

# Show Me

Using the creative process for healing and self  
discovery

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## Art Therapy in Addiction Treatment

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Information covered in this presentation

- What is art therapy?
- How can art therapy be incorporated into addiction treatment?
- What are some ways that the creative process may be incorporated into my work?
- Questions and Answers
- Optional art therapy experiential- mandala making

## History of art therapy

- Art Therapy was established as a defined practice in the 1940s.
- In America, Dr. Edith Kramer and Margaret Naumberg were the first to use the term 'art therapy', based on the idea that art making released the unconscious through free association and it was the job of the art therapist to analyze and understand it.
- Contemporary art therapy has broadened the term greatly- art therapy has been influenced by all theoretical and therapeutic schools of thought.

## What is art therapy?

- Art therapy in it's simplest form is using the creative process for healing, developing new understanding of self, replacing dysfunctional thoughts and beliefs with healthy ones, and offers a means of healthy expression.



## What is art therapy?

- Through the act of creating art and thinking about the process and medium, people are able to develop skills that increase cognitive ability, increase awareness of self and others, and help them cope with the distressing symptoms or limitations imposed by disability or disease.



## Why art therapy?

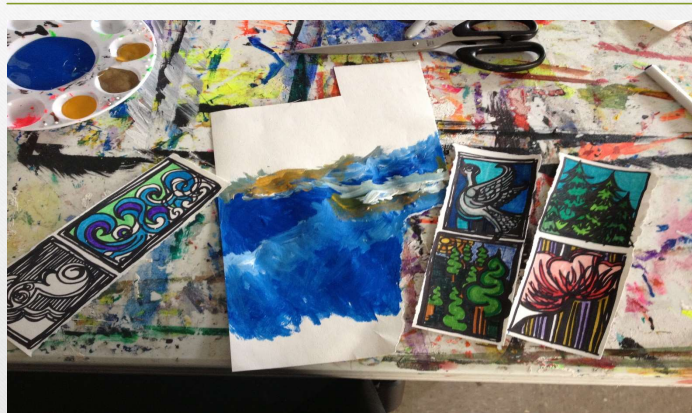
- Art therapy bypasses defensive structures in it's nonverbal approach
- Confronts and breaks down denial and shame
- Provides a safe avenue for expression
- Increases sense of control through mastery of the art making process



## History of art therapy program at Cumberland Heights

- Art groups and classes have been at Cumberland Heights for most of its history.
- Art Therapy as a formal practice was established first through group work in 2008, and has evolved to a department that offers art therapy groups to every residential program on campus.
- In addition to art therapy groups, individual work is also offered based on the recommendation of the primary therapist.

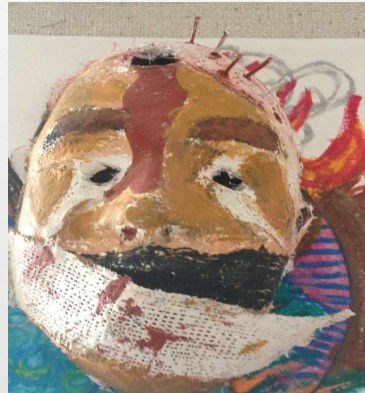
## Art Therapy at Cumberland Heights





## Special Considerations

- Balance the emotional content of the work with the controllability or regressive nature of the art media
- Always provide guidelines and safe closure for containment



## Special Considerations

- Art Therapy can only be called this if it is facilitated by a trained art therapist



# Art Therapy Directives

Examples of work done in groups and individual sessions.

Many of these may be adapted and incorporated into your work.

## First Step: Powerlessness

- Directive: What did it feel like to be in active addiction?
- Create a painting to show what it **felt** like, **not what it looked like** to be in active addiction.



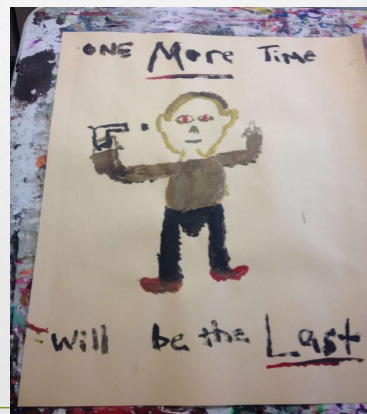
## First Step: Powerlessness

- The process of painting is examined as metaphor. The patients are only offered acrylic paint for this exercise and are asked to consider how they experienced powerlessness in the process of painting.



## First Step: Powerlessness

- Materials needed:
  - - large manila paper
  - -paint brushes
  - -acrylic paint





## First Step: Powerlessness

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- There is also a lot of significance in doing this in a group setting- it brings patients out of isolation and helps them to better understand and connect with one another.

## Second Step: Came to Believe that a Power Greater than Self

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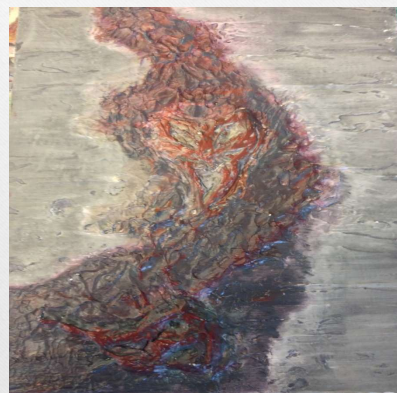
## What does your anxiety feel like?

- Use media of your choosing to create a sculpture that represents what your anxiety feels like.
- “It’s scary, heavy and sharp. It wraps around me and closes in on me”



## Represent what role you play in your family

- Use media of your choosing to explore the pressure you feel in your family as the identified ‘strong emotional shoulder’.
- “I am so angry that I feel so burdened and pressured to be strong for everybody else”



## Create a Self Symbol

- Use media both hard and soft to represent authentic self.
- Patient chose sandpaper, wire, nails, feathers and canvas for this.



## A Study of Connectivity

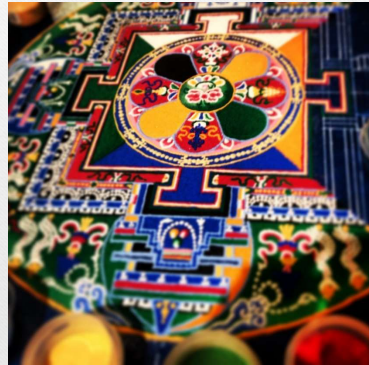
- Using wire sculpture, create an symbol that represents a healthy, connected relationship
- Patient used wire and beads to create a tree with a strong root system





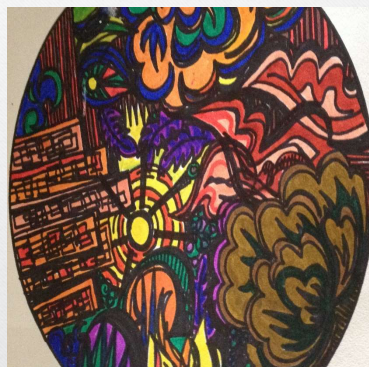
## Mandalas

- Patients are educated on their use for meditation, self discovery, and spiritual practice
- Materials needed:
- Predrawn circles
- Drawing materials



## Mandalas

- In a group setting, patients are introduced to the history of mandalas and given the opportunity to practice for themselves. They are encouraged to consider how they may incorporate this into their meditative practice.



## Mixed Media Self Portrait

- Create an image of self as you are now



## Fear

- Patients are asked to identify a fear that has been most problematic in their recovery work.
- They then do a painting and printmaking process around this.





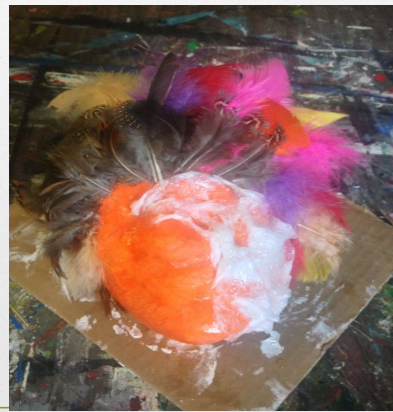
## Fear



- They are given questions to answer to identify ways they can access resources and practice coping skills to lessen fear.
- The metaphor of painting and printmaking is significant in this process.

## Mask of Addiction

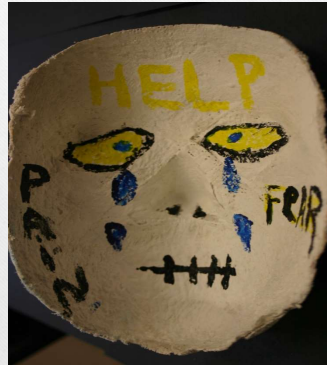
- Directive: Create a mask to represent how others saw you in active addiction.
- On the outside, consider your biggest defensive structures, how you believe others saw you and how you wanted others to see you.





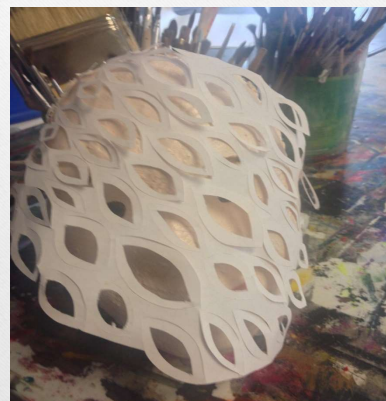
## Mask of Addiction

- Directive: On the inside of the mask, show what it felt like to be in active addiction, the parts of self that you would not allow or want others to see, the parts you worked hard to keep hidden.



## Mask of Addiction

- “I wanted people to see me as high achieving, I wanted to look beautiful. I wouldn’t let any one close to me- I was always covered in a veil of secrecy. My husband never even saw me”.



## Mask of Addiction

- Materials needed:
- Plastic face mold
- Plaster casting strips
- Decorative materials:
- Paint, feathers, modeling paste, nails, wire, mirrors, etc.



## Show your relationship with addiction



- This patient had been highly resistant to art therapy work.
- He created a sculpture to show his relationship with the disease- that he loved it and hated it, that he was fed by it and always connected to it.

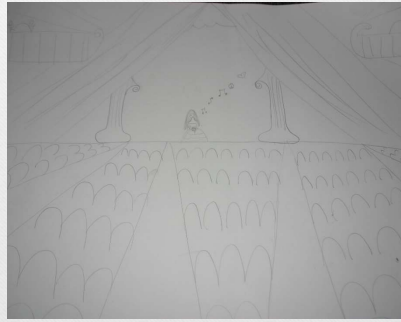
## Represent empowerment versus powerless

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Powerless



Empowered



## Internal/ External World

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- Directive: Have a peer trace the outline of your body or create your own representation



## Internal/ External World



- . On the inside, fill it with your internal world views, beliefs, etc.
- The outside should show how you present yourself to the world.

## Inside/ Outside Box

- Directive: Show on the outside how you allow others to see you.
- “I deflect a lot. I let people see what I want them to- I want them to see me as peaceful so that they stay away.



## Inside/ Outside Box

- Directive: On the inside of the box, represent how you truly are, the parts of self that others don't see.
- "I want to have a home. That's all that I want. I have to create home wherever I go".



## Healing wounded self

- Create a representation of your wounded self.
- Next, create a safe place for this wounded self-consider healthy coping skills, strengths, and supports you can use to comfort, but not to suppress or shut off these parts of self.



## Sculpt an animal that represents you

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## Sculpt an animal that represents you

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- As this patient continued her work, it came out that she was also a hoarder. We used the metaphor of her 'nest' to create a more contained safe place that she used for self soothing.



## Create a container space for self soothing

- The patient was asked to create a safe place, using materials she deemed to be soothing. There was a lot of importance for her in creating something beautiful from junked materials.



## Draw a tree series



## Prayer Flags

- Use each flag as an affirmation, prayer, or goal.
- Based on Tibetan prayer flags, and the belief is that when hung, each time the wind blows them the prayer is sent out again.



## Vision Board





## Using objects found in nature, create a sculpture



- Patients are asked to form groups for this task, then to spend an hour walking around campus to gather materials and ideas. They shared their sculptures with their entire group and document through photographs.

## Materials to have on hand

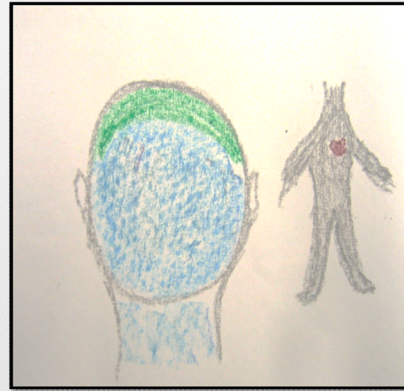
- Drawing materials
- Magazines for collage
- Mod podge
- Shoeboxes and containers
- Crafting materials- feathers, beads, wire, etc
- Cardboard
- Canvas panels





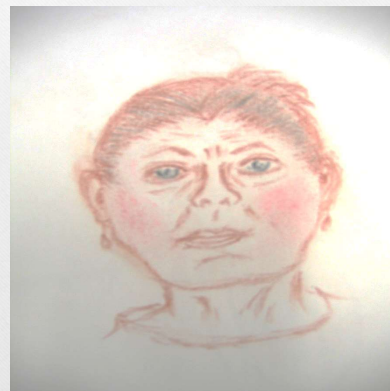
## Authentic Self: Patient S Self Symbol drawing

- 60 year old female
- She explained that she feels completely disconnected, that she has been stuffing her feelings for so long that she has no idea how to experience or express them



## Authentic Self Assignment

- Create a self portrait sketch every day.
- Each day, write and practice a self affirmation to go along with the self portrait.



## Authentic Self Comparison: Assessment week 1 and week 4

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## Case Study: Assessment and Treatment Directives

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Patient A  
Young 20s female  
Significant violent trauma  
History of eating disorder

## Art Therapy Assessment Patient A

- Draw a Self Symbol
- “I feel so alien to myself. I feel like the world is crashing down on me and all I can do is try to keep everything up in the air”



## Art Therapy Assessment Patient A

- Paint a Person in the Rain using watercolors
- “I hate the rain- it’s melting and there’s not a thing it can do”





## Art Therapy Assessment Patient A

- Sculpt an animal that represents you.
- Patient A sculpted a praying mantis



## Art Therapy Assessment Patient A

- Kinetic Family Drawing
- “This is intense. This is my dad taking me to a Grateful Dead concert”
- Upon further questioning, she said she was 13 in this image



## Art Therapy Assessment Patient A

- 3 Wishes
- 1. I want to be a singer
- 2. I want to stand up for myself
- 3. I want to reconnect with my love of horses



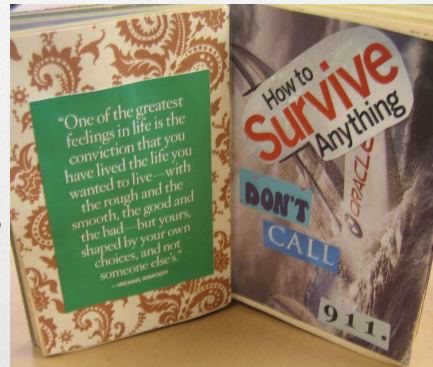
## Conclusions from assessment

- Conclusions from assessment:
  - Patient feels 'alien'
  - very few coping skills in place
  - victimization
  - feels exposed and has no voice



## Altered Book

- Directive: Use an old library book and any materials to create an altered book. Do not worry about themes, just allow your work to evolve without manipulation.



## Altered Book

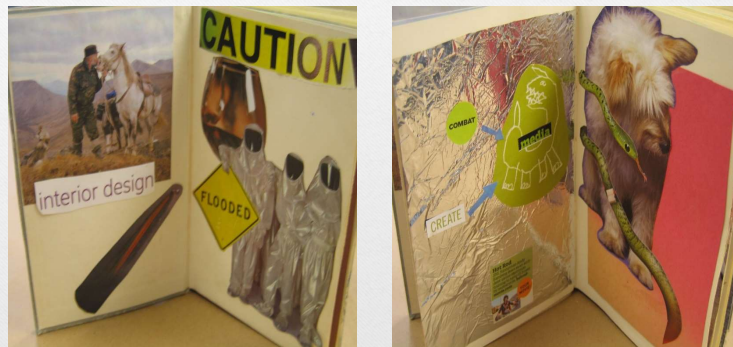




## Altered Book



## Altered Book



## Altered Book



## Altered Book: The trauma



## Altered Book: Beginning a new book to continue



## Case Study: Assessment and Treatment Directive

Patient W

Late 50s male

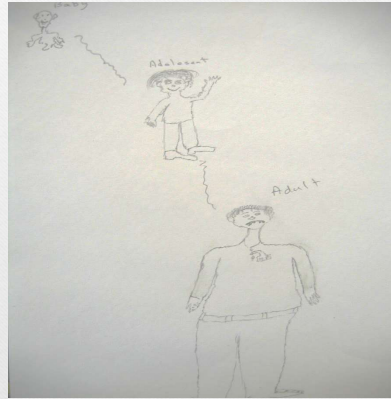
Risky sexual behaviors

Just before coming into treatment, had some significant injuries affecting his appearance



## Art Therapy Assessment Patient W

- Draw a self symbol
- Patient drew a representation of self as a baby, adolescent and adult.



## Art Therapy Assessment Patient W

- Close up of self symbol drawing
- Note the emphasis on the heart and teeth



## Art Therapy Assessment Patient W

- Paint a person in the rain
- Work is disorganized and chaotic. He has no means of protection and seems unaware of surroundings.



## Art Therapy Assessment Patient W

- Represent yourself as an animal
- “I wish people would see that the snake just wants love. It won’t hurt you- it may bite you, but not because it wants you hurt”

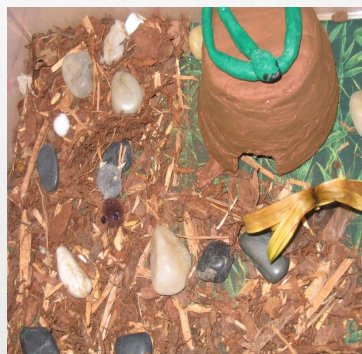


## Art Therapy Assessment Patient W

- Identified problem areas from assessment
- Negative self view
- Poor impulse control
- Highly disorganized-need for containment



## Safe Place



- This patient had some sexual compulsivity and acting out in his addiction. He used the snake as self metaphor, so we stayed in this metaphor to create a safe place and containing environment.



## Case Study: Assessment and Treatment Directive

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Patient J

Early 40s male

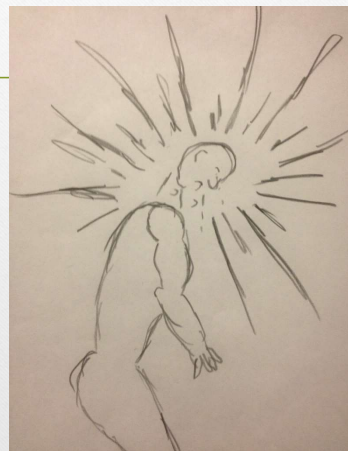
Chronic Relapser

Significant grief and loss

### Art Therapy Assessment Patient J

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- Self Symbol
- 'Self Pity'
- "Full of pain, misery and agony. Slumped over in shame and guilt"



## Art Therapy Assessment Patient J

- Paint a person in the rain
- “It’s me- I love the rain. I’m reaching up to embrace it because I know the good it brings”



## Art Therapy Assessment Patient J

- Draw a bridge, place yourself on it and consider what is in either direction
- “I feel like I’m finally running towards my recovery and not away from something else”



## Art Therapy Assessment Patient J

- Problem areas in assessment:
- Powerlessness
- Resolved to be a victim
- Each figure is cut off at the knees- indicates he has no means of making a change



## Using junk, create a symbol to explore wounded self and healing wounded self

- Patient was given a double paned window and on one side, asked to show his wounded self. On the opposite side, he was asked to paint 'healing wounded self' and examine how they coexist.





## Case Study: Assessment and Treatment Directive

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Patient O

Early 20s female

Professional musician

History of suicidality

## Art Therapy assessment Patient O

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Draw a Self Symbol

“I analyze what I feel too much”



## Art Therapy assessment Patient O

Paint a Person in the Rain

- “It’s no one in particular- she’s looking good even though she’s in the rain”



## Art therapy assessment Patient O

Draw a bridge, place yourself on it, and consider what is in either direction

- “The left is sober- it’s clear, happy. The right is being not sober- it’s dangerous, deadly and dark. I am a feather. I’m in process of figuring it out and don’t know my way yet”



## Patient O

- Identified areas of concern from assessment:
- No developed sense of authentic self
- Feels attacked and under scrutiny
- Loss of voice



## Patient O

- Directive: Using wire and feathers, create a self symbol.
- “The body is more solid, she’s sitting on a lot of chaos- the wires are curled and crossing in every direction, there is no pattern in it. The feathers have eyes to show that I am constantly being watched and scrutinized”.





## Questions and Answers



## Experiential: Create your own mandala



Thank you.

- 
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  - Cumberland Heights Treatment Foundation
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