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ART THERAPY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

by

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ABSTRACT

This study surveyed the major portions of the available literature related to the use of art therapy/counseling in elementary schools. The investigation was expanded to include the historical development of art therapy as well as the unresolved problems concerning the discipline.

Art therapy grew within a psychoanalytic framework during the 1920's to the 1940's and within an existential and humanistic structure during the 1950's and 1960's. The emphasis shifted from pure diagnosis and evaluation to personal and creative expression. Art counseling in recent years has been used in schools and outpatient mental health clinics as well as mental hospitals.

Based on the findings of this library investigation, the writer offers the following conclusions: First, art therapy may be incorporated into elementary schools since it approximates play therapy and could service all children by an involvement in an alternative educational experience; therapeutic art may be used in a psychoanalytic or humanistic framework; art simulates the life-experience because independent problem-solving is encouraged; based on research, it has been hypothesized art counseling may be of more help to people who are neurotic rather than psychotic; finally, unresolved problems with definition and philosophy of art therapy practice exist.

Recommendations include more empirical research of art counseling, as well as a more clearly stated and defined philosophy of the discipline. In spite of the unresolved problems in definition, it is suggested by the writer that art be used as an aid in counseling elementary school children in an educational setting.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The potential therapeutic effects of artistic creativity have been known for centuries; yet, the use of art specifically incorporated into the counseling session, has been practiced only within the last thirty years (Denny, 1969; Goldenson, 1970; Naumberg, 1966).

The use of art materials for personal expression offers a unique challenge to the client as well as the therapist. Expressive movements have been recognized as an individual's idiom which may be understood as meaningfully as any language.

The process of art as therapy is based on the recognition that man's fundamental emotions and rationalizations stem from the unconscious and are expressed in images, rather than words (Denny, 1969, pp. 120; Naumberg, 1966, p. 1). Through the use of visual representation, symbolic communication may be established between the therapist and the client. Paintings and sculpture made by the client may deal with dreams, fantasies, fears, conflicts, daydreams, and childhood memories. The techniques of art therapy work on the assumption that every individual, whether trained in art or not has the innate capacity to express himself through

the visual arts. A by-product of the expressive activity often is spontaneous verbalization as the client begins to explain his art production, to the therapist.

Art therapy works especially well as a technique in counseling children. It appears to be a form of play therapy. Non-directive, or client-centered, play therapy is quite effective as a form of counseling since play is a child's natural medium for communication through which he may demonstrate a conglomeration of feelings (Axline, 1947, pp. 16). Huizinga mentioned that play goes beyond the physical or biological activity even in its simplest forms.

It [play] is a significant function--that is to say, there is some sense to it. In play there is something "at play" which transcends the immediate needs of life and imparts meaning to the action. All play means something (Huizinga, 1950, pp. 1).

At this point in the history of counseling, art therapy with children has been most exclusively utilized in mental institutions and rehabilitation centers. The only schools to use art as therapy extensively appear to have been those specializing in the care of physically handicapped or the mentally retarded youngsters. Very little art therapy, or play therapy in general, has been used by public elementary school counselors.

White and Allen summarized the situation by stating the following:

Although the use of art in therapy has gained rather wide acceptance in the hospital setting, especially with emotionally disturbed children, and in the private practice of psychoanalysts, the use of art to aid in the counseling of students with developmental and situational problems has not been systematically pursued (1971, pp. 218).

White and Allen were among the few to challenge current elementary school counselors to improve their approach with their students. They emphasized pre-adolescent children need to experience a less threatening encounter in therapy through the use of art. The researchers believed children within the pre-teen age group exhibit a great deal of anxiety in a one-to-one situation. The results of their study indicated that twelve-year-old boys' self-concept changed more effectively with art therapy than with traditional counseling. White and Allen further stressed the importance of art in the study as a "means for providing conditions in which pre-adolescents feel free to verbalize their feelings and to think about themselves in the presence of adults" (1971, pp. 224).

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study is to review the literature

regarding the development of art therapy, to assess the need for art therapy, to investigate the extent of the workable practice of art therapy, and to state what the literature says are the limitations of art therapy.

Need and Purpose of the Study

Many educators and counselors are just beginning to appreciate the emotional significance of art to the individual. Abraham Maslow has stated that art "is important not so much for turning out artists or art products, as for turning out better people" (1971, pp. 57). Kaufman further elaborated on this by stating the following about art education:

The goals of art education have to encompass all the feeling and thinking attributes of people. The teaching of art has to be a contagiously enthusiastic and qualitative engagement with the living experience (1966, pp. 27).

The art program is one of the few areas in public elementary schools in which children are permitted to completely abandon restrictions and express non-verbally as well as creatively and intelligently, their perceptions. This is one situation where they are encouraged to be honest and communicative about themselves. Another such situation is, of course, in counseling. To combine both areas seems obvious in the sense that they will help a child become more

aware of himself and his environment through expression.

The practice of any tool which involves the creative process results in the ego-enhancement of one's personal self, which is the ultimate goal of counseling. The use of art materials for children will allow them to express feelings in an avenue that is completely natural.

Goldenson has offered a wide variety of values of art therapy that has significance for children.

1. Art therapy provides a less threatening method of emotional release than talking directly with the counselor.
2. It provides a useful technique for determining the process of therapy.
3. Art counseling furnishes a channel for communicating changes in self-concept.
4. It is an opportunity for non-verbal communication.
5. It is a means of group interaction as children work together on projects.
6. Art therapy accomodates a key to the unconscious and unknown sources of emotional problems (1970, pp. 7).

All of these values are also the goals of counseling. The practice of art will furnish additional assistance to the counselor by allowing a client to communicate non-verbally. If the threat of verbal disclosure is high for a

client, or if he is merely too confused and overwrought with emotions to express himself clearly, working independently with material objects can help to reduce the fear of expression with another human being. Often the non-verbal behavior is more insightful than words could ever be, especially when the level of threat is greatly diminished.

General Questions to be Answered

1. What is the use of art therapy in a counseling session?
2. Is there a need for art therapy in the counseling programs of elementary schools?

General Procedure

Reviewing the literature for this investigation was conducted primarily through the services of the library of Montana State University. Most of the journal articles were obtained from the Pacific Northwest Regional Health Services Library in the state of Washington. The writer was able to utilize the two prominent journals dealing specifically with art therapy.

Various Montana State University faculty were consulted

for sources of references and suggestions concerning the purpose of the study.

Inferences, suggestions, and conclusions were made following the review of the obtainable literature and research articles.

Limitations

There is an extremely limited amount of literature available directly associated with the use of art therapy in elementary schools. A small amount of research was found concerning the effectiveness of art therapy, in general; although most of the studies were basically unsophisticated, not empirical in nature, and not detailed.

Definition of Terms

1. Art therapy, or art counseling like other forms of psychotherapy, has different meanings to the various professionals who use it. For the purposes of this investigation, the definition presented by Denny will be used:

Art counseling is a professional encounter between counselor and client where art materials and expression are introduced into the relationship in order to facilitate the release of feelings, to promote understanding of the self, to strengthen personal resources, and, most importantly, to help the client take constructive action (1969, pp. 119).

2. Non-directive, or client-centered therapy is based on the assumption that man has the innate ability to solve his own problems and that he seeks positive growth experiences after discovering it satisfying. The therapist is involved with the client's growth and enters into his experiences during the therapy sessions. The relationship between therapist and client is vital to the therapeutic outcome. The counselor is "experiencing and communicating attitudes of realness, caring, and a deeply sensitive non-judgmental understanding" (Wolman, 1973, pp. 305). The foundation of client-centered therapy is based on process, not diagnosis or evaluation.

3. Directive, or traditional therapy, as Axline defines it, is the method whereby the counselor takes responsibility for the interview of guidance or interpretation (1949, pp. 9).

4. Play therapy is defined by Hopke as simply "the process of assisting a child through play to better understand at his level of maturity, his behavior, or to provide an outlet for maladjusted behavioral activities" (1968, pp. 274).

Client-centered play therapy utilizes the premise that the individual has the capacity for growth and self-direction

The play activity provides a creative outlet and an emotional release and reeducation.

5. Art therapy and art counseling are synonymous terms and are used interchangeably in the paper.

6. Elementary-age children as used in this paper, include the junior-high youth, so actually the ages range from approximately six to thirteen.

7. Existential philosophy, defined in its simplest terms, is a combination of philosophies that are based on man's quest for existence. The emphasis is on man and his subjective experiences and reactions in existing.

8. Humanistic psychology is a direct offshoot of the existential framework. Man's uniqueness and self-actualization is stressed.

Summary

The graphic arts have served as a vehicle for communication throughout the thousands of years of recorded history. Man has found it necessary to represent his fears, puzzlements, and pleasures spontaneously through the visual arts.

Since art is used for communication, it seems only natural to incorporate its use into counseling as an additional source of expression. Therapists have thus far been negligent to use art as a tool in counseling.

Art therapy or art counseling appear to offer possibilities for constructive use in counseling children. Its similarity to play therapy would justify reason for elementary school counselors to learn and practice non-directive art therapy as a natural and non-threatening technique for eliciting personal expression from children.

The historical development and the philosophy of art therapy is presented in Chapter Two. The development of art therapy has followed in a general fashion the growth of the two prominent counseling systems: psychoanalysis and existential psychotherapy.

Chapter 2

DEVELOPMENT OF ART THERAPY

Introduction

Psychotherapy and art have a natural relationship as seen by many theorists, such as Freud, Jung, and the existential psychologists. Both disciplines offer the opportunity to teach man about himself through expression and interpretation, both verbally and visually. The diagnostic and evaluative worth of art is seen as providing an indirect method of revealing conflicts or unconscious problems.

Psychoanalytic Contributions to Art Therapy

The practice of art therapy has been most influenced and enriched by the theory of psychoanalysis. In the early mental institutions at the beginning of the twentieth century, patients were permitted an activity period in which they could paint or draw as they desired. The sessions were primarily structured to fill time, with no intention of using the art products or consideration of what the drawings meant to the patient. It was not until the 1920's that any systematic studies were conducted with the art work. At that time a few isolated psychiatrists collected the drawings and paintings of their patients to gain information about diagnosis. Interpretations were made from

in-depth descriptions of the art pieces. A European by the name of Prinzhorn wrote a book based on the collected paintings, drawings and works of sculpture of schizophrenics. Psychiatrists and the public as well, became aware of the qualities of psychotic art. Soon afterwards other psychiatrists compiled examples of their patient's works and praised them for their esthetic qualities. The influence of Freud and Jung regarding the unconscious had been felt at that time (Naumberg, 1966, p. 24).

With the advent of Freud and his followers, came a new consideration for art and psychology. Freud discussed art in his early lectures in reference to fantasies. He claimed "there is a path that leads back from phantasy to reality-- the path, that is, of art" (1966, pp. 375-6). He explained further that the artist is more able to release his sublimated emotions through fantasy in art; whereas, the non-artist must settle for "meagre day-dreams" that are allowed into the conscious (1966, p. 375). The artist has the capacity to shape material until it resembles his fantasy. He then can share the image with others, who also derive release from their unconscious. The artist, as a result, has "achieved through his phantasy what originally he had achieved only in his phantasy" (1966, pp. 136-7).

Freud also presented lectures on the relationship between dreams and art:

We experience 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" (1966, p. 90).

Even though Freud admitted the correlation of art to dreams and fantasies, he did not permit his patients to express their images graphically.

It was Jung who first encouraged his patients to draw their dreams and fantasies because he realized how difficult it was for them to express accurately in words what they were experiencing (Denny, 1969, p. 120; Naumberg, 1966, p. 22). He believed patients were able to provide a more direct means of expression visually since the symbols were straight from the unconscious.

Jung discovered that spontaneous art was helpful to his patients in expressing the state of a dream or day-dream. A patient was able to reexperience the feeling of the unconscious, which also became a reality. Jung himself used to paint and draw while working through his dreams and knew clearly the value of the activity (Bennet, 1967, p. 111).

Bennet summarized Jung's attitude regarding the therapeutic success of spontaneous art:

It is in such circumstances that the element of surprise in painting is so arresting. Perhaps the painting is begun with no end in view then it begins to take shape, form, and thereby comes alive, and does express something that cannot be expressed in words. It is the language of feeling and emotion. No one should doubt the importance of being in touch with our emotional life which so often determines success and failure in our ventures (Bennet, 1967, p.112)

A part of Jung's theory is that man can attach symbolism to everything. Natural objects, as well as man-made, are subject to symbolism. Humans unconsciously change objects to symbols which transforms them to significant psychological impressions (Jung, 1964, p. 232). Art, then, is a direct visual representation of the symbols, which when produced, provide a therapist an opportunity to see a client's inner experience.

Margaret Naumberg is one of the earliest writers in the field of art therapy. In fact during the 1940's her "dynamically orientated art therapy" was the first attempt to apply psychoanalytic theory to the active use of art as therapy. She has stated the following:

Art therapy accepts as basic to its treatment methods the psychoanalytic approach to the mechanisms of repression, projection, identification, sublimation, and condensation (Naumberg, 1966, p. 1).

She encouraged the use of free association in art for spontaneous expression of thoughts and feelings. She further maintained the heart of art therapy is the transference relationship which is experienced non-verbally as well as verbally.

Another leading art therapist and writer is Edith Kramer. She has worked primarily with emotionally disturbed children. Her philosophy is based on the Freudian psychoanalytic framework, though she differs on one significant point. She emphasizes "the idea of art as therapy rather than on psychotherapy which uses art as a tool" (Kramer, 1971, p. xiii). Therapy proceeds not to uncover unconscious material, but to support the ego and to promote a sense of identity through psychic reorganization.

Art therapy has been recently used with individual and family groups, for the most part, under the work of Kwiatkowska. Her aim is to work with a schizophrenic member and include the entire family in therapy with art. A mixture of verbal and expressive techniques are used in treatment (Denny, 1969, p. 121).

The importance of the unconscious in the psychoanalytical phase of art therapy can not be emphasized enough. Directive art therapy will provide an opportunity for a

client to transpose an unconscious imaged experience, such as a dream or fantasy into a constructed visual image.

The psychoanalyst can use their patient's records of dreams and fantasies and translate them into words. The images then become topic of discussion between patient and analyst through word or free association.

Quite often the images produced through art convey a more accurate account of feeling and thoughts than the words that are used that could deny or distort a particular experience. The unconscious emotions will come through in the graphic production if the verbal expression of conflicts and unknown drives are not readily available to individuals who are in various levels of their illness. The communication which results between psychiatrist and patient may be conducted entirely on a preverbal level, through the art work. Jakob recommended art to be used in this manner because it may be especially constructive in the treatment of autistic patients (Jakob, 1968, p. 95).

It must be noted that art therapists do not intend to translate an individual's symbolic expressions as psychoanalysts do. Instead art therapists will reassure their clients to discern the meaning for themselves. If a patient has difficulty understanding the significance of his

production, it is possible through free association and by recapturing the original mood under which the work was completed, to uncover the correct meaning (Denny, 1969, p. 125).

Art Used in Diagnosis and Evaluation

The use of art as an evaluative and diagnostic tool is a psychoanalytic contribution. The artwork, as it flows from the unconscious, provides psychoanalysts with a visual clue of a patient's inner world.

Very little empirical research has been conducted to test the effectiveness of art as an evaluative tool. However, a few studies have been conducted on specific psychotic and neurotic symptoms. Also, the more common types of psychosis have been investigated.

One of the areas under study is depression. There is great emphasis on the art of the schizophrenic, and in fact, many examples of the art have been accumulated and examined. Wadeson has contended, though, that depression is much more common than schizophrenia and very little research has been devoted to the art of the depressed. One problem is due to the fact that depressives lack motivation and a desire for communication due to their low moods.

Wadeson discovered that highly depressed individuals exhibited the following characteristics in their paintings:

1. less color than lowly depressed patients
2. more empty space
3. more constriction
4. more disorganization
5. less investment of effort or less complete work
6. more meaninglessness of subject matter
7. either depressive affect, or
8. less affect (Wadeson, 1971, p. 199)

The content of the pictures was varied and no common themes seemed to prevail (Wadeson, 1971, p. 203). Highly depressed patients, as a rule, did not use color; in fact, patients who were becoming less depressed, displayed more color as they improved.

The patients who were highly depressed indicated a congruency with their overall personality. The depressed individuals also displayed "psychomotor retardation, general inhibition or expressiveness, lack of productivity, and impoverished interpersonal communication sometimes to the extent of being mute" (Wadeson, 1971, p. 204). The art of the highly depressed patients projected a "pervading

emptiness" which appeared to be an indication of their condition (Wadeson, 1971, p. 204).

As mentioned, there has been rather extensive research into the art of the schizophrenic. The schizophrenic by nature does not seem to lose the desire for communication. In fact, as he regresses the expression changes from verbal to non-verbal (Billig, 1968, 15).

Several qualities of schizophrenic art are known and may be applied for diagnostic purposes:

1. The inability to distinguish reality from fantasy will typically result in an individual hallucinating. The art of the schizophrenic reveals this obvious blending of unreality and reality. A combining of unrelated objects into one whole is usual of schizophrenic expression. Other features commonly found in drawings by schizophrenics include the mixing of spatial planes, poorly defined objects, no shading or depth, and side-views of figures that are also in juxtaposition.

2. Another characteristic of schizophrenia which comes through in art is the tendency to regress or return to more immature and simpler levels of development. The art displays child-like representation of geometric forms and lines;

often, in fact, the art forms look a great deal like the drawings of the ancients.

3. A disturbed body image contributes to a lack of cohesiveness and an inability to see one's self as one's own self. The art is typified by still-appearing figures in the drawings, and an alienation and isolation.

4. Alternation of motor behavior has been discovered as an indication of schizophrenia. The drawing movements are different from normal individuals possibly due to the tenseness of the muscles.

5. Disturbances in thinking occurs in schizophrenics in two ways. One is the incoherence of thinking which is related to the hallucinations. The other is a different type of reasoning which is exemplified by unreasonable rationalization. The individual who believes he is Jesus Christ, for example, suffers from illogical thinking. The art work of disturbed thinking is shown as a confusion of "figure and ground" due to the inability to sort the real self. An example of this expression was indicated by a patient who was asked to draw a self-portrait. He drew a picture of the sun and when asked about his portrayal, he commented syllogistically: "The sun was hot; I am hot; therefore I am the sun" (Lowenfeld, 1957, 496).

6. Because of the lack of logical thinking, a schizophrenic will lose his ability to abstract or use common symbols. In his art, the symbols will have significance to himself and no one else. Often, the meaning is totally unknown to the observer (Lowenfeld, 1957, 494-97).

Additional qualities of schizophrenic art have been noted. One characteristic is the appearance of the x-ray picture. Objects will become transparent, while surface structures, such as walls of houses and buildings will be open for observation. A second feature of such art involves placement of the base line. In an attempt to organize space, the patient may draw objects on a single base line which gives a flat illusion. A final peculiarity of schizophrenic art is the loss of reality relations which is indicated by a lack of concern for spatial representation, as already mentioned. In some cases, objects are scattered haphazardly on the paper, with no apparent relationship involved (Jakob, 1968, pp. 5-15).

Taylor, an art therapist, has summarized his impressions of the classifications of art for other psychotics. It must be noted that his comments are based on mere observation with no statistical evidence to substantiate his statements. The cyclothymic work traditionally is hard in form and line and

ranges from bright to morbid colors, depending on the high or low mood of the individual. When the mood of the patient is somewhat in the middle of the range, the work is for the most part objective with little personal involvement. The creator is the only one who is able to interpret the work because the meaning is so literal and confining. Paranoids were found to present their out-of-contact image, much like the schizophrenics who drew distortions and broken space. The use of color and design is esthetically pleasing for these two groups. The hebephrenic designs paintings that are more abstract than the schizophrenics. The colors are strong and the lines are quite angular, which is claimed to be an indication of hostility. Also, primitive images which are typical of the deeply regressed schizophrenic were present. The catatonic, at best, drew a few scribbles or arbitrary symbols (Taylor, 1950, p. 603)

Since the early 1960's, art has been used for diagnostic purposes in determining stress in children. Children by nature emphasize any significant object by drawing it disproportionately larger than usual (Chaddick, 1963, p. 335). Cooper and Caston discovered that when children were exposed to stress by the announcement of an operation, they drew human figures larger than normal (Cooper & Caston, 1969,

p. 57). Therapists, with this knowledge, may have a method of learning non-verbally how children may be experiencing anxiety.

Psychoanalysts have been able to use art for personality assessment of adults and children. A few significant studies have indicated that children project their personalities through paintings (Alschuler and Hattwick, 1947; Smith and Appelfeld, 1965; Schnidl-Waehner, 1956; Elkisch, 1947; Anastasi and Foley, 1944). Very little statistical research has been thoroughly conducted at this time. Smith and Appelfeld concentrated on the judging process in their study while at the same time investigating paintings drawn by normal and disturbed children. They concluded the judges used to determine the differences in the children's paintings were influenced by intuition more than the paintings themselves (Smith and Appelfeld, 1965, p. 293).

Art has use as an indicator of emotional adjustment or maladjustment if practiced over a period of time. Elkisch (1947, pp. 238-39) has established a criteria of "form expression," which is opposed to the content or subject of painting, that may be used as a method of diagnosis. They are results of studying children's drawings. The criteria were constructed in pairs of opposites so distinct positive

or negative values may be attributed to each painting. The author has defined and interpreted each pair of the criteria:

1. Rhythm versus rule exemplifies the child's degree of expressive movements on one hand, and the emotional rigidity on the other. For instance, a child who is tense or up-tight, would display the emotions with spasmodic, jerky, tight strokes on the paper. The child would draw controlled or rigid lines with no differentiation in the size of the strokes.

2. Complexity versus simplicity is an indication of energy, as well as the ability to invest time and interest in an activity. Often a child who draws simple patterns conveys a "lack of differentiation and lack of ability to detach oneself" (1947, p. 238). The conventional or most basic of schemes will be presented in the paintings.

3. Expansion versus compression is the attempt to seek new experiences or to retreat into repression. The drawings revealing expansion exhibit open spaces, or incomplete designs which must be closed by the viewer's imagination. Compression is represented as meticulous concept of space which is in poor relation with other objects.

4. Integration versus disintegration are significant criteria for diagnosing children's art. Integration is

based on the inner organization of the child. It may be possible to detect the unification of the personality even though it is poorly expressed through art. Another feature of integration is centricity. If the child has a focal point within himself, centricity may be expressed in art either by means of representation or by structure (Elkisch, 1947, p. 239).

If disintegration appeared in the child, his art did not display harmony or did not make sense. Also, the art would lack a center with the composition being disconnected. The author believed disintegration within art indicated chaos for the child (Elksich, 1947, p. 239).

Elkisch summarized her study by commenting on the fact that the "child seems to crave to portray and unburden himself in his art work" (Elkisch, 1947, p. 241).

Existential Contributions to Art Therapy

Nearly all the early writers of art therapy worked from a psychoanalytic reference and concentrated on the pathological tendencies of the patients. Art in this context served as a means of diagnosis, and helped to unlock the unconscious. Art also provided a vehicle for establishing a transference relationship between the patient and the therapist.

With the influence of existential and humanistic philosophies and their emphasis on experience and feelings and sensations of the present, art therapy made drastic changes. This appeared to occur about 1950 to 1960. Rather than using paintings for diagnosis and patient classification, clients were urged to paint simply to experience and explore unique personal qualities through the use of art media. The Gestaltists especially encouraged their clients to flow with their experience and enjoy whatever happened.

Even though existential and humanistic psychologies have influenced the advance of art therapy in recent years, there has been no systematic theory of the use of art therapy within a philosophical framework.

Denny has stated that a "comprehensive theory of art counseling stressing the positive and fulfilling aspects of the creative act is sorely needed" (Denny, 1969, p. 121). White and Allen mentioned that humanistic and existential writers such as Arnheim, Jourard, Maslow, and Rogers have provided the rationale in which art therapy may be used, but a "systematic theory of the use of art in counseling has not been developed" (White and Allen, 1971, p. 219). Many psychologists, philosophers and educators have written volumes on the importance of creativity, but do not

specifically discuss the usefulness of art to man within the existential content. Barrett has indicated how art portrays twentieth-century man's estrangement and loneliness, but he has not mentioned particularly how art may help the individual (Barrett, 1958, p. 65).

Jourard is one of the few modern writers who has emphasized the usefulness of art. He stated art serves as a means of expanding our being and "unifying our head with our hearts and bodies and our imaginations with our feelings and intellect" (Jourard, 1968, p. 183).

In spite of the fact no specific system of existential art therapy has been formulated, the blending of the modern philosophies is obvious. Many of the qualities of existential art therapy compare to the features of existential and humanistic psychotherapies.

One important characteristic of non-directive art therapy that differs from the psychoanalytic approach is the avoidance of classification of the client and his art work. There is no attempt to treat specific symptoms; rather, the client changes on his own, free from schedules. Denny had been one of the few clinical psychologists at this time who has provided a concise theory of existential art therapy. His statements are incomplete and simplistic; yet he is

among the minority to present a beginning of a philosophy: "Art counseling attempts to facilitate each client's emergence and becoming, which is a never-completed process of growth and liberation" (Denny, 1969, p. 122).

In their study, White and Allen (1971, p. 220) emphasized in the art sessions the process of creating, rather than concentrating on the final product. Each client's work was accepted by the therapist as having significance for the growth of the individual. Again, this attitude was viewed as evidence of the humanistic philosophy. Satisfaction in the process of "becoming" a person is comparable to creating a piece of art.

Existential art counseling adheres to the principle that man is neither good nor bad, but has the freedom of choice to grow and be sincere or to remain static. The non-directive approach to counseling generally trusts the individual to be self-directive and assumes that the individual has the potential to solve his own problems satisfactorily. The impulse for growth makes mature behavior more satisfying than immature behavior (Axline, 1947; Maslow, 1971; Rogers, 1951).

Existential art therapy encourages clients to explore, discover themselves, and become more aware of their

experiences. Art becomes much more flexible and the client is on his own to find his channels for creativity and to discover the meanings of his individual work. Art counseling within the existential framework may serve to help the client to define decisions, to develop new values or change old values, and most importantly, explore new strengths and how they may be effectively used (Denny, 1968, p. 94). The art counselor is fully active in the session, as in client-centered and Gestalt counseling, but may also serve as an observer in some situations.

The process of art counseling brings about actions, such as catharsis, communication, self-disclosure, and alternations in behavior and attitudes. Involvement also results in freedom and new awareness. White and Allen believed the art association required their subjects to be immersed in a "holistic, humanistic education" (White and Allen, 1967, p. 169). The experience is further enunciated by Taylor:

It is in this use of the sensual, the intellectual, and the emotional or spiritual that one recognizes for himself the fusion and use of the whole person and the significance of the creative process (Taylor, 1950, p. 605).

Summary

Art counseling appears to have been shaped primarily by psychoanalysis and existential and humanistic psychologies. Art may be used as a vehicle for verbalizing feelings, unblocking the unconscious, as well as a means for diagnosis and evaluation of clients. Studies have indicated specific psychosis exhibit particular artistic traits that are easily identified.

Art also provides a method of personal exploration of non-verbal expression. Clients may be urged to try art in counseling simply because it would provide a new experience for them. The therapist may actively participate as the client involves himself in art, or he may merely observe.

Chapter Three expresses the need and practices of art counseling in public elementary schools. Art therapy as it relates to the non-directive play therapy model will be the approach presented in the remainder of the paper.

Chapter 3

NEED AND PRACTICE OF ART THERAPY IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Introduction

It appears that a systematic use of art as therapy has not been utilized in educational settings by elementary school counselors. It has been apparent that art counseling provides an opportunity for a client to face himself directly and spontaneously. If art therapy was initiated into an elementary school counseling program, young children would learn at an early age how to recognize their feelings and express them in an individual manner. ✓

Need for Art Therapy in Elementary Schools

The literature pertaining to the use of art therapy in public schools is extremely sparse. Art materials integrated into a counseling session appear to have been restricted to mental hospitals, mental health clinics, and special schools for handicapped children. Little or no information was found that was directly concerned with art therapy in public elementary schools for those children with emotional problems. Throughout the literature, writers recounted many incidents of case studies, but offered no systematic or philosophical reasoning for the treatment with art therapy. Prominent art educators, among them, Lowenfeld, has strongly ✓

advocated the exposure of art to children since through the creative process it is possible to simulate the experience of coping with life. Children, in art, are presented with unsolved problems in which they must synthesize, work independently, and originally. They also express themselves throughout the process. It is obvious that "the importance of art education for personality growth and development can easily be recognized" (Lowenfeld, 1972, p. 58).

Interestingly, the art educators, not the art therapists or counselors, were the professionals who mostly claimed therapeutic art ought to be incorporated into the public schools (Kaufman, 1966; Lowenfeld, 1957; Reed, 1957; Ulman, 1971). Psychologists and art therapists still work within a medical environment and apparently have not mentioned an educational setting for art therapy in their writings.

Denny, a clinical psychologist, is among the few who have advocated that art therapy is needed in public schools (Denny, 1969, p. 126). He has urged counselors of universities and high schools to organize a systematic use of art therapy. However, nowhere has he stated art counseling belongs in the elementary schools.

A minority of art therapists, such as Kramer and

Naumberg, who work especially with children, do so in special schools or hospitals, They also have not made comments about integrating art therapy in public schools.

Art within an educational and therapeutic framework appears to offer limitless possibilities. The writer, after reviewing the various references, was able to extract four apparent essential reasons for using art therapy in public schools. The suggestions reviewed were for junior high schools through college. No mention was made for elementary schools. The writer would suggest a systematic rationale for such use in the elementary schools.

Counseling contains many of the same vitally important values of education. They are presented by Rivlen:

The aim of modern education and of mental hygiene is essentially the same; a well-adjusted child, integrated with his environment, making good use of his abilities and utilizing his potentialities (Rivlen, 1943, p. 489).

Art enhances counseling and counseling enhances a child's education and development. Any chance to improve the quality of education for children would appear to be a necessity.

It is imperative to use any method to enrich the essence of education. A well-rounded learning experience that up-dates a youngster's intellectual development, and

just as importantly, his emotional development, is required in today's schools. It seems ironic in this age that to improve a person's mental health, one would have to leave the school premises. Combining the use of art and counseling in an educational setting would allow maximum opportunity for the growth and development of a child.

There is another equally important reason for practicing art therapy in public elementary schools. Since schools contain the greatest concentration of children with emotional problems, it would appear as though art therapy could be used more exclusively in this setting than any other. Bloom firmly urged art counseling to be integrated into therapeutic programs for emotionally disturbed children. He stated six reasons why artistic activity could be utilized:

1. Youngsters can be helped to channel their energies from destructive to creativeness.
2. The therapist is helped to comprehend and treat the youth's unspoken feelings by understanding the unconscious.
3. The children can express any feeling of violence symbolically, rather than do actual physical damage to people or property.
4. By use of art a child can rejoin the social life by

entering group art activities, or at best express visually his inner desire to be more sociable.

5. Art provides the child a relatively safe opportunity to explore the external world by painting his family, classmates or himself in school.

6. To create appears to result in a feeling of personal achievement and self-worth; many children rarely experience success until they are given the freedom to produce something completely on their own (Bloom, 1957, 381-82).

A third, and highly significant part of rationale for the use of art counseling in elementary schools is due to its close relationship to the counseling technique, play therapy. Children quite naturally play out their feelings, either through active and dramatic play, such as running and climbing, or through more quiet and calm play, such as fingerpainting or drawing. A growing, developing child spontaneously will express himself through action.

Early psychotherapists who worked with children recognized how similar play was to the act of free association. In either, the client was acting, or talking, to bring to the conscious, repressed experiences and feelings (Rogers, 1951, p. 235).

The effectiveness of play therapy has rarely been

evaluated. However, Axline did a follow-up on many of her former clients to ascertain what they thought were the dynamics responsible for their change. She collected comments by those children who were considered successful in treatment. A common thread appeared repeatedly throughout the interviews. The children seemed to experience freedom and liberation due to the minimal restrictions that were placed on them during the therapy sessions. Even if that freedom lasted only one hour out of the entire week, it made a difference to the children. One boy who was busily messing the play therapy room, suddenly explained with much excitement, to the therapist: "Oh, every child just once in their life should have this chance to spill themselves out all over without a 'Don't you dare! Don't you dare! Don't you dare!'" (Axline, 1950, p. 55).

Axline found after interviewing past clients, that insight had been the direct result of their play experience. They also developed a new self-concept as a by-product of their insights. By acting out their home situations many of the children were able to see themselves and members of their family in a different perspective. In this sense, play therapy approximates the activities of psychodrama. Being able to activate a situation results in more insight

than thinking to one's self, or even talking with a counselor.

The usefulness of play therapy is due, in part, to the child's innate ability to reorganize the meanings, concepts, emotions, and understandings of himself. It is important for the success of the therapy, for the child to have an emotional experience, immediately followed by insight. The reorganization which ensues each successive experience, will help the child gain newer understandings. Often the insight was quite sudden, an instantaneous reorganization. It appeared to be most therapeutic for the children because they could act immediately and did not stop and wonder what to do next (Axline, 1950, p. 62).

A fourth and final part of the rationale for art therapy in the elementary schools is enunciated by educators. A few art educators believe so strongly in the psychological values of art, that they encourage schools to develop and use "art education therapy" for all children (Lowenfeld, 1957; Ulman, 1971). They believe art is therapeutic for all youngsters, even those without severe emotional problems. Since art is tied so deeply with the needs of the developing personality, less disturbed children may benefit greatly from exploring personal visual expression.

Kaufman, an art educator, has clearly indicated the functions of art and why it is vital to human beings:

They [the arts], permit us to engage in wish fulfillment through fantasy, precise delineation, and recording of knowledge through representational images, or communication through a wide variety of forms exciting our senses, provoking our emotions, deepening our perceptual understanding, and providing a vital source of meaning. They may be a form of escapism permitting us to supercede a distasteful or hostile present or they may act as the outlet for many psychological promptings in human nature to ensure a more pleasant present (Kaufman, 1966, p. 27).

All children, whether emotionally maladjusted or not, need to benefit from the exhilarating experience of creative involvement and personal expression. The arts will provide the opportunity for unification of the "social and sensory experience, of thought, feeling, and action" (Mendelwitz, 1963, p. 12).

A creative art teacher can accomodate children with the healthy challenge of art education counseling. By allowing each child to satisfy his own unique and personal needs through art, a teacher may permit a therapeutic catharsis to occur when that seems necessary.

Kaufman has emphasized the need for children to be distinctive individuals (Kaufman, 1966, p. 33). The art class is one of the few areas in education where non-conformity and individuality are supported. Art provides

the necessary channels for self-realization. Children need to learn they are unique beings who have a meaning for existing. When an art teacher accepts a child's personal visual expression, in actuality he is accepting who that child is. The teacher may aid the child in "perceiving who he is, rather than what he has produced" (Denny, 1969, p.122).

Educators have warned art teachers to be concerned about art education therapy. It is vitally important for art instructors not to diagnose or evaluate the children's art. Teachers for the most part, lack the specialized training necessary to make accurate observations. In trying to help a student, a well-meaning teacher could cause psychic damage. At best, Reed urged teachers to talk to the administration if he notices anything peculiar in some of the art work. He further warns teachers if a referral is made due to art, never to let the student know it was the project that initiated the referral. It would greatly hamper the further creativity and involvement if the children thought they were being analyzed for their work (Reed, 1957, p. 35).

The Practice of Art Therapy in Elementary Schools

Very little literature was found which specifically discussed art therapy techniques and practices with children.

Many of the suggestions that were viewed were general in nature with no apparent justification for the technique that was used.

Denny has issued the most complete statement regarding the use of art in therapy. He has strongly urged counselors to have a thorough understanding of art media plus a knowledge and commitment to at least one counseling theory (Denny, 1972, p. 117). Counselors should choose techniques with the understanding of their effects on the children. Also, the counselor must be sensitive to the child's developmental readiness to use the art material. Each procedure definitely has special value for different personality needs in children. For instance, a shy retiring youth may benefit from working on a large sheet of paper, so he could overcome a fear of asserting himself. A tense youngster could try to work with flowing paint, such as tempera, and a large brush in the hopes he could relax his body movements (Taylor, 1950, p. 600). A hostile child may achieve emotional release by pounding and kneading clay. A depressed child could express himself quite accurately if given dark colors for drawing; while a fearful child could profit from drawing his nightmares and frightening enemies (Goldenson, 1970, p. 114).

The writer has taken the liberty of applying art counseling exercises to the elementary school situation that were normally intended for use in mental hospitals and special schools for children. As mentioned, there were no specific outlines for the practice for art counseling in elementary schools found anywhere in the literature.

Beginning tasks in art therapy should serve the purpose of exploration for liberation as well as relaxation. The child is encouraged to release conscious controls and be expressive and as spontaneous as possible. The exercises ought to be non-threatening and simple and direct.

Denny has constructed major areas of techniques which move from the vague art tasks to those with more structure and therapeutic effects (Denny, 1970, pp. 164-165; 1972, pp. 119-134).

Exploratory and Rapport-Building Approaches

1. The automatic drawing or the scribble technique is a helpful method for introducing the child or adult to the art material. It also serves as a procedure for achieving relaxation.

2. Free drawing serves the purpose of providing a guide to psychological growth. The child has complete freedom of choice of media and subject. The therapist may be

able to evaluate the child's choice of color and subject matter throughout therapy as an indication of change.

3. Blob and wet paper techniques are purely accidental exercises which may be the source for drawings or designs. This is a useful method of introducing art materials to children.

4. Color exploration sharpens a child's ability to achieve integration. A child may work with colors he likes and dislikes to produce a unified composition through colors. He may also express his present mood through color, which is quite a subjective experience.

5. Drawing completion may serve as a non-threatening device for initiation of disclosure through art. The child is given a paper with a few simple lines or shapes which serve as a means for beginning a drawing. Kinget used the drawing completion as a personality test (Kinget, 1952).

Exploration of Inner Feelings

1. One exercise which helps to investigate one's inner feelings, is to depict one recent negative emotion, a recent positive feeling or event, and the immediate feelings. These ideally should be completed in rapid sequence.

2. Six rapid sketches of the emotions that are inspired by words such as love, hate, beauty, charity, anxiety, and freedom will allow a child to respond immediately. Five to ten minutes are allowed for each drawing. Davis suggested using collage as a way of depicting word associations (Davis, 1969, pp. 4). Drawings integrated with magazine photographs assist children to express themselves in an individual manner.

3. Using word pairs that are opposites as stimuli such as strength-weakness, love-hate, dependence-independence, masculinity-femininity, are examples that could elicit strongly felt drawings.

4. Drawing dreams and fantasies provides an opportunity to delve into a child's unknown. The counselor should be especially supportive if a child appears frightened of this experience.

5. Having children draw three wishes is a useful projective task. Often the youngsters find this a challenging task and will approach it with much enthusiasm.

6. A first-memory drawing is a helpful way to get a child to introspect. The memory may be positive or negative, whichever the child feels comfortable drawing.

7. The road-of-life drawing allows an individual to make a visual statement of his attitude about life. This exercise is thought-provoking, even for a child.

Interpersonal Relations and Awareness of the External World

1. The Goodenough Draw-a-Man (1926) or Machover's Draw-a-Person (1941) tests are used primarily for psychological diagnosis, but may also be used as an art therapy technique. Any drawing tool, such as pastels or charcoal may be used.

2. A house-tree-person drawing may be completed on separate sheets of paper, or may be unified into one composition. This also is a projective exercise for children (Buck, 1948).

3. At any age, drawings of the opposite sex may be revealing.

4. Drawing full-size self-portraits in one minute is another interesting projective technique. The time limit forces children to make instantaneous decisions about the significant elements about themselves.

5. Portraits of the "ideal" and "real" self allows a child and counselor to observe self-concept. Any discrepancies between who the child wishes to be and how he views himself are clearly seen.

6. The Burns and Kaufman Kinetic-Family Drawing Test is a good exercise to incorporate into art therapy (Burns and Kaufman, 1970). The child may be instructed to draw his entire family doing something. The counselor and child may discuss the drawing together upon completion.

7. Drawing oneself as an animal is a task that most children enjoy. The drawings may be discussed in a group or individually. Other themes may also be used, such as favorite story book character, a flower, or even a favorite toy.

Expressions Concerning the Group in Group Art Therapy

1. Individual drawings of the entire group allows the child to express non-verbally his feelings about the other children.

2. Rapidly drawn portraits of group members emphasizes the psychological characteristics that impress a child.

3. A constructive technique for generating emotions is to paint specific feelings towards an individual group member. This is especially helpful for a child who cannot verbalize his feelings easily.

4. A group mural is a way in which all of the children work together. Cooperation is almost a necessity in this

exercise. If conflict does arise, the group may take the opportunity to resolve the issues.

5. Another group project which requires all the children working together, is to make a portrait by combined effort. It would be necessary for verbal communication and listening to occur for a successful project.

Supplementary Approaches

1. Drawing to music, dance, or poetry allows a child to experience even more stimulus for creativity.

2. The use of collage is a non-threatening method of communicating. If a child seems especially tense about drawing, the collage provides an excellent vehicle for expression. The child is forced to organize a composition and a complete thought with the pictures (Denny, 1970, 1972; Davis, 1969).

The counselor may elicit verbal responses from the children as they work on their particular projects. Instead of asking "Why or how did you come to paint that?," counselors need to ask "What meaning does your painting have for you now, how do you feel about your creation, does it reveal you to you, and how might this lead to change?" (Denny, 1970, p. 164). These particular questions are more personal and

will lead a child to probe into his feelings, and not his intellect.

It has been noted that art therapy fits into the different psychotherapies. Most basic are psychoanalysis, or the directive approach, and the newly developed existential psychotherapies, which are non-directive. Art has been lately used within the Gestalt structure. Latner has expressed his impressions of the relationship of art and Gestalt:

A model of healthy functioning often cited in Gestalt therapy is the creative activity of the artist. . .the creative act is psychological health. The psychology of art is the psychology of everything; it is a paradigm of mustering the materials of the field with spontaneous imagination, directness, awareness, and skill in the service of challenging and enlarging the self (Latner, 1973, p. 46).

Rhyme discussed the use of art in Gestalt therapy groups. She wanted her clients to experience awareness of themselves on a perceptual level. All of the activities in her therapy groups were "related to the philosophy that knowing one's self on the perceptual level is the most valid kind of knowing" (Rhyme, 1970, p. 274).

Art has also been used in psychodramatic exercises. Therapists have utilized art as a "warm-up technique" that aided individuals to be more spontaneous and creative

emotionally (Blatner, 1973, p. 43). Psychodrama for adults bears similarities to play therapy for children. Both provide indirect means of expression, often non-verbally.

Art Therapy is Not "Arts and Crafts"

Art therapy as it can be used in elementary schools is not a time for "arts and crafts." That appears to be one of the most common misconceptions regarding the purpose of art counseling.

Most art therapists will agree on the fact that art and craft do have a place in therapy. However, the counselor must have a therapeutic purpose for the artistic activity and must not merely provide busy work for children. Kramer warns of the extreme limitations of crafts because as an activity it provides decoration to utilitarian products such as pottery or hand-made furniture; whereas art allows for complete personal expression (Kramer, 1966, p. 150). Craft may be acceptable for a child who is intimidated by direct involvement in art. If he is rigid or frightened, often an activity which is repetitive, such as weaving, might acquaint him with a general art activity. Kramer further stated that allowing children to use kits permits only immediate gratification and in the long run, will actually frustrate them. Nothing they would do in the future would ever turn out as

perfectly as a product from a kit (Kramer, 1966, p. 151). The "pseudo-arts," or kits as Kramer calls them, are destructive, limiting, and are busy work. The author made a statement which explained the need for true art: "Creative work is not fun. . .[It] makes demands but it repays effort with exquisite satisfaction" (Kramer, 1966, p. 152).

Summary

The literature exclaiming the needs for art therapy in elementary schools is extremely limited. Some literature was found that indicated a need in high schools and colleges.

Four basic reasons for the use of therapeutic art in elementary schools was compiled by the writer. First, counseling is, in a sense, education. Therefore, using a technique such as art therapy, would heighten the counseling process, which, in turn, would benefit the total educational experience of a child. Second, elementary schools contain the greatest number of emotionally disturbed children than any other institution in our society. It would seem counseling services could be vastly improved to meet the needs of these children. Art therapy is just one more tool a counselor could use. Third, art therapy is based on the play therapy model, which is an acceptable technique for working with children. Fourth, art therapy could possibly

be integrated into art education to serve less disturbed children. It is essential to let children learn about themselves and their environment through experience, rather than directing their learning exclusively. The earlier children can learn by experience in school, the healthier they will be.

Chapter 4

UNRESOLVED PROBLEMS IN ART THERAPY

Introduction

In recent years a few writers have been questioning the relationship between art and counseling. Only a minimal number of articles was found that specifically dealt with the unresolved problems in art therapy. The investigator was able to locate only one study that indicated art therapy was not a significant factor in the patient's psychological improvement (Serban, 1972). For the most part the authors have been clinical psychologists and psychiatrists who work primarily within an analytical framework (Champernowne, 1971; Kubie, 1973; Serban, 1972; Ulman, 1961). Most of the questioning has been strictly theoretical with little empirical evidence to support the concepts. The writers have indicated however, that a great deal of ambiguity exists in basic concepts regarding art therapy.

Problems of Definition

In trying to clearly define the impact of the creative processes on psychotherapy, many terms seem inaccurate and inappropriate. As a result a concise definition of the relationship between the arts and counseling is lacking or diffuse (Kubie, 1973, p. 95).

The creative process itself is a concept that has a variety of meanings. Different types of creativity have been identified and the problem is further compounded by trying to conclude which one contributes to personal growth. Kubie has offered a general statement that attempts to include all aspects of creativity:

. . .all share at least one quality, namely the courage and freedom to reexamine the psychological residues and imprints of past experience, to pull them apart and then to fit them together again in new and changing patterns (Kubie, 1973, p. 96).

The question must be asked: What exactly is the influence of artistic creativity on man's ability to change and grow psychologically? The question may be asked of the creator as well as the observer of the art--what is the impact of the artistic experience in psychotherapy?

Most of the writers who were reviewed for this paper were unable to clearly specify what occurred in counseling when artistic creativity was involved. The answers to the questions seem to be still unknown. Writers such as Kramer and Denny have been able to demonstrate that healing apparently has transpired from creative involvement in the arts; but they have not answered exactly what has happened. Many definitions discuss art therapy process, but do not specify the source of the healing process. Ulman has presented

another proposition that applies to any aspect of therapy: "If favorable changes occur we don't know exactly how much an aesthetically valid painting or how much a dramatic new spoken insight did or didn't have to do with it" (Ulman, 1961, p. 19).

It appears to be more appropriate to ask questions about the relationship of art to counseling simply because there are not any answers at the present time. Philosophical and theoretical questioning is encouraged by Kubie. He is enthusiastic about the quest for the unanswerable and unknown questions and believes it is a moral and cultural necessity to seek the little known facts regarding art counseling. Some basic and vital questions are quoted by Kubie:

Are we considering the effects of the struggle to be creative, or of the degree of success or failure in that struggle? Or is it the impact of the product that we are concerned with? Or is it the acclaim, recognition, or monetary rewards these products may bring? Or are we asking about their more general effects upon the quality of human life, and if so, what effects do we search for? (Kubie, 1973, p. 96)

Another vague term seems too obvious to mention: How is "art" defined as it relates to the psychotherapeutic process? The term can be misleading as writers have suggested. Kubie has offered the notion that art has broad implications and

covers a variety of connotations. He has stated that something more specific is needed:

Basically our concern starts with the question whether any cultural process can influence people to change that which needs changing in all of us, whether we wish to change or not, and whether we are sick or well or both (Kubie, 1973, p. 96).

It appears the term "art therapy" also is inadequate and incomplete (Ulman, 1961, p. 10). The problem in definition is due in part to the complexity and subtlety of the discipline of art counseling. Currently, art therapy denotes activities in education, rehabilitation, and psychotherapy. The practices are varied within each institution as needs of the clients are met. With regard to art therapy, the only commonality between the specific agencies is that art materials are utilized to venture "integration or reintegration of the personality" (Ulman, 1961, p. 10).

Another problem has arisen from the ambiguity of the term "art therapy." Some art therapists or counselors emphasize art while others stress therapy. The professionals most interested in art have often excluded methods where completion of the creative process was not the ultimate goal. The counselors who emphasize therapy often reduce artistic goals for the sake of psychotherapy. There are some therapists who state art counseling may be used

independently or as a subservient technique in counseling (Ulman, 1961, p. 11). If art and counseling are to work together, counselors must not let the art "override the partnership." Art may appear to be more exciting and appealing than therapy so counselors must never lose sight of their objectives with their clients (Champernowne, 1971, p. 142).

Incompatibility of Art and Therapy

Champernowne, a Jungian psychotherapist, has clearly stated her thoughts concerning the relationship of counseling and the arts: "Art and therapy are often, it seems to be, two opposing disciplines or fields of activity and can even be at war with one another and destructive of one another at some levels" (Champernowne, 1971, p. 132). Jung recognized the need for art in diagnosis and healing more than fifty years ago. His followers incorporated creative expression into the profession of therapy, but have given warnings for its use. Patient's involvement in art has been equated with the experience of being "mad." Even though the drastic reorganization is necessary for psychotic people, seeking a "madness" experience ought to be avoided according to the Jungian therapists. For this reason Jungian psychotherapists insist that caution must be used during an art

therapy session. Before healing can occur, the patient's ego must regain control after the art experience is completed. The counselor must "remain in a conscious position, thus serving as ego security for the patient" (Champernowne, 1971, p. 135). The therapist who uses art in counseling must be prepared to support the client while reorganization takes place. This time apparently is confusing and frightening for the client.

Champernowne has questioned the true value of artistic expression. She has stated that paintings have had little influence on the total lives of the patients (Champernowne, 1971, p. 137). The patients appear to have minimal ability to observe and learn what was expressed from the unconscious. The ego has been too buried by the unconscious experience to truly understand what has happened. Again, having a highly skilled and sensitive therapist to make interpretations seems to be a necessity.

A further challenge is presented by Kubie. He also has demanded evidence of the positive therapeutic effects of art:

Why, apart from a certain naive optimism, should anyone assume that the creative process or its products, whether in art or in any other field, will necessarily contribute to man's freedom to change? Why, if we cannot dream our way to health,

should we expect to write or paint or compose
or invent or discover our way to health?
(Kubie, 1973, p. 99)

The point is emphasized moreover by the fact that often highly creative people in most disciplines appear to be highly neurotic (Kubie, 1973, p. 99). For example, Vincent Van Gogh and Francisco Goya did not seem to recover at all from their psychosis by painting. In his study on the art of psychotics, Serban has concluded that the therapeutic value of art seems to indicate primarily the "momentary mental condition" of the patient (Serban, 1972, p. 8). It may be concluded that individuals who are psychotic, including artists, do not seem to derive healing from artistic activity. Apparently, the paintings of Goya and Van Gogh simply showed the state of their minds and the great amount of reality distortion that is indicative of psychosis.

A Critical Study of Art Therapy

A researcher was able to locate doctoral dissertations that studied the influence of art counseling, but little research was found in the psychological and educational journals concerning the subject. One critical study was conducted by Serban, a psychiatrist, during the 1960's. The primary purposes of the study were to evaluate the

effect of art therapy as a means for exposing the unconscious material in psychotic patients and to evaluate the progress of the patients under art counseling.

The subjects were patients from a New York City hospital who all had been previously hospitalized. The technique involved three phases. First, the patients were familiarized with the art materials through discussion. Second, the patients were allowed to use the art materials depicting dreams and free associations. Third, the patient's interpretations were recorded and reanalyzed from their own perceptions of their world and themselves. The results of the analysis were compared to a control group who was not involved in art therapy. Half of the control and experimental groups had the same psychiatrist, while the other half of each group shared another psychiatrist. Serban's conclusions are summarized as follows:

1. The patient's drawings revealed a unique interpretation of a personal reality that was distorted.

2. The emotional conflict apparently remained the same before and after the psychosis subsided according to the drawings. The researchers reported that the drawings changed in form during art therapy, but not in their emotional content.

3. It was shown by free association that the patients had no clear insight into their conflicts before, during, and after improvement.

4. The degree of verbalization between the control and experimental groups was not significantly different. Also, the amount of improvement was close between the groups regardless of verbalization of the unconscious turmoil.

5. Serban has concluded that "art may be used as a clinical tool for the evaluation of perceptual distortion in psychotic patients and an ancillary means of communication" (Serban, 1972, p. 9).

6. Finally, as a result of the study, Serban concluded that the concept of psychosis is not merely a higher form of neurosis. He found that the emotional conflict remained the same before and after the crisis had disappeared (Serban, 1972, p. 9).

Generally speaking, Serban found that art therapy appears to:

. . . reflect mainly the particular momentary mental condition of the patient. It's purpose, as demonstrated in this study, appears to be dual: as an ancillary method for psychiatric rehabilitation, and as a test evidence of the patient's view of reality at any given time (Serban, 1972, p. 8).

Summary

Many unsolved problems exist in the field of art therapy, many of which are also a reality in other aspects of counseling and psychotherapy. Definition of basic terms rarely arouses agreement from the professionals. Also, a concise philosophy of art counseling is lacking. More empirical research is needed to learn exactly what does occur in art therapy. Writers disagree on the most basic questions such as "Does art therapy have any effect on an individual's ability to change?" Definitions and explanations of the process of art therapy are extremely biased and theoretical with very little scientific reasoning for its use.

Chapter 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This investigation described and explored the need for art therapy in educational settings, specifically in elementary schools. An historical development was also presented which gave special emphasis on research of the various qualities of psychotic art. The unresolved problems regarding the profession were also indicated. It has been the purpose of this researcher to present a complete view of the discipline of art counseling at the same time indicating the need for its use with children in elementary schools.

Conclusions

The following conclusions may be observed by elementary school art teachers and elementary school counselors who are interested in the personal growth of children:

1. Art therapy has evolved within psychoanalytic and existential and humanistic frameworks. Special training is needed if children's art is to be diagnosed and evaluated. Art teachers and counselors have successfully used therapeutic art by stressing each child's personal ability to grow and to express himself through visual media.

2. Art provides an opportunity for children to solve problems much as they would in life. Involvement in an art experience will allow them to synthesize and work independently while organizing themselves within the creative process. Art educators believe that an art experience is a simulation of coping with life since both situations necessitate problem-solving.

3. Art therapy may easily be incorporated into an elementary school setting for four reasons: First, counseling is an educational experience which may be greatly enhanced by the practice of art therapy; second, elementary schools contain more emotionally disturbed children than any other institution and with the help of art counseling, the psychological and emotional needs of these children may be met; third, art therapy is based on the play therapy model which has been favorably used in counseling children; fourth, art therapy could possibly be integrated into art classes to help those children who are less disturbed.

4. Techniques have been itemized that may be important for art teachers or counselors. Major areas of techniques were presented which move from vague art tasks to those with more structure and therapeutic results.

5. Art counseling is not to be confused with "arts and crafts." Kits and projects that are basically busy work have been called destructive and appear to be limiting to children.

6. Art is a worthwhile learning instrument because children learn through experience. Art is therapeutic in the classroom and in a counseling session because the youngsters are completely on their own to express their feelings and thoughts directly and spontaneously.

7. A concise definition and explanation of the relationship between art and therapy is lacking according to some writers. The impact of the creative process on an individual is still unclear. As a result it appears to be difficult to state clearly how an art experience may promote emotional healing.

8. Art counseling appears to be more therapeutic for those individuals who are neurotic than those who are psychotic.

Recommendations

As a result of the investigations for this paper, the following recommendations are made:

1. Therapeutic art appears to offer possibilities as a counseling tool for elementary school children. It is

felt that the use of art counseling in the elementary schools could be an asset.

2. Systematic research is needed to learn the effects of art counseling. The short-term and long-term results of art therapy need to be investigated.

3. A clearly stated philosophy of art therapy is sorely needed as well as accurate definitions and guidelines of the discipline.

4. Other educational institutions could benefit from art therapy. Community and church youth organizations and camps could assist the children more directly by excluding "arts and crafts" and including therapeutic art.

5. It is the wish of the writer that art teachers and counselors in elementary schools would learn basic art counseling skills. Even though psychologists are unsure as to what happens with an involvement in art, they do know art somehow contributes to emotional healing. Until the questions are answered, it is hoped that the rewards of the creative process will be actively sought in counseling.

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