etc.); and also the humanistically oriented school of thought which includes Gestalt psychology (Fleshman and Fryrear, 1981, pp. 31-34).

Edith Kramer (1973) explains that individuals can understand style and the changing of styles in society as a result of the interaction between an artist and his or her society. "Thus, societies which change slowly, for example the culture of old Egypt, produce a static, slow-changing style of art while our Western world, which for the last 2,000 years has been changing and developing with ever-increasing speed, has seen constant changes and transformations of style" (p. 9). Kramer goes on to say that when social changes take place at a quick pace, art is most likely to become more or less formless in nature. Hence, "Left without a form in which to cast his message, the artist evolves his own private language and, with it, art ceases to be communication in the true sense of the word" (p. 9).

Keeping Kramer's thoughts in mind, it seems that art depends on society and also contributes to society. It is found that art can be adapted easily to any type of field which happens to be a significant factor in the growing development of a society. According to Kramer, art can

contribute to magic, religion, politics, the crafts, and many other fields; in respect to the changing historical situation (1973).

> Because of the interdependence between art and society it often is difficult to recognize and to isolate the element of art within the fabric of society. But whatever the intracacies of each special situation might be, one factor remains constant, art contributes pleasure, pleasure chiefly derived from unconscious sources (Kramer, 1973, p. 10).

Perhaps the earliest account of this type of creative therapy is recorded in the Old Testament in the first book of Samuel: "And it came to pass that when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand. So Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him." Later on in time, Aristotle brought about the concept of "catharsis." Others after him extended the principle to other art forms besides drama, and then later, Freud's formulations extended this notion to realms much wider in scope than the theater. Tarantism, a type of hysteria occurring in the 1400's-1600's in Italy, was supposed to be cured through vigorous dancing. In addition to this, the Navajo and Pueblo Indians were said to have used sand painting as part of their healing ceremonies. The individual seeking to be relieved of an illness would be known to sit on a painting created by the medicine man especially for these circumstances

(Conference of Creative Arts Therapies, 1979, p. 9, by Linda Gantt).

The general history of art therapy practices is characterized by a rather long gestation period, and then following this, a period of remarkable growth. For quite a long while, it seemed as if nothing much was going on, and then, quite rapidly, the field was moving ahead quickly. The problems and questions that face therapists who use art today can be understood on the basis of history.

During the time of the 1930's, art therapy was referred to in the literature mostly because of the "tenacity and astonishing efforts of Margaret Naumburg" (Gladys L. Agell in Conference of Creative Arts Therapies, 1979, p. 15). About thirty years later, five institutions provided a sum of seven courses which were taught by four art therapists, with Naumburg being among them. Ten years later, in 1971, there were several programs that offered Master's degrees in art therapy. These programs, it should be noted, were in addition to the specific courses taught at the academic institutions across the country.

In earlier days, the courses were offered by art therapists who were convinced that there were special qualities inherent in art. These therapists persuaded others such as artists, teachers, and clinicians that art expression was very valuable. Quite a bit of the early

course work was based on actual case material derived from the work of hospitalized patients, private clients, and children in residential treatment centers and special schools. "The initial efforts of these therapist/instructors brought forward others who had similar experiences in special care facilities but who did not know what to call themselves, the process, or the results of the special thing they did" (Agell, p. 16).

When the American Art Therapy Association began, one of its greatest concerns was support of training development. The different variety of views were taken into account when writing Guidelines for Art Therapy Training; the document that provides direction and standards to be used for training. The guidelines state the entire association's belief that professional entry is at the graduate level. Also, specific didactic and practicum experience was to be regarded as essential.

In many mental hospitals, patients used to do art work such as draw or paint. Yet, this was formerly regarded as a curiosity. There was no systematic studying done of the paintings and drawings until the 1920's. Some psychiatrists put together a few items of such art productions without even using them in the diagnostic or treatment procedures of their patients (Psychiatry and Art, 1968, p. 94).

Today, the graphic art products find their place in both the diagnostic and prognostic evaluation, as well as in the treatment of the mental patient. In the beginning, psychotherapists used the drawings and paintings of patients as a tool to supplement verbal therapy. In such a case, the psychotherapist was to be the individual who did both the verbal therapy, and the art therapy, making use of art works or other non-verbal expression.

CHAPTER III

Various Views of Art Therapy

"Sometimes the contact with art is a simple matter of unwinding, like going to a gallery, leafing through a photographic essay, or perhaps doing some embroidery" (Rubin, 1978, p. 206). Or, at other times, it could be a way in which to deal with experiences that are hard to assimilate. "Whether creative or responsive, the therapeutic value of art," according to Rubin, "is not limited to the clinic or hospital, nor to deviant populations, but is known by everyone who has derived release, pleasure, and a sense of integration from an aesthetic experience" (p. 206).

Creative elements apparently are present to some degree in almost everyone (Williams & Wood, 1977). Even more obvious, "...is the daily ebb and flow of emotional drives" (p. 5). Explanations in regard to the relationship between these two forces have taken many forms. Some believe that emotional drives are the central force behind creative expression. For others, it is the creative need or drive itself which is the primary source for obtaining the "eventual integrity of the self."

Francis Reitman, in his book, Psychotic Art (1951), discusses the relationship between both form and content of

art works in regard to the dynamics of a patient's illness. These "dynamics" in his words, correspond to the patient's illness, and "...to the basic motivations and needs on which his illness depends and to his particular way of responding to such fundamental drives" (Reitman, p. 130). Views of psychotic art in dynamic terms, seems to have led to interpretative speculations as to the motivations of art works in general, as well as in the cases of individual artists.

Freud was the first to attempt to solve the issue of interpretating art in dynamic terms. His contribution to the understanding of aesthetic activity began when he first asked the question, what function has creativity for the artist himself? In his studies such as that of Leonardo da Vinci, he explained the symbolic expression in terms of the artist's subconscious struggles (Freud, 1958). To him, the subconscious was the primary force in motivating creative activity.

Freud also argued about the cathartic function of art. This last concept was presented quite clearly by Baudouin, who firmly believed that art represented a relief from tension, and as a result, can be a means of therapy in relation to nervous diseases (Rubin, 1951). The release of tension through art is a psychoanalytic concept of sublimation, or in other words, the symbolic expression of subconscious struggles.

For those who produce a work of art, the symbols represent non-verbal substitutes for something that is meaningful. The symbol and its functioning corresponds to the role of symbols in a dream;

> ...it conceals the real meaning from the artist as from the dreamer, and it graduates and reduces emotions which in direct, non-symbolic expression would arouse disturbance, stress or extreme unhappiness. In non-symbolic expression such emotions would be chaotic; they would not be coordinated. By reducing their objects to symbolic form the emotions are rendered orderly and tolerable (Reitman, p. 131).

The psychoanalytic approach to the interpretation of symbols, is totally based on Freud's theory of the "libido." There is an assumption that the primary conflicts of an individual artist and the thoughts that are most disturbing, must lie in the sexual sphere. The fact that in many circumstances there are more important and immediate sources of conflict is entirely ignored.

There are a whole legion of phallic symbols according to the psychoanalytic investigators. Yet, there is no concrete evidence that most of these symbols are, in fact, symbols for the male organ. Criticism of a similar nature also applies to other Freudian symbols. In the case of one particular person, it may be shown that a specific object symbolizes a given meaning. To extend this notion to a statement that the specific object symbolizes the exact meaning for all other people is not justifiable.

Nevertheless, this has been a typical procedure among psychoanalytically oriented investigators. In addition to this, it should be recognized that a symbolic interpretation offered to a given symbol in an art product by one psychoanalyst, may be entirely different from another psychoanalyst's interpretation.

The idea as to the functional meaning of art for the psychotic artist has been further explored by Kris (1958). His basic understanding is that the art of psychotics is a way in which to adjust to reality. Other psychoanalysts have also, in fact, demonstrated in certain circumstances, that the choice of theme in a piece of art work is dependent on the conflicts within the individual doing the piece of art work. Studies such as these have been successful in demonstrating that the motivations leading to the production of art by the artist, may be highly related in his life-history. According to Reitman:

> They have also shown that such motivations may correspond to general needs and drives in the community; it is upon this fact that appreciation and enjoyment of art by the general public depends, at any rate, in part. These accounts in terms of motivation, however, fail to give a satisfactory description and evaluation of art as a function of the human organism specific to it.

Quite obviously, the psychoanalytical evaluation of art products is closely related to the Freudian doctrines in general. For this reason, it is important to restate a

significant objection to the Freudian theories. In a most simplistic way, psychoanalysis deals with both psychological processes and reactions as causally determined. All human behavior is treated in terms of cause and effect. Freudian psychology tends to disregard the fact that many actions of humans are habitual, or in the words of Goldstein (1941), "preferred."

In Art Psychotherapy, Harriet Wadeson presents some information about art therapy. She tries to familiarize mental health professionals with the concept of art therapy by first describing it as a "doing" sort of therapy. To her, describing art therapy "is like trying to explain the flavor of chocolate to one who has never tasted it" (1980, p. 8).

Wadeson notes that there are some limitations inherent in trying to present information on art therapy. Perhaps it's the abstractness of the concept. In spite of the difficulty, though, she goes on to explain some of the advantages which art expression contributes to the psychotherapy process.

Firstly, Wadeson speaks of imagery. She notes that all humans think in images before using words. As an example, we could recognize mother before we could say "mother." She admits that other senses play a part too, but there is evidence that in the second six months of life, babies seem to come to recognize their mothers by sight.

In addition to imagery enabling an individual to form a base of experience in one's personality development (Erikson, 1950), it is also regarded as a fundamental component of unconscious phenomena. In Freud's writing about dreams, which he considered to be the "royal road to unconscious," Freud stated:

> We experience it (a dream) predominantly in visual images; feelings may be present too, and thoughts interwoven in it as well; the other senses may also experience something, but nonetheless it is predominantly a question of images. Part of the difficulty of giving an account of dreams is due to our having to translate these images into words. "I could draw it," a dreamer often says to us, "but I don't know how to say it" (1963, p. 90).

In the process of art therapy, the image of a dream, fantasy, or any experience, is portrayed in an image form versus having to be translated into words, as in verbal therapy. Jungians have encouraged their clients many times to make pictures of their dreams. In many cases, the interpretations of these pictures serve as the primary modality of a Jungian analysis (Perry, 1976). Clearly, words can be used to elaborate and associate to the art expression, but the basic message is depicted in image form.

Decreased defenses is another attribute that Wadson speaks about, and it is closely related to images. Since verbal language is our primary mode of communication, it is easier to manipulate what we want to say, and easier to refrain from saying something we would rather not say. Art

is less often used as a way to communicate, and hence; less amenable to control. Unexpected things may come out in a picture of sculpture; sometimes in direct opposition to the intentions of its creator. Perhaps this is one of the most exciting things that could happen in art therapy. The unexpected recognitions often can become a step toward insight, learning about oneself, and even eventual growth (Wadson, 1980).

One common misconception about the use of art therapy is that artistic ability is a prerequisite and necessary for self exploration through art. As Wadson notes:

> On the contrary, an artist may be less prone to accidental "slips of the brush" due to a high degree of ability in manipulating the materials. Occasionally I have worked with such people. On the other hand, I have also conducted therapy with a number of art therapists who were both skillful artistically and sophisticated psychologically, yet who were sufficiently open to self examination to relax their controls and let their pictures speak to them (1980, p. 9).

Another advantage to art therapy is in relation to the production of a tangible and concrete product. A unique attribute of there being a tangible object is that it may be easier for an individual to relate to the picture rather than to the self. This is evident in the case of a hospitalized depressed man who spoke about the angry expression on the face of his picture. He said that he hadn't intended it to come out that way, and he also denied being angry himself. Yet, eventually he did come to identify

with the figure he drew in his picture and recognized his own individual anger. Wadson (p. 10) calls this process "objectification" and explains that in "...'objectification'...feelings or ideas are at first externalized in an object (picture of sculpture)."

A fourth attribute of art therapy that Wadson considers, is in regard to the permanence of the object created. Being that the object is more or less permanent, there can be no distortions of memory. The picture of sculpture stays the same and can be looked at months or even years after it was produced.

Reviewing objects that were created sometime in the past could be very beneficial, while also enabling one to develop new insights. What is particularly advantageous is being able to notice certain patterns which may not be apparent while viewing a single creative production. Also, a piece of work from the past can enable an individual to recall particular feelings that were present when the object was created. This can help both the client and therapist derive a sense of ongoing progress throughout the sessions. To quote Wadson once again:

> Although it might seem likely that therapeutic progress would be self-evident, it is striking how easily people tend to forget how things were and how they felt. A series of pictures can provide ample documentation of the significant issues and their affectual components (1980, p. 10).

Utilizing art therapy is different from the use of a more verbal exchange between the therapist and client. When one speaks about something, it is usually linear in nature. In contrast, expressing oneself through art does not need to follow the rules of language. Art is more spatial in nature with no time element; relationships occur in space. According to Wadson, this form of expression can at times more closely duplicate an individual's actual experience. Whereas language is more or less sequential in nature, the use of art work can portray something all at once.

CHAPTER IV

Present Trends of Use and Evaluation of Art Therapy

This idea of using pictures to portray an experience all at once, parallels Janie Rhyne's idea of combining art techniques in a gestalt framework. The term "gestalt," to her, "means the ability to perceive whole configurations--to perceive your personality as a totality of many parts that together make up the reality of you" (1973, p. 9).

In Rhyne's book, The Gestalt Art Experience, she writes about the giving and receiving of messages. When she begins, she first writes about seeing the whole:

> Sometimes we understand each other intuitively--we exchange a few words, touch together, or maybe make contact only with our eyes. Surely we are communicating! That's beautiful when it happens. But sometimes we try to reach each other in all sorts of ways and give and get only confused messages that result in no contact or communication at all. What's happened to our intuitive powers? Can we rely on such an elusive sense of knowing that excludes conscious reasoning? Does intuition exist al all? (p. 87).

Rhyne believes in the existence of intuition. She writes about how sometimes people know things without knowing how they know them. Without intuition, perhaps people wouldn't be as wise as they are. To Rhyne, intuitive

understanding develops as one gains experience in perceiving truthfully and reasonably. Our own perceptions of meaningful relationships, in turn, help in gaining confidence in regard to our intuition.

> But sometimes we see only details and parts and have no idea of how they are or could be related. That's when a conscious mind comes in handy: when or intuitive insights fail us, we can use our mind to observe and reason our way to some conclusion that helps us function (Rhyne, 1973, p. 87).

Rhyne's understanding of the gestalt art experience is that people produce creations made from materials. These materials, in themselves, have no special meanings of any kind. Instead, the manner in which one perceives the materials makes them meaningful. Being that the artistic creations are those produced by unique individuals, and that the individuals themselves that view these creations are also unique, there is a potential problem of common ground communication. Therefore, in the words of Janie Rhyne, "If we don't intuitively understand each other's imagery or have a system of definitions common to all imagery, how can we begin to comprehend messages between us?" (p. 87).

Rhyne responds to this question by going back to the gestalt notion that the whole is more than the sum of its parts. In terms of applying this idea to acquiring more knowledge about communication, Rhyne says:

> ...that we can practice envisioning the total process of a person creating art forms, in

> seeing the whole we learn that our latest capacity for seeing the relationships of the parts comes into play naturally. When we concentrate on the total gestalt, we perceive how the differences and similarities of the details form patterns to which we respond without labored reasoning. Intuitive understanding, then, becomes active as we learn to stretch our vision wide enough to include many possible views of the meaning in any message (p. 88).

As adults, we are conditioned by our culture. Therefore, extending "the vision of our mind's-eye," many times, means that it is necessary to open up ourselves from our ordinary narrow vision. In order to see at a wider range, it is necessary to stop viewing from only a single viewpoint. "...we can see all of the facets of a form only by moving around to see from all sides; limiting ourselves to one perspective is likely to distort the whole image" (Rhyne, p. 88).

Quite obviously, there are many different types of perspectives, and they can be used according to the kind of picture desired. Because in a gestalt art experience it is preferred to see the whole person, it is important to use as wide a range of perceptions as possible. It's virtually not possible to say where one kind of perceiving ends and another starts, and there's no easy judgement for interpretive processes. Therefore, perhaps when interpreting art work, it is advantageous to guide one's intuition to focus on the lifestyle that the individual brings to the experience, the literal as well as the symbolic content in

specific art works, the media the individual chooses as a means of expression and how the media is manipulated, and probably most important, how the individual creator interprets with form, actions, and verbal language what he perceives as his message.

The genuine images in all art creations are clearly its most obvious content, but the total message is difficult to uncover unless referring it to the total context of the actual images. This also includes the style in which the images are portrayed, the different relationships between the figures, the choice of emphasis in depicting certain images, and, rather often, the things that have been left out in the picture. Because of the many different variables in the individual, cultural, and psychological experiences of the creator, it is quite difficult to provide any reliable structure for interpreting the art work produced. Accordingly, in order to make any sense out of certain messages, it's always necessary to consider the widest possible range of expression aspects.

> Pictorial expression includes both the range of actual subject matter, as wide as the world of visible objects, and the gamut of kinesthetic and emotional experiences, which are more felt than seen; also, graphic communication is often presented entirely through symbols that stand for ideas that are neither seen or felt. Keeping this all in mind when we want to grasp the full measure of art forms is not easy; grasping and claiming the one and only truth of a message is obviously impossible. But we must begin somewhere, and figure content is the easiest aspect to receive (Rhyne, p. 9).

In using art work as more or less of a language, it is desirable to create different images that are congruent with one's inner life; it's desirable to express with art how one is feeling and thinking. An individual will inevitably do this in their own unique style, and the content included will reflect what is going on in the individual's life at the time. In a sense, one uses the art materials in order to translate how and what is being perceived from the inner subjective realms by using the outer objective forms and images. An integral part of the individual's art experience, is therefore, the materials utilized. The actual media used could contribute to or take away from the completeness of the message.

Some investigators who use art therapy state that different personalities find which of the various art materials appear most natural to them (Machover, 1949). Both professional artists and those people who are experienced in using art materials, find certain media more agreeable than others. In fact, they often choose to express themselves with only a few different mediums even though they may be knowledgeable and skillful in many different media techniques. The same seems to be true for those individuals who are untrained and unskilled in using art media; but nevertheless, use art media as a form of personal expression. These people, too, seem to prefer

using certain specific media rather than others (Rhyne, 1980). Perhaps if given some time and a little bit of guidance, any individual could discover their own preferred media technique.

Unfortunately, it is not always possible for therapists to provide enough materials or time in order that a particular client can experiment. It's also unfortunate when a particular client's attitudes have to be evaluated on the basis of only a few quickly done drawings. It would be very difficult to offer an opinion or even offer an interpretation of a drawing, unless a series of drawings could be done over a period of time and with the use of different materials. Furthermore, it has been observed (Rhyne, 1980) that "...people who seem completely blocked in expression in one media will freely create imagery with other materials (p. 92). As an example, Rhyne notes that

> ...the widely used scribble technique reveals how a person sees forms or can form some pattern in a tangle of self-created lines; that revelation may be significant. But someone may not be accustomed to perceiving forms in two-dimensional, linear, colorless scribbles. Such a person sees the scribble but it makes no sense to him in terms of experience; give this person clay to manipulate and he may be able to create coherent forms that belie his confusion in scribbling. I observe that men, especially those that use their hands in making three-dimensional objects, can become perceptually blind when they are asked to make something out of a small, one-plane scribble. I've seen dancers and athletes--who ordinarily use their whole motor system--grow awkward, frustrated,

> and immobile when they try to draw something small using only hand and arm motions. Given large surfaces and broad tools to paint with, they get their whole body into what they're doing (1980, pp. 92-93).

Some people dislike having to work with blank surfaces and fear that they may make a mistake. For this reason, a therapist may choose to help alleviate this particular problem by use of collage. The cutout shapes can be placed on the surface area only temporarily, and then can be removed immediately. The individual cutouts can be placed in any manner and can be moved all around the background, until there has been enough experimentation to where the artist feels secure enough to glue them down.

In Childhood and Art Therapy (1979), Kramer considers the use of art within not only the therapeutic milieu, but also within the therapeutic team and the mental health professions. Of the two words that together make up the term art therapy, Kramer is inclined to stress the word "art" above the word "therapy." Her emphasis is in part due to her strong commitment to the visual arts, and it is in part a result of other art therapists who tend to neglect the art in therapy or take it for granted.

Kramer (1979) distinguishes the adjective "therapeutic" from the noun "therapy." To her, it seems that in today's world, anything that appears to be beneficial, or that lifts the mind,

> ...quickens the spirit, or eases the body, is readily dignified with the adjective "therapeutic." This inclination to stress the so-called therapeutic rather than mention the pleasant, useful, or helpful aspect of various educational, recreational, artistic, or public-spirited endeavors seems to be born of a certain irrational disdain for the practical and educational that pervades our cultural life. We deplore the global use of the adjective "therapeutic." We must insist even more strongly that the noun "therapy" be not used so loosely (1979, p. 136).

Perhaps it is expected that the use of art therapy is more than just vaguely beneficial. Maybe it is also expected that art therapists understand the different concepts of mental illness and health, of human development, and of the various processes that contribute to a human being's functioning. Possibly, it is expected that as an art therapist, one applies their knowledge to their field, and continues to gain more knowledge throughout their professional lives. Yet, with the variety of concepts about personality structure and about different therapeutic inventions, it is highly unlikely that one can categorize all art therapists and demand that they all adhere to one specific school of thought.

In discussing the functions of art therapy and that of the art therapist, Edith Kramer's presentation (1979) relies heavily on the concepts of Freudian psychoanalytic psychology. This is both the main foundation of her work, as well as her thought. Nevertheless, she also states that

"Ideas from adjacent fields, including art therapy itself, broaden and complement my understanding" (1979, p. 137).

Kramer believes that no matter what the psychological orientation of a therapist may be, the therapist must find ways of incorporating their theories predominately within a visual context. rather than a purely verbal one.

> At the onset we might say that just as verbal therapists have learned to listen with the third ear, art therapists learn to see art productions with a third eye. However, the anology must be qualified as soon as it has been stated. Much confusion has arisen because the meaning of words and phrases that were invented within the framework of Freudian psychoanalytic treatment became blurred when these new terms were transplanted into related fields (Kramer, 1979, p. 137).

Kramer asserts that although art therapists can develop a "third eye," it is only in respect to perceiving the meaning of lines, colors, and sculptural forms. She does not believe that it is right for art therapists to compare themselves to psychoanalysts. The psychoanalyst can listen to a client's free associations, but to her, no comparable material could be brought out in art therapy.

On the other, Kramer states that the art therapist's skills go beyond those of psychotherapists. This is in regard to all the realms of art and art materials, and is a result of the incidental use of art by psychotherapists (1979). Taking a reverse look, a person only skilled in art therapy "...cannot be expected to match the psychotherapist's

third ear or his knowledge about how to use words therapeutically" (Kramer, 1979, p. 139).

Things, however, seem to be a little more complex than this. It is not accurate to regard the art creations produced in an art therapy session equal to that of the words used in psychotherapy or to the play and talk when working with children. The communication that is typically done in psychotherapy is usually focused mainly on content. "While art therapists encourage unconventional form as well as content in art, they are nevertheless intent on fostering 'artistic eloquence.' ...the depth and verity of the experience in art therapy is in many ways bound up with its 'formal' qualities. Above all the individual's eloquent productions eloquently speak back to him both in the course of work and when he later contemplates it" (Kramer, 1979, p. 139).

This form of dialogue between the specific creator and his creation has no exact likeness to a verbal type of therapy. It can paralled only when the other creative arts such as dance, music, drama, or poetry are utilized in the therapeutic session. The use of artistic expression is a very powerful aid in helping an individual recognize, sort out, and master his or her own experience. To quote Edith Kramer:

> Art therapists are therefore forever intent on helping individuals to become more coherent and

> more eloquent in their art. They are skilled in perceiving even the most hesitant moves in this direction and in finding ways of supporting the most rudimentary efforts (1979, p. 140).

In her book, Personality Projection in the Drawing of the Human Figure (1949), Karen Machover makes an effort at describing a method of personality evaluation. This method is primarily based on the interpretation of drawings done on the human figure. She states that it has long been recognized that individuals are capable of revealing their personality through the use of drawings. Furthermore, she goes on to say:

> What has been lacking, and I trust that the work that is now being done in drawing analysis will supply, is a degree of systematization of analysis of the graphic product which is at once comprehensive, communicable, and does justice to the intricacies of personality (p. 4).

When Machover considers some theoretical notions, she begins with the phenomenon of projection. She depicts personality as being something that develops through an individual's movement, feeling, and thinking. She then states that different methods of projection that explore motivations have, time and again, uncovered deep and maybe even unconscious types of self-expression which would not be obvious in direct communication. In the words of Karen Machover:

> It is safe to assume that all creative activity bears the specific stamp of conflict and needs pressing upon the individual who is creating.

> The activity elicited in response to "draw a person" is indeed a creative experience as will be testified by the individual who is drawing. Wide and concentrated experience with drawings of the human figure indicates an intimate tie-up between the figure drawn and the personality of the individual who is doing the drawing.

In terms of drawing the human as a vehicle for self-expression, it is believed than an individual will be compelled to draw from some sources (Machover, 1949). External figures are so varied, and as a result, lend themselves to a more subjective representation of a person. According to Machover, at some point there is some process of selection that involves the identification of both projection and introjection (1979). An individual will create the drawing consciously, and no doubt, unconsciously. "...upon his whole system of psychic values" (Machover, 1979, p. 5).

Machover continues by mentioning that the individual self is the most personal point of reference in all activities. She believes that as an individual grows older, he or she comes to correspond various sensations, emotions, and perceptions with specific body organs. The investment of the body organs is, in fact, the perception of the body image as it has evolved out of personal experience.

> Consequently, the drawing of a person, in involving a projection of the body image, provides a natural vehicle for the expression of one's body needs and conflicts. Successful drawing interpretation has proceeded on the hypothesis that the figure drawn is related to the individual who is drawing with the same

> intimacy characterizing that individual's gait, his handwriting, or any other of his expressive movements (Machover, p. 5).

Emanuel F. Hammer, in his book The Clinical Application of Projective Drawings (1958) also speaks about the use of art expression as a projective device. In his own words, "...both the subject's self-concept and his perception of his environment press forward onto the drawing page" (p. 165). He writes about a specific art therapy technique, "The House-Tree-Person Projective Drawing Technique," and states that concepts such as house, tree, and person are symbolically potent. Hammer also states that "...concepts such as House, Tree, and Person are saturated with the emotional and ideational experiences associated with the personality's development, and the drawing of these images compel projection on the part of the drawer" (p. 165).

In respect to the administration of the House-Tree-Person, it should be noted that certain restrictions have been devised in order for standardization purposes. For example, the same concepts are requested from each individual, on the same size of paper, and with materials that are similar. A number two pencil with an eraser is provided, as well as a four-page form sheet that is white in color and seven by eight and one-half inches in size. Only one drawing surface is exposed at a time, and the drawing of a house is requested first. This is drawn with the sheet of

paper situated horizontally to the client, and is followed by the drawing of a tree and person respectively. Both the tree and person drawings are obtained on separate pieces of paper, and are to be drawn with the sheets of paper situated vertically.

The client is then "...asked to draw as good a House (and later Tree and Person) as he can. He is told that he may draw any kind he likes, he may erase as much as he wishes, and he may take as much time as he chooses" (Hammer, p. 166).

If the client complains that it is impossible to follow through with the drawings because of lack of skill, the therapist may want to assure the client that the House-Tree-Person is not a test of artistic ability. Instead, the therapist is more interested in how the drawings are executed. If the client should ask permission to use any sort of mechanical aid, the therapist's response is that the drawings must be done in free-hand.

> The order of presentation of the stimuli: House, then Tree, and then Person, always remains the same. This provides the most gradual introduction into the drawing task, in that in step-by-step manner, it leads up to the entities that are psychologically more difficult to draw. The subject is gradually led along from the more neutral to the "closer-to-home" self-portraits, Thus, the drawing item which arouses the most conscious associations is left to the last (Hammer, p. 166).

In response to whether there is any value or worth in art therapy, much has been written. Francis Reitman, the author of Psychotic Art (1951) believes that there is an immense diagnostic value in the use of spontaneous productions,

> ...any means (art classes, etc.) which encourages this is welcome. So many latent schizophrenics, well controlled by the personality, become unveiled through painting. Thus it is, in a sense, a "projective technique" of the diagnostic armory. It also offers possibilities for various experimental investigations... (Reitman, pp. 165-166).

Reitman continues, however, with the statement that "As an occupational therapy at a higher level, art treatment is to be encouraged, but as a treatment 'per se' it does not seem to have much value" (p. 166). He goes on to state that it is highly questionable as to whether a client can act out an experience through an artistic creation. Whatever the case may be, it is the duty of the therapist to offer as much help as possible, rather than relying on chance therapeutic results.

> Hence he will reinforce his physical methods of treatment with encouragement to paint, and 'vice versa.' No psychotic on record has been cured by means of painting alone; this, of course, excludes the truth artists whose relationship to their art, including the question of the healing value of their art, has already been raised. But this specific question at present has to remain unanswered. (Reitman, p. 166).

Evelyn Virshup, in her book, Right Brain People in a Left Brain World (1978), strongly supports the value of utilizing art therapy. She states that "Art therapy can provide a place and method for experimentation with the expression of feelings that can be safe, revelatory, fulfilling, and generally satisfying" (1978, p. 30). She believes that some such experience as this may be very necessary for an individual's emotional development and growth.

Virshup's notion of art therapy is that the use of art enables an individual to work through conflicts on paper, with the use of clay, and other media. "Anger, guilt, fear and other subliminal emotions may not only be expressed graphically, but while being explored in a series of drawings or sculptures, these feelings may at the same time be resolved and/or integrated; sequestered energies may be released and destructive impulses channeled, and all without the use of words" (Virshup, p. 20).

Perhaps this aspect of art therapy is what makes it valuable. As an adjunct to verbal therapy, art may be especially useful for those for whom the use of language through words, is too easy or too hard. Virshup sums up by saying that "...it is, above all, a mode of education of those functions which are best reached nonverbally (p. 20).

In The Artist in Each of Us (1951), Florence Cane writes that productive organization puts an individual into

great conflict in terms of the individual need of the person, and the good of society. She says that as an individual, a person requires a varied existence, with both an opportunity for play as well as for work, and for the irrational and rational.

> Primitive man used his creative ability naturally in making his clothes, utensils, and habitation. We should learn from him and use art freely in our lives to bring back the balancing and health-giving qualities of creating (Cane, p. 303).

Art, according to Cane, can be a healing agent. Many people who hold on to a particular problem for any length of time may eventually break down, and may even develop some sort of mental illness. Painting, or any type of creative expression, can lift a person up to a healthier condition.

> However fragile the effort and unformed the art, the persons creating it experience a new breadth of life; they share in the creative pattern of the universe; they know its pulse and, for a flash, feel godlike in their new power. A candle is lit; the dark is dispensed. This is only the beginning. Afterwards the journey consists of steps forward, retreats, and steps forward again (Florence Cane, p. 303).

Art is believed to have therapeutic value for both the normal as well as the abnormal (Cane, 1951). Florence Cane thinks that a great many problems with those individuals categorized as "slow" or "difficult normal" can be cleared up through the use of art experiences. She adds further, that at the beginning and later stages of an

individual's drawing, it is possible to trace the entire development of the individual. The different stages of a particular drawing that are seen, offer a great opportunity to recognize the individual's disturbances.

> The fact that nearly all disorders of the mind and soul shake self-confidence is one of the most important axioms of the modern psychotherapy. The normalization of the creative power would mean not only the adjustment of self-confidence but also the rehabilitation of the whole mental habit (Cane, p. 304).

Margaret Naumburg notes that although the value of "free painting" is recognized, few Freudian colleagues have been ready to encourage their patients to express themselves and their experiences in this manner (1966). In the formal Freudian use of a patient's art productions, the patient is told to exclude all conscious expectations when making free associations. Therefore, there is little room for the patient to interpret the meaning of his art work to the therapist. "In contrast to this formal Freudian use of a patient's art productions to reinforce his analytic approach, dynamically oriented art therapy allows a patient complete freedom to associate to his symbolic art production in any way that he chooses" (Naumburg, 1966, p. 20).

Margaret Naumburg presents some remarkable proof that free paintings, not copying from models, intensify and accelerate successful therapy (Naumburg, 1953). She asserts that the advantage of utilizing art therapy over that of the typical verbal free-association technique is that it

intensifies the therapeutic process. She goes on to say "No doubt the reasons for it are numerous and are but vaguely known" (Naumburg, 1953, p. 115). Among them that she states are the following six.

Firstly, Naumburg explains that it is much more difficult to be evasive when communicating graphically rather than verbally. To back up this statement, Naumburg writes:

> The statement "a person walks" does not tell us anything about the age and sex of the person; about the strength or speed of the movement; about its direction, whether it is upward or downward, or on a level; whether it is straight, smooth and easy, or difficult, circuitous and hampered by obstacles, etc. On the other hand, when a patient paints "a person walking" he must be specific about numerous details absent from the verbal statement. Moreover, the use of colors adds information which is not at all implied in a verbal phrase. Even if the patient succeeded in drawing an ageless and sexless person, he would be doing something very rare and very meaningful because he would thus disclose peculiar personality disturbances. The difference between abstract speech and concrete paintings is conspicuous. It is very difficult to make a detailed painting without expressing some attitudes unintentionally. In a painting it is almost impossible to say the bare minimum (1953, p. 115).

Next, Naumburg maintains that it is a clinical fact that personality traits are brought out more readily when a patient is doing some type of creative work, rather than when doing some simple and unoriginal routine type of work. Artistic creations such as those through the use of free

drawings and paintings, stimulate an individual's creative effort, and requires a certain degree of originality. Visual images reflect more of a person's individuality than many of his words for the very fact that it's difficult to imitate others in art. "Such an imitation is by far easier in speech in which one can readily hide one's own thoughts using the words of others with little personal involvement (Naumburg, 1953, p. 116).

The third reason that Naumburg discusses, in regard to the therapeutic value of an art technique, concerns the symbolic content of art productions. An individual is probably less likely to become cognizant of the meanings to the symbols used in an art work, in comparison to his words. Therefore, anxiety is much less likely to become a distracting factor in therapy; as may, in fact, be the case in pure verbal therapy.

According to Naumburg, another advantage of art therapy is that there is less of a need for consistency, objectivity and rationality with free art work rather than during speech. For whatever reasons, language constantly attempts to shorten words and sentences. People express themselves with the use of fewer words and in less time. Furthermore,

> In our civilization drawings and paintings are not a universally employed media of social communication. Therefore, they are not so

> standardized as words and thinking in words. This may explain why many a psychotic discloses the mental disintegration in his graphic productions. Sometimes inappropriateness of affect and unrealistic thinking are revealed by the addition of a single horn-like hair on the top of the head, or a tail-like line to the sacral part of the human figure. These "irrelevant" and small details can be added easily and quickly without interfering with the main composition and are very telling (Naumburg, 1953, p. 116).

Naumburg comments on a fifth advantage of using art therapy in respect to the individual being able to do the art work with little interference from the therapist. The client is left alone, and therefore, there is no need to divide his or her attention between maintaining verbal contact with another person, and creating a work of art. There is time in order to formulate ideas without not only interruption, but also, influence. Also, "The desire to make certain that one is properly understood by others in conversation affects imagination and interferes with the free flow of associations" (1953, p. 117).

The final point that Naumburg makes is that, "Making paintings is physiologically and neuromuscularly a more intense activity than is saying words, particularly when one is otherwise physically inactive" (1953, p. 117). Art involves the person more than just talking, and there is more difficulty in trying to vary, change, distort, and disguise different types of actions in comparison to the use of words. As Naumburg sums it up:

> It is thus possible that the creation of graphic visual images by eye-hand-motor-coordination may be nearer the unconscious than is the producing of words, especially in the case of literate, intelligent, conventional and highly educated adults. In conclusion, readiness to perform certain actions can be manifested more directly, more reliably and more fully in graphic than in verbal productions (1953, p. 117).

In his book, Creative and Mental Growth (1957), Viktor Lowenfeld describes art education therapy. The principle of an art therapy education begins on the level of the individual with the use of visually perceivable documentations (and not for their symbolic interpretation) for the extension of the individual's frame of reference until the particular individual accepts himself. "Art education" to Lowenfeld, "serves a double purpose: as a means of self-expression and as a therapeutic means" (1957, p. 189).

In the book, Creative and Mental Growth (1975) both Viktor Lowenfeld and W. Lambert Brittain, the authors, describe art as a means of understanding growth. They emphasize that art can provide an opportunity for growth in ways that other types of subject matter cannot. Moreover, "Art ...is more than a pastime; it is meaningful communication..., it is the selection of those parts of his environment with which he identifies, and the organization of these parts into a new meaningful whole: (Lowenfeld and Brittain, 1975, p. 43).

Lowenfeld and Brittain consider the study of children's art as fascinating. By understanding the manner in which a youngster draws, as well as the methods used to depict his or her environment, a therapist can gain much insight into the particular child's behavior. In addition, the therapist can come to appreciate the complex and varied ways in thich youngsters grow and develop.

> It is possible to look at children's growth in art as being a process of organizing thoughts and representing environment in such a way as to give us an understanding of the development of thinking. It seems clear then that these developmental stages are not merely developmental stages in art, but are developmental stages in the whole growth pattern and that the art product is merely an indication of this total growth. Actually, the art activity may be growth in itself (Lowenfeld and Brittain, p. 55).

Emanuel F. Hammer makes some concrete conclusions as to the general advantages that project drawings can have. The conclusions he puts forth are hypothesized from empirical observations only, and do not imply scientifically proven relationships. At present, though, they have shown to possess a pragmatic usefulness.

> In an abbreviated way, one might say that projective drawings have the following advantages: (a) they are relatively simple to administer; (b) total response time is comparatively short thus affording rich returns in terms of time and energy expended; (c) they can, therefore, serve as a quick screening device; (d) they afford a minimally-threatening, maximally-absorbing introduction to the test battery; (e) the tests' ease of administration and simplicity of handling make them as easily applicable to testing large

> groups as to testing individual subjects; (f) a nonverbal projective technique has obvious advantages with young children, the poorly educated, the mentally defective, the non-English-speaking, the painfully shy, and those of concrete orientation; (g) drawings more frequently get under the defenses of evasive and guarded subjects, incarcerated inmates of correctional institutions, etc.; (h) experience suggests that organicity is more readily detected with projective drawings than with the Rorschach; (i) empirical evidence is beginning to suggest that drawings may constitute a clinical instrument which descends to the more primitive and deeper layers of personality; (j) "purer" samples of behavior, for research purposes, are obtained; (k) the quick administration of drawings and their somewhat lessened influence by memory allows for easy periodic retests to check progress in psychotherapy and to focus the therapist's attention on conflicts before they come into view in the psychotherapeutic collaboration; (l) because of the graphic picture of the entire personality as a gestalt, interpretative relationships between various personality components are more readily apparent to the experienced clinician (that is to say, the psychologist does not have to simultaneously keep in mind a long series of scores, a large number of ratios and various content themes as in Rorschach interpretation, but can see the personality elements and their relationship at an extended, pursuing glance); (m) data from drawings are more easily explained to, and more readily understood by, psychiatrists untrained in projectives (Hammer, pp. 609-610).

With a quick glance at the literature on the use of art for the handicapped, it is evident that there are some negative expectations. By way of example, Saunders states that art for the retarded reveals "a definite attitude that the retarded child [is] not capable of developing creative and imaginative concepts" (Rubin, 1978, p. 232). According to Judith Aaron Rubin (1978), there is a common notion that

the retarded require very organized procedures in a step-by-step manner, that only one single activity at a time is needed, that they must constantly be supervised in order that they don't misuse the materials, and that the retarded are generally lacking as far as imagination is concerned.

Similarly, negative attitudes are frequently expressed in terms of the use of art with the blind. According to Decker, "negative sentiments exist concerning the creative aspects of the blind child and feasible art activities... with the result that the child's handwork time has been consistently devoted to learning repetitious movements which evolve a craft skill" (Rubin, 1978, p. 233).

Even among those who have great faith in the potentialities of art and the exceptional child, there seems to be many who emphasize the need to "keep to the rules." Although "keeping to the rules" may at first seem to be in direct conflict with the freedom for self-expression, there is an assertion by Lindsay that procedures such as these "enable many backward children to state clearly in paint what they have to portray, which they would otherwise not do if left to their own resources" (Rubin, 1978, p. 233). These condescending attitudes need to be disproven and overcome, in order that the pleasure in the creative art experience can be brought to the handicapped.

> Certainly, it helps to develop a healthy skepticism for at least some of what one reads in this

> area. It may also help to be aware of some of the conditions which make it possible for even the most disabled to create (Rubin, 1978, p. 233).

Through the use of art materials, spontaneous art expression and art therapy itself, may become misunderstood, taken lightly, and even misleading. In order to be therapeutic, art expression has to be placed into a system of carefully guided psychotherapy. "But even when such a system is provided, it must be kept in mind that art therapy has its limitations" (Mala Betensky, 1973, p. 347).

For some clients the art materials that are used may offer beneficial contact with some component of reality, or a bit of freedom in terms of using their hands and eyes or in making decisions. These kinds of clients may start to regain a sense of mastery over their environment. Yet, for others, if they are perhaps very much disturbed and not supervised by a trained art therapist, the use of art materials may bring about aggressive impulses and release formless and irrational outbursts of energy. In such a case, the outbursts would be of no value, with no one to offer any solutions or support.

In her book, Self-Discovery Through Self-Expression (1973), Mala Betensky discusses art expression as being an essential part of the therapeutic process with children and adolescents. She states that the use of art expression can be valuable as an aid in therapy, but also says that the

use of art therapy is not necessarily the quickest amongst other therapies.

> Becoming aware of immaturities, relinquishing them while normal maturation is struggling with its own blocks, and integrating slowly developing new maturities, is a time-consuming process which cannot be hastened by the magic of self-expression with paint or clay (Betensky, p. 347).

Betensky believes that all art expression in art therapy must be brought to the level of awareness with the use of verbal statements; those which are communicated to the therapist by the clients themselves. In this way, clients will get more in touch with their own personal behavior. She goes on to say that if guided intelligently, there may be change initiated. Yet, before this takes place, "the subconscious material expressed in the art production must be brought into the awareness of both the therapist and the patient" (Betensky, pp. 347-348). Obviously, it is the therapist's professional responsibility for both the process and the procedures.

Emanuel F. Hammer (1958) states that like the Rorschach, the use of projective drawings are usually more revealing with an introverted individual rather than one who is extraverted. He considers, "The projective, and at the same time identification and emphathic, process which is relatively more characteristic of the intratensive subject is also the most important factor in deep rapport, be it

with a person, a landscape, a house, a tree, the movement or posture of an animal, and the like" (p. 647). He also goes on to state that it is perhaps to be expected that dreams, free association and other types of clinical investigative approaches all offer richer yields with clients that are capable of both reflection and introspection rather than with those clients who are predominantly extratensively oriented.

Hammer discusses the practical uses for projective drawings. He says that he has found this instrument to be of value in exploring deep mental processes at the start, during the middle, and at the end of the course of therapy. "Their easy administration allows them to be used as an aid in identifying suppressed or repressed dispositions and conflicts, and in defining the nature of the patient's resistance to these dispositions (Hammer, p. 647).

In addition, Hammer has found that the use of projective drawings can be employed as a starting point for productive associations, and can also further the therapeutic process. According to Hammer:

> To ask the patient to associate to the stern-looking female drawn, the seated or leaning male, the vulnerable tree bent almost double by the environmental pressures, the tree rooted in a junk yard piled high with debris, or the bleak, desolate, deserted-looking house, for example, provides productive starting points for free association (1959, pp. 647-648).

Repeated employment of projective drawings also enable a means of estimating the actual effects of therapy, or of predicting the later areas to be dealt with as they emerge nearer to the surface. Lastly, the use of projective drawings have been favorably accepted as instruments for research. They seem to lend themselves most adaptively to this particular goal (Hammer, 1958).

At the present time, there is an increase of interest in the use of the creative arts with mental patients as both a means of exploring and reintegrating human personality (Naumburg, 1973). "Recognition of the validity of measuring personality by means of such tests as the Rorschach and Thematic Apperception, as well as scientific analyses of individuality through handwriting and gesture has stimulated the use of the arts as supplemental projective techniques" (Naumburg, 1973, p. 49). Yet, while there has been some encouragement of art expression for either diagnosis or therapy, there is still some considerable divergence in terms of approach. Some recognize the value of art for both purposes, some find art useful for diagnosis, and others only for therapeutic reasons.

When the art productions of mental patients is considered diagnostically, it reveals very little, unless it is of a type that is both spontaneous and free from formal direction. Yet if art is utilized as therapy, two quite different approaches are possible.

> The more formal and traditional approach is represented by the occupational therapists, who have been most effective, with mental patients, in developing an acquisition of skills in various crafts. Such training is carefully graded and planned in order to assist the patient in attaining tehcnical mastery of the tools and materials in a chosen activity. The emphasis in occupational therapy, as in academic art teaching, is on the technique of the craft or art to be mastered, rather than on the self-expression of the patient (Naumburg, 1973, p. 49).

Spontaneity and originality of expression are recommended by those who support what has been called the "free" expression in therapeutic work. The term is not very adequate, nor accurate, and needs some definition. According to Naumburg (1973, p. 49) "...'free' art expression is meant an authentic and original response to life (either inner or outer) made in some chosen art form; it does not mean a reproduction of models or stereotypes such as one often followed in formal art teaching or occupational therapy." A danger in using the term "free" expression is the suggestion that such a condition is absolute with the existence of unconditioned freedom.

> But those who advocate the encouragement of creative expression are fully aware of the limitations of such freedom; for the mental patient, like every other individual, is conditioned by factors working upon him from both within and without his personality. Among dominant influences radiating from the environment are those related to the general cultural and economic milieu, the parental attitudes and the school experience. All of them play a part in either stimulating or

> deflecting what spontaneity the patient is able to release, in his first attempt at "free" expression in art (Naumburg, 1973, p. 50).

The following is a clear delineation of the scope of art therapy from a psychiatric orientation to art-oriented positions. The format for this information was first developed by the American Art Therapy Association.

> Art Therapy is a human service profession. Art Therapy offers an opportunity to explore personal problems and potentials through verbal and nonverbal expression and to develop physical, emotional, and/or learning skills through therapeutic art experiences. Although visual forms of expression have been basic to societies throughout recorded history, art therapy emerged as a profession in the 1930's. Therapy through art recognizes art processes, forms, content, and associations as reflections of an individual's development, abilities, personality, interests, and concerns. The use of art as therapy implies that the creative process can be a means both of reconciling emotional conflicts and of fostering self-awareness and personal growth. The benefits of art therapy experiences are applicable to populations with special needs. Art therapy may be primary, parallel, or adjunctive therapy in psychiatric centers, clinics, community centers, nursing homes, drug and alcohol treatment clinics, schools, institutions, half-way houses, prisons, developmental centers, residential treatment centers, general hospitals, and other clinical educational and rehabilitative settings.
>
> Art therapists work with people of all ages; with individuals, and groups in clinical, educational and rehabilitative settings. Through observation and analysis of art behaviors, art products, and the client's communications, the art therapist formulates diagnostic assessments and treatment plans as part of a total therapy program. An art therapist may focus on growth experiences, rehabilitation, psychotherapy, prescriptive treatment, remediation,

> adaptation, and/or personality enhancement. Although different theoretical approaches may be employed in the therapist-client relationship, the art therapist creates a supportive environment by organizing the presentation of art materials and other resources; by inviting participation appropriate to the client's willingness to share thoughts and feelings; and by encouraging the client to recognize and extend these insights beyond the art therapy session. In responding to both the strengths and needs of the client, the art therapist integrates personal training and experience in art and therapy with theories of human behavior; with a knowledge of visual symbol production; with an understanding of normal and abnormal behavior; with skills in intervention methods; and with creative expressions in art by individuals and groups. In art therapy the client and the art therapist work together to understand visual and verbal messages (Florence Singer, 1980, pp. 9-10).

"Perhaps the need to make one's mark through creative endeavor stems from a simple sensory response to attractive materials, from a primitive desire to give form to that which is formless, or to interact with a manipulative environment" (Rubin, 1978, p. 254). Perhaps, too, it stems from a more greater complex psychic need in order to balance an individual's experience. The human being is uneasy when things are not fit or don't make much sense. Judith Rubin argues that in order to re-establish an optimal point of comfort, it is necessary to lessen cognitive and affective "dissonance" and conflict (1978). According to her:

> There appears to be strong inner pressures toward both constructive and destructive acts,

> seen in responses to art media, as well as elsewhere. In order for progressive and integrative tendencies to gain ascendance, internal conflict must be reduced. Energy can then be free, both to express and to control that expression aesthetically (1978, p. 254).

The primary issue that Florence Cane addresses in her book, is how to best develop the "Artist in Each of Us" (1951). She perceived the concept to be the following: no amount of hands-on technical instruction in drawing or painting can be compared in value to the ability of altering conditions within the artist. The artist "...is the instrument through which the art is produced. It follows that the art can be no better than the instrument" (Cane, 1951, p. 369).

Cane (1951) speaks about the chief value of creative experiences for a child. To her, it lies in the power of the letting go of emotions and ideas, giving them some form, and through this creative activity, developing and integrating the child as a full human being. Throughout the creative work, all one's functioning comes into play, and it's the therapist's or teacher's responsibility to make sure that they actually do function.

> Thus, instead of judging the drawing or painting as a product to be corrected or improved, the teacher uses the drawing as an index of the child's state and tries to improve that, knowing that if the child is fully alive, his work will be (Cane, 1951, p. 369).

As in any other new field, there are a variety of different approaches and techniques being applied and experimented with in art therapy. The approaches and techniques only differ in respect to the particular therapist's orientation, as well as to the program and type of patient population of the institution with which the particular therapist is affiliated. Furthermore, all of the various approaches and particular techniques are important contributions not only to the understanding of art therapy, but also contributes to the basic understanding of man.

All in all, the use of art productions appears to constitute one of the most significant workable techniques in response to psychology's quest for serviceable instrumentalities. Art therapy can be viewed now, as well as in the future, as being related to an individual's own unique creative process. Images and symbols are the daily language of creativity. As Robbins and Sibley put it:

> The art therapist understands the power of the symbol and utilizes this tool as a very special way of communicating. He recognizes that the image pulls together many levels of the psyche and can make a more accurate and complex statement of cognition than any verbal interpretation (1976, pp. 41-42).

Many believe that there exists room for more dynamic use of artistic methods within the therapeutic relationship. Robbins and Sibley, for example, write:

> We see the creative part of art therapy as one in which imagery flows between patient and

> therapist, where art materials function as a bridge--a bridge where symbolism reaches out and enhances a therapeutic process. Art materials are used in a very dynamic sense. The materials only provide a means for expressing symbolism--symbolism that can lead the process further into self-discovery (1976, pp. 53-54).

Perhaps there is nothing more important than enabling individuals to experience creatively in order that they can release themselves from their personal emotional prisons. Eventually, however, this goal may be perceived as being inadequate, and possibly even naive. When some clients do not grow, and others improperly use or abuse this type of therapeutic intervention, something more is needed. A belief in nonverbal communication is not enough.

A broad grouping of client behavior presents characteristic issues for a therapist utilizing art. Different diagnostic descriptions can be very helpful in terms of the formulation of treatment plans. However, it is important to recognize that the diagnostic positions are only guidelines. No one specific client ever falls clearly into any single diagnostic category. Instead, "Each person is a unique entity with a multitude of characterological styles and must be seen as 'original,' as through the eyes of an artist" (Robbins and Sibley, 1976, p. 56).

Throughout this paper, the general notion of art therapy was considered. Although the topics covered were done so in a more or less specific manner, the issues raised

and the conclusions drawn do not claim to offer a particular generalized theory. Yet, perhaps it is better to come up with some sort of truth even if it covers only a small fraction of art therapy. "The problem," to quote Sherrington, "has one virtue at least, it will long offer to those who pursue it the comfort that to journey is better than to arrive...and when that arrival comes, there may be regret that pursuit is over" (Reitman, p. 168).

Maybe the use of art is not entirely adequate as a tool in therapy, but the value of any tool lies in the use to which it is put. In some ways, artistic endeavors may be the most exciting experience in which an individual can engage. Art therapy cannot supply solutions to all types of problems, but one can most reasonably expect that when it is rightfully employed, a great deal can be achieved in terms of the fuller development of an individual human being.

The test of the wider potentialities of art therapy and art expression,perhaps, still lies in the future. Nevertheless, the actual writing of this paper, alone, may be considered as another step in the effort to reinforce art therapy, a respected position in the counseling/psychological domain.

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