Introduction to Art Therapy for Adults

**What is art therapy?**

Art therapy combines a non-verbal creative process with personal and interpersonal exploration. It is intended to help people to develop their strengths, cultivate well-being in their lives, and express their unique selves.

*No art experience is required.*

**What would someone go to art therapy for?**

People come to art therapy for a variety of reasons, including:

a desire for greater self-awareness

feelings of grief & loss

stress and anxiety

learning disabilities

social challenges

physical health issues

addictions

trauma, past or present

creative blocks

relationship challenges

self-esteem issues

mental health challenges

eating disorders

depression

changes in or crisis of identity

the intention to actively engage in one’s own personal growth

**What are some of the benefits of art therapy?**

Art therapy has many benefits. These benefits result from having a safe space to intentionally immerse oneself into a creative process while being supported by a trained art therapist. This can be in either a one-on-one or a group setting. Either way, safety and confidentiality are emphasized. Benefits of art therapy may include:

**Personal expression and choice-making**

Express feelings and thoughts in a supportive and non-judgmental atmosphere

Make choices about what materials to use, what images to create, and what to speak about

Explore feelings, thoughts, memories, fantasies, and dreams

**Interpersonal communication and connection**

Be listened to, witnessed, and understood

Use the metaphoric qualities of art to express subtle feelings and experiences

Put one’s own feelings and thoughts into perspective by increasing capacity for empathy

Regain a shared sense of meaning and connection to society and culture while becoming empowered to make appropriate change

**Insight and self-awareness**

Connect with creative, physical, mental, and emotional aspects of self

Create something to be proud of and that has meaning to oneself

Develop a sense of self-control and positive coping skills to manage oneself in the world

**Intentional creation of identity and meaning**

Develop a sense of purpose and a meaningful structure to one's life

Explore one's sense of self identity in an environment of acceptance

Discover and create meaning by expressing one’s life story in new ways

Increase self-mastery and confidence