

Paper presentation 4:

We often talk about arts as able to create a new type of “space” within which we can communicate differently. How can our profession provide these spaces for communities dealing with long term conflict and stress?

Ephrat Huss, Israel/England

While there is much literature on art therapy in contexts of trauma, there is less literature on the connection between art therapy and community or social theories that address long term reverberating community crises and conflicts.

This lecture based on my last two books and research: Will outline how arts therapies can enhance itself through social theories: Using multiple case studies and examples, I will demonstrate how arts can create meaning, manageability, and a space within which to meet the “other” on new terms and create community coherence.

***Ephrat Huss** is a supervising level art therapist and senior professor, who chairs an MA in Art Therapy for Social workers at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Israel. She has published over 90 articles and six books on arts therapy, social and community arts therapy, and arts based research. She has also received competitive grants in this field and provided webinars and plenaries on the connection between art therapy and social theories. She is a former EFAT board member.*

## Paper presentation 5

# How does art therapy work with awareness?

Anna Farrokhi, Sweden

In our time in history and especially in the north of Sweden we have a growing number of young adults unable of attending work or social life. They stay at home behind closed doors and are disconnected from the society and they seem disconnected from themselves. Mental illness is growing rapidly, and younger and younger kids are adding to the numbers. They seem to be lost and there seem to be a lack of affect awareness among our people. Accordingly, to Monsen, Eilertsen, Melgård and Odegård (1996) a high level of affect awareness is associated with a good mental health. Art therapy is a great tool for helping people to reconnect with themselves and their affect awareness.

My study "How does art therapists' work with affect awareness" examined four art therapists' stories of how they work with affect awareness in art therapy. The study was written as a Master Thesis at the Master Programme in Art Therapy, Degree of Master of Medical Science, at Umeå University.

The study's thematic analysis was based on four dimensions of affect awareness: Affect awareness, Affect tolerance, Nonverbal and Conceptual expression of affect. The four dimensions were created by Monsens, Eilertsen, Melgård & Odegård.

Analysis of the interviews resulted in nine themes/art therapy methods for increased affect awareness: Paying attention to affect, highlighting unconsciousness affects, Highlighting more aware affects, Switching between thought and affect, Regulate overwhelming affects, Restructure, Body focus, Opening the image and Borrowing the image.

By highlighting art therapy methods focusing on affect awareness, important techniques and aspects, both non-verbal and verbal, are clarified.

**Anna Farrokhi** is an art therapist with a Degree of Master of Medical Science from the University of Umeå. She also has a Postgraduate Diploma in Special Educational Needs as well as a Degree of Bachelor of Education for the Compulsory School, also from the University of Umeå. She is running a small parttime business giving art therapy and classes in art. Part time she works as a Supervisor at S.t Mary, which is a collaboration between Framnäs Folkhigh School and the Church of Sweden, where she works with vulnerable/fragile people.

Paper presentation 6:

## Effectiveness of Trauma-Focused Art Therapy (TFAT) for psychological trauma: a multiple baseline single case experimental design

Jackie Heijman, & Suzanne Haeyen, The Netherlands

Trying to psychologically process traumatic experiences is a major challenge faced by those who experience them. This ties in well with the theme of the conference: enduring dark times. Creating art can contribute to the ability to deal with psychological suffering. When someone, often after many years, starts with trauma therapy, connecting to these often long avoided or overwhelming experiences requires great courage.

As we know, art therapy is an often-employed therapeutic strategy for trauma in addition to psychotherapeutic approaches such as EMDR and narrative exposure therapy. Patients may benefit from art therapy because of its more indirect, nonverbal, experiential approach. In this presentation, we describe the findings of a study which examines the effectiveness of a 10-week individual Trauma-Focused Art Therapy (TFAT) intervention. This intervention focuses on both the dark times by depicting negative memories, as well as on the light, by depicting positive memories. We will describe the intervention itself and the use of the mixed method multiple baseline single case experimental design (MBSCED), by which a total of 36 participants with psychological trauma were enrolled and studied.

We will guide you through our results, which are both quantitative and qualitative, with measures of negative symptoms such as trauma symptoms (Post-traumatic stress disorder Check List; PCL-5) and depression (Beck Depression Inventory; BDI-II) as well as positive outcomes such as well-being (Mental Health Continuum, Short Form; MHC-SF), resilience (Resilience Scale; RS) and self-esteem (Resilience Scale). These were analysed with linear mixed models using the MultiSCED web application. Besides this, in-depth change process interviews with therapists and patients focusing on their experience and process within the Trauma-Focused Art Therapy were held. The interviews were thematically analysed using established qualitative methods. Artwork was collected and discussed in the interviews, to gain a deeper understanding of the individual therapy processes.

**Jackie Heijman** is a junior researcher of the research group *Arts & Body-based Therapies in Health Care* at HAN University of Applied Sciences. She is a visual art therapist and a psychologist in education. She published previously about compassion-focused art therapy, trauma focused art therapy and collecting and/or constructing art therapy interventions and has co-written several publications on these subjects.

**Dr. Suzanne Haeyen** is professor of the 'Research Group Arts & psychomotor therapies in Health Care' at HAN University of Applied Sciences. She is coordinator of content of the Master programme. She is an art therapist and researcher at 'Scelta, expert centre for personality problems' at mental health care institute 'GGNet, centre for mental health'. She has several publications about arts therapies in personality disorders and contributed to the multidisciplinary guidelines for personality disorder treatment and the standard of care for the same target group.

Paper presentation 7:

## Making Art Therapy Visible - BALANCES between private and public & conceptualising an art therapy exhibition

Jenni Lehmonen, Finland

The power of group-based art therapy as a preventive mental health method is not sufficiently known or recognised in Finland. Art therapy practitioners often work on a freelance basis or through another profession and art therapists (other than art psychotherapists) do not have professional title protection.

To make art therapy more accessible and to present its potential to a wider audience, a group of Finnish group art therapists organised the BALANCES- exhibition project in Porvoo in August 2023. The project included a month-long art exhibition open to the public and free art therapy workshops. The exhibited art was created by the therapists themselves in their own therapy process or using art therapy methods. The exhibition included key concepts of art therapy practice, working instructions and art materials available for free use by the visitor. An art therapist was present in the exhibition space, ready to engage in conversation with visitors. In a very practical way the exhibition sought to answer following questions: what happens in an art therapy session, what are the key concepts of art therapy, what kinds of issues can be addressed in art therapy, for whom is art therapy intended?

Visitor feedback from the exhibition project was encouraging. The exhibition and workshops attracted a wide audience and many first-timers tried art therapy in the workshops. Somewhat surprisingly, many visitors stayed with the artworks for a prolonged time and found the space and artworks in their own words "healing". During the lecture the concept of an art therapy exhibition will be presented and the audience will be invited to consider how the closed doors of art therapy can be opened to a wider audience.

NB! This lecture complements the workshop of the same name.

**Jenni Lehmonen** specialises in art therapy methods in the field of education and training and in the social field in the context of child protection. Jenni's current main occupation is a class teacher at a primary school in Helsinki. As a group art therapist she has worked with children, adolescents and adults. Jenni is particularly interested in trauma-informed communities, the integration of art therapy methods in schools, the self-regulative methods in children's and young people's state of arousal and issues of intercultural growth. Jenni has worked as a guest lecturer and workshop facilitator in a variety of educational contexts.

Jenni is a member of the BALANCES -working group. The working group also includes Group Art Therapists Maiju Multanen and Pia Angeria.