



Colours That Heal: The Importance of Art Workshops and The Significance of Colours For The Mental Well Being of People

Malti Sharma, Dr. Ved Prakash Paliwal

Research Scholar, Assistant Professor

Painting Department, School of Performing and Visual Arts

Central University of Himachal Pradesh, Dehra, India

Abstract

This paper delves the therapeutic nature of colouring during the art workshops. It also highlights how visual stories help for the emotional expression of mind, and expands the community links across the globe. This paper deals with the arts therapy with colourful frameworks and ideas. Also, this study examines the role of colour therapy sessions on individuals facing mental health issues. Through the case studies of art therapy, the research paper documented the transient attitude of painting. Art is a tool for self-discovery and healing our mind and body. It accelerates the concern of art trainers in setting an environment to encourage and explore the art activities. These findings underline the importance of visual arts for mental well being. It offers a new direction of innovation for emotional and physical health.

Keywords: Therapeutic, expressions, therapy, painting, healing

I. INTRODUCTION

In this century, the integration of art and mental well being has evoked a sense of attention for both clinical and societal issues. This is a growing sector which captures a broader picture of recognition and importance regarding mental health. The wide perspective of creative expressions is valuably contrasted with traditional colour therapy. People suffer with so many mental disorders, such as the COVID-19 pandemic all over the world. During those suffocating and depressing days, creative therapies and the role of expressive power of art expands as an essential platform for the promotion of healing (Creech et al. 2017). There are various art forms for the expressions but painting is the best way for self-expression and healing. Verbal communication is very easy to deliver but, painting serves as an individual tool to articulate their inner self. These colourful activities allow participants for the exploration of their inner complexities, fears, anxiety and cheerfulness (Malchiodi 2003). Painting helps to translate our feelings and thoughts that are very difficult to express on any medium.

Art workshops related to the various activities such as painting, drawing, craft, weaving, and clay modelling etc. creates an environment where people can freely express their suppressed thoughts. These types of sessions basically are guided by trained art educators who encourage and create a vibrant atmosphere of colours, which is good for personal growth and healing (Hernandez 2019). Participants are inspired to create art based on their feelings and recollections of memories. Artistic activities provide a platform for knowing the routes of self-discovery.

This paper documents the crucial role of painting in art workshops across the world. It also delves about the idea of visual perspectives, which defines both personal and universal healing. It is also an investigation about the art therapy done with painting and drawing. This research paper illustrates how artistic expressions can describe our emotions and well being of mind (Kester 2004). This paper underlines the significance of painting and art as a medium of transformation of thoughts.

This paper highlights the different medium of art-making. It is an exploration of artistic experiences that can break down the bridges and expands the connections with participants. It also reinforces the social platforms that are important for mental well-being (Kester 2004). These combined artistic workshops cultivate a sense of happiness and achievement where every individual support each other and share creativity and expressions (Smith and McClure 2020). Therefore, this paper sets the platform for unification of painting and mental health. This summary delves into the synchronization, in which art practices promotes mental healing.



Fig.1 Collage, Art workshop, J&K
Source: Self clicked



Fig.2 Painting, art workshop, J&K
Source: Self clicked



Fig.3 Collage, Art class, J&K
Source: Self Clicked



Fig.4 Drawing, Art class, J&K
Source: Self clicked

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Art therapy is linked with diverse range of psychological theories, which are associated with therapeutic matters of creative expressions. “Expressive Arts Therapy” one of the foundational theory, which depends upon the creative processes used for self-discovery and mental health. This theory was give by Shaun McNiff which suggests that activities related to art helps people to articulate their inner feelings that are suppressed. Art promotes the growth in the field of emotional cleansing and self awareness (McNiff 2004). This artistic activity is an exploration of subtle emotional thoughts and experiences.

There is another theory which tells about the “Humanistic Psychology”. It is defined by Carl Rogers. The wide perspective of this theory reflects the crucial role of self discovery and personal thoughts. Rogers defines about the innate strength toward personal satisfactions and that creativity (Rogers 1961, 183). Participating in the artistic activities such as painting and other forms of art, participants can develops their cognitive thinking and achieve healing.

In addition to these theories, there are some other theories related to art therapies, such as “Narrative Therapy”. This theory underlines the importance of storytelling in the process of healing. It is documented by Michael White and David Epston, which describes about the therapeutic model and its crucial role of personal narratives for the self growth. In artistic activities the visual narratives can be done by painting which helps the individuals to shape their experiences and reframing their inner self in a new way (White and Epston 1990). These kinds of activities allow people to reflect their experiences and transform their inner struggles into expressions of real growth. Hence, painting is not merely for the means of expressions but also a tool of crafting imagination, which enables individuals to create their journey with the thoughts of personal healing.

These theories provide strong information for knowing the importance of painting in art workshops and sessions. There multiple benefits of art workshops, which pushes practitioners to practice more art, which are unique and facilitate their emotional exploration of self. Therefore, above theories highlights the power of colours during art workshops, which serves as an innovative tool for art therapy. Artistic involvement enriches the lives of people who face lot of mental pressures in their lives.

III. COLOUR THERAPY INTRODUCED IN ART WORKSHOPS

In art workshops people finds their safe places, where they may explore colours intermingle with their subtle emotions, never expressed. Through these creative workshops there is involvement of certain sessions led by art educators. The provide art materials and ideas to fosters a vibrant atmosphere with multifaceted expressions. It is mentioned that participating in painting workshops helps to resolve number of psychological issues, which includes anxiety, depression and low self esteem (Creech et al. 2017, 320).

3.1 Emotional Expressions translated with colours:

The process of painting supports individuals to deal with their inner feelings. It really helps those who are living with traumatic state or other mental illness. Research done by Cathy Malchiodi gives an idea, that art bridges the gap between the subconscious and conscious mind, art also helps people to channelize their suppressed emotions and thoughts (Malchiodi 2003). In surveys, participants are seen with feelings of relief and joy after engaging with creative processes linked with their past experiences, which embodies that the colour therapy is good for emotional processing. These kinds of creative explorations not only help individuals to confront their unexpressed thoughts, but also facilitate them to make conversations with their inner struggles in a visual language. It allows people towards the deep level of self discovery.

3.2 Awareness of colourful explorations during art workshops:

Artistic activities during the art workshops reveal the hidden emotions of mindfulness. These sessions are related to spread the awareness of mental illness and their healing treatments. During these art workshops every individual participate in the art activities, with a concentration and focusing the present moment while painting with colours (Kabat-Zinn 1990). People immerse deeply in these kinds of creative sessions and it helped them to escape from the stress and provide calmness. The creative activities like paintings, drawings, collage and clay modelling engages the every sense of participants. These activities not only enhance the therapeutic effects of colours but also surround the participants to deal with anxiety issues and mood disorders.

3.3 Art builds connections between different communities of the society:

Art workshops always stimulate a perception of integration among unlike members of various customs. Art also generate freedom for the communal meetings and independent viewpoints. Art has an ability to easily blur the extensions and evolve the communication between humans. In the opinion of Grant Kester, art retreats may encourage a consciousness of self identity and entrench collective thoughts for mental awareness (Kester 2004). These kinds of art explorations and workshops are very beneficial for the individuals suffering from mental disorders, as colour involvement helped them to think their psychic levels and produce an expression of reasoning. Literally, colour excitement magnifies the curing movements and healing among the individuals.

Thus, vibrant art activities are basically used as healing therapies for treating the mental disorders. Colours used for expressing suppressed thoughts and establish links among community people. Colours needs to determine the matters interlinked to cognitive wellness and strengthen the minds of the participants. There are so many benefits associated with the colour application, which are unlimited. Art workshops and activities provide a platform for the people to know art skills and understanding, so that they may use them to remove unwanted thoughts from their lives with artistic flavour of colours.

IV. SOME CASE STUDIES ABOUT THE PAINTING WORKSHOPS OR ACTIVITIES:

Case studies about colour therapy or art therapy have so many benefits for the mental healing and awareness. Some researches highlight the impact of specific colours on mind. For instance, blue and green are associated with the calmness and relaxation and vibrant colours boost our energy levels. These case studies mentioned below, clear the concepts of art therapy or colour therapy with some examples. They elaborate the transformative power of colours during art workshops.

4.1 First Case Study: Painting Away the Blues

One of the notable case studies is the 'Painting Away the Blues', it was an initiative for those people who experienced depression. The painting classes organised by instructors for the exploration of colours for the depiction of random emotions such as happiness, desire and persistence. Art workshops evaluations manifest a noticeable lowering in depressive indications among individuals also represents the rise in measure of satisfaction and integration (Smith and McClure 2020). Those artistic creations produced during the workshops became the translators to their healing processes. Art works mainly exhibited in the society to spread alertness about mental strength. This action emphasizes how art workshops not only deal with particular therapy but also encourage group commitment and perception.

4.2 Second Case Study: Trauma Informed Art Therapy

Trauma informed art therapy art workshops motivated the participants for painting and play with colours to showcase their traumatic journeys. This analysis done by 'Rafferty' which presents a narrative how these art sessions makes individuals to create visuals that transmit their fables of existence (Rafferty 2021, 47). This process of painting trauma into art forms, allows artists to understand themselves and embrace their own identities.

V. THE ROLE OF ART EDUCATORS DURING ART WORKSHOPS FOR MENTAL AWARENESS:

The relevance of art in art workshops is totally depending on the expertness and viewpoint of the art instructors. Trained art educators play an important role in designing protected and encouraging surroundings. The responsibility of the art instructors includes the delivering lessons on creativity; provide mental support and discussing about their artistic creations during the workshops.

Art instructors create an atmosphere of welfare in mental health workshops. They need to coordinate with the psychology of the participators and facilitating an ambience where people find a freedom to express clearly without any fear or restrictions. As stated by Maria Hernandez the confidence by doing art allows participators to explore seriously about their past experiences and paint them artistically (Hernandez 2019, 22).

Coordinators also support people to engage with numerous art techniques and topics. In this way they encourage them to paint their suppressed emotions and thoughts. This exploration of colours enhances the ideas of art therapy. The freedom of art enriches souls with a sense of encouragement which pushes people to establish links with their inner self (O'Rourke 2020, 61).

VI. CONCLUSION

The concept of art therapy and art workshops defines a powerful tool for self healing without medicines. These sessions allows the people to feel free with creative processes. Creativity and colours unburden their traumas and mental disorders. The information from case studies underlines the true power of art. Different communities try to understand the value of mental health. These creative processes like painting, drawing, embroidery, crochet etc can significantly enhance the brain power.

In nutshell, embracing these art activities enriches the mental health and also empowers the journeys of self discovery. Such art interactions are very crucial for mental awareness. It is very important for medical professionals to include art based therapies in their schedules Therefore, colour therapies or art therapies in creative workshops are known as a testimony of creativity.

REFERENCES

- [1] Art Therapy Project. The Art Therapy Project: Healing Through Creativity. Art Therapy Project, 2020.
- [2] Creech, Andrea, et al. "The Benefits of Participating in Arts Activities for Mental Health and Wellbeing: A Systematic Review." *Perspectives in Public Health*, 2017
- [3] Hernandez, Maria. "Building Trust in Therapeutic Art Settings." *Journal of Art Therapy*, vol. 29, 2019
- [4] Kabat-Zinn, Jon. *Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life*. Hyperion, 1990
- [5] Kester, Grant H. *Conversation Pieces: Community + Communication in Modern Art*. University of California Press, 2004
- [6] Malchiodi, Cathy. *The Art of Art Therapy: A Guide for Healing and Self-Discovery*. Guilford Press, 2003
- [7] McNiff, Shaun. *Art as Medicine: Creating a Therapy of the Imagination*. Shambhala, 1992.
- [8] O'Rourke, Jennifer. "Creative Freedom in Art Therapy: Fostering Expression." *Art Therapy Review*, 2020
- [9] Rafferty, Amanda. "Visual Narratives in Trauma-Informed Art Therapy." *Journal of Trauma and Art Therapy*, 2021
- [10] Rafferty, Patricia. "Narratives of Survival: Art as Healing for Trauma Survivors." *International Journal of Art Therapy*, 2020
- [11] Rogers, Carl. *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy*. Houghton Mifflin, 1961
- [12] Smith, Jenna, and Claire McClure. "Assessing the Impact of Art Workshops on Depression: A Longitudinal Study." *Mental Health Review Journal*, vol. 25, 2020
- [13] White, Michael, and David Epston. *Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends*. Norton, 1990

