

What happens in Art Therapy?

The purpose of Art Therapy is not essentially to teach art techniques or complete 'projects' which will impress the onlooker or produce 'good art' in the conventional sense. It is about giving the space, time and materials to discover your own individual creativity, and to experience being creative for its own sake, rather than necessarily having 'goals' or working toward a 'finished' product.

The process of forming a relationship with your art therapist using the art work you make in order to think about what is happening to you personally, can sometimes be very moving or upsetting for a while. Although over time you may be able to embrace more of your self and feel more self acceptance and nurture leading to a greater sense of wholeness.

Because art therapy is about developing a personal way of creatively accepting ones self it is not possible to predict the exact way in which therapy will proceed, apart from the commitment of the art therapist's knowledge, skills and experience to this creative process and the provision of a clearly defined relationship.

What happens at the first appointment?

This is an opportunity for you to talk with the art therapist in order to gather together information about the problem you would like help with and to discuss what Art Therapy would involve and then decide together if this approach will be suitable. If this approach is suitable your art therapist will discuss with you how long your treatment will last.

Is this service confidential?

Yes. Normally a letter will be sent to your GP about your meeting with a therapist but no information will be passed on to anyone else without your consent. If you have any questions or concerns about confidentiality, please discuss these with your art therapist.

If you would like to know more, there are two therapists specialising in Art Therapy in Shropshire County NHS Primary Care Trust whom you can contact and who have received extensive training in working with peoples' problems and distress.

Ivor Payne or Mary Perks
Chaddeslode House
130 Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY2 6AX
Tel: 01743 361295



South Staffordshire and
Shropshire Healthcare
NHS Foundation Trust



Department of Psychological Therapies
Chaddeslode House
130 Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
Shropshire
SY2 6AX

Tel: 01743 361295
Fax: 01743 352210
Website: www.shropsych.org

ART THERAPY



This leaflet provides you with information about Art Therapy to enable you to decide if this service would be of help to you.



What is Art Therapy?

We have found it to be helpful that you receive some information prior to commencing in Art Therapy in order to develop further your understanding of how this may be a helpful experience.

Please do not be put off by the term 'art' or 'therapy'. This title is used really just to point out that we shall be using materials such as paint, paper, crayons etc. whilst working in therapy.

No artistic skills are needed

Art Therapy uses the ideas and techniques of both Art and Psychotherapy in various ways in order to understand, express, work through, and overcome psychological distress.

The focus of Art Therapy is the image and involves talking between yourself (the creator), the image and the therapist. This can help clarify feelings to a conscious level. These feelings are made manageable by using art materials to illuminate and contain the process.

Therefore, many people find that engaging in Art Therapy gives them a chance to express difficult or unacceptable feelings in a safer way. It is sometimes easier to relate to a therapist through an art form, which as a personal statement, can provide a focus for talking and self-evaluation.

Comments from people who have worked in Art Therapy with us....

"For myself, I found Art Therapy a real help in allowing me to put onto paper feelings that I had kept bottled up for a very long time, and to see them as images, talking about them afterwards was very helpful and I realised the result was rewarding."

"My experience of group Art Therapy was very positive and got me through things I'd given up on. I never imagined Art Therapy could help as much as it did."

"Art Therapy was the main and very positive/important part of my recovery and should continue to help others who need it. I can not put into words just how important and special the Art Therapy was to me. It was a very important piece of my life."

"The Art Therapy group was, for me, a very special/useful form of therapy. The thought of doing group Art Therapy filled me with dread, but my fears were greatly misplaced. The feelings of trust, support and well being within the group were a great help to me, and those that run the Art Therapy group should be congratulated for facilitating such a therapeutic environment."

What sort of problems can Art Therapy help with?

Art Therapy has been shown to be of help for a wide range of people, including those who are not helped by more traditional approaches, e.g. verbal psychotherapy.

Art Therapy can help with:

- Lack of clear identity
- Low self-esteem/self-image
- Lack of purpose
- Symptoms such as depression and anxiety
- Out of touch with feelings
- Inability to express feelings
- Difficulty controlling emotions
- Relationship difficulties, e.g. getting close to partner, child, friend or family member