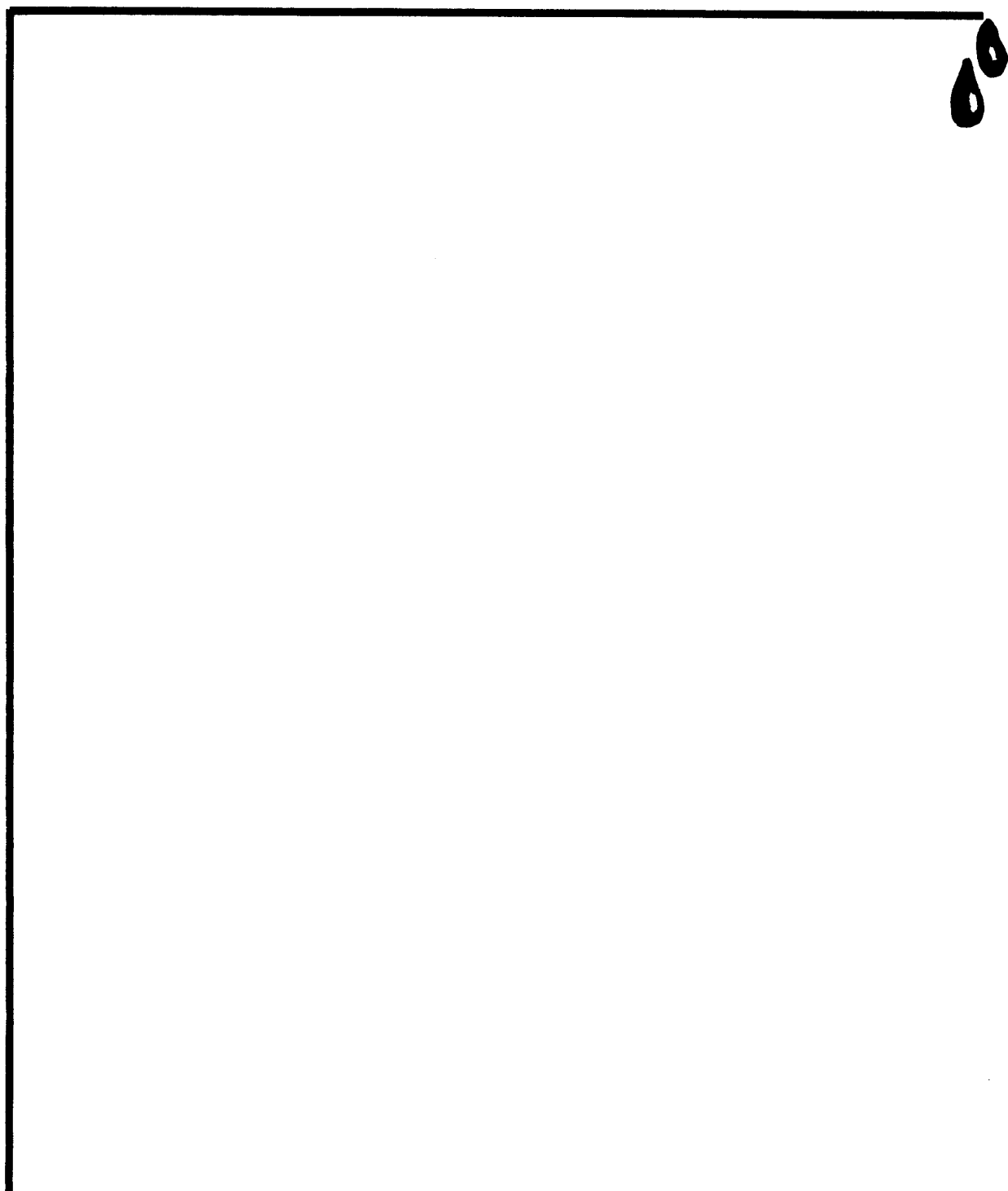


Art Therapy Activities



by

Pamela J. Stack

M.A., A.T.R.,

L.C.S.W.

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I make the
dots.





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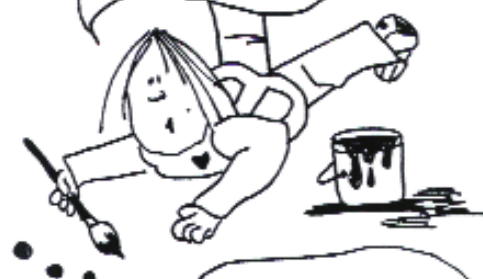
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Ever read
The Dot and the Line
by Norton Juster?
It's great!



Whewee



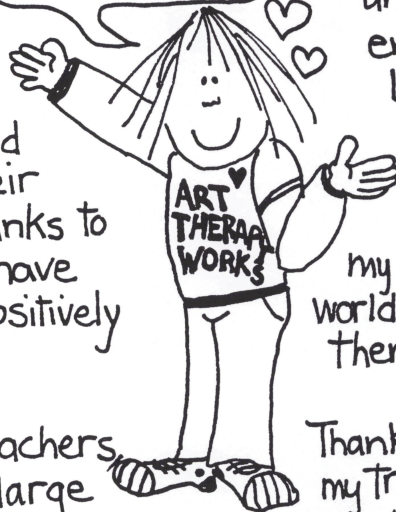
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your help!

gee thanks guys!

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future for their
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to me.



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Thanks to Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.
who said, "I rarely look at the
dictionary, which after all is
merely somebody's estimate of
polite usage, a matter on which
one can form one's own opinion."
Now I can relax about my
spelling mistakes.

Art Therapy Activities
And Lesson Plans
For Individuals and
Groups by

Pamela J. Furrer, 1982.

Love, PJ♥

703 Fieldston Terrace Webster Groves, MO 63119

page i

Introduction

iii

The purpose of this workbook and the activities in it is to encourage, stimulate and facilitate your creative expression and that of those with whom you come

Creative expression helps us: in contact!

- get our feelings out in the open.
- recognize feelings we are experiencing.
- achieve insight and understanding into our feelings, thoughts, behavior.
- more fully experience physical sensations through concentrated awareness.
- relax.
- release tension through physical activity.
- become aware of conflicts.
- make conscious choices and decisions.
- set goals.
- implement changes.
- clarify creative potential and how to use it.
- deal with creative blocks, negative patterns and other problems.
- play with new ideas, concepts, media (color, images, symbols)
- enrich relationships with others and yourself.
- learn new skills, encounter new experiences.
- increase and focus awareness.
- increase acceptance and understanding of self and others.
- increase opportunities for change and growth
- find deeper meaning in life.



Use this book as a jumping-off point to stimulate your own creative ideas. Use it as a workbook—write notes, ideas, images, and anything you like on the back of the pages. The lesson plans have been tried in at least one setting, as indicated on each plan. Use your imagination to create adaptations and variations. The appendix material at the end of the book is included for reference. I hope you enjoy the material, ideas, artwork and humor I've compiled as much as I enjoyed putting them together.

Love, PJ♥

Let's see... What words of
wisdom shall I
lay on these folks.



IV

MY THERAPEUTIC ORIENTATION

Teaching art in the elementary school these days is a challenging job. I have encountered numerous problems during my four years as an art instructor. One of the main things I became aware of after I began teaching was my lack of understanding of the creative process. The undergraduate art education background I had suddenly seemed inadequate as I searched for a meaningful rationale upon which to base my professional theories and practice. I felt that my background program had been too product-oriented. I became more and more interested in the therapeutic aspects of the creative process and the psychological needs of my students. The district where I teach has a divorce rate approaching seventy-five percent. Many of my students had unstable home lives and a high incidence of instability in their family histories. Coming from a middle-class suburban upbringing myself, I was initially shocked by the life styles many of my students had to endure. No longer could a teacher have students make things to take home to "Mom and Dad" or send a note home "for your parents to sign." I now instruct the students to take things home to "whomever they live with." Holiday gift giving such as Mother's Day cards pose special problems in some cases, so I find myself assuring the children that it's OK for them to give the cards to whomever they like. I became aware that many of my students were insecure, unsure of themselves and lacked self-esteem. I want to be able to offer them opportunities to build self-concept and to learn to release emotional fears, anxiety and tensions through creative expression. I hope to expose them to the benefits of therapy, to encourage them to get help with problems that they feel are overwhelming. I see my role in the school as a social worker, a counselor and a supportive friend as well as a teacher. I would like to promote the benefits of therapeutic expression and to emphasize that therapy can be a liberating, growth-promoting experience that can allow an individual to deal more effectively with

could have avoided the hormone imbalance that resulted from the shock and stress I encountered that first year of teaching.

Luckily, each year I have gotten more and more relaxed and have learned to deal with the problems and stress more effectively than I did at first. I have had to adjust my goals and become more flexible in method and philosophy. I have become less idealistic and more realistic, learning to value small accomplishments and to be enthusiastic over simple things like finding a few extra pairs of scissors in the bottom of my desk drawer, or getting a new pencil sharpener that works, or in seeing the joy in childrens' eyes when they make something they are proud of.



Trying to do art therapy and provide a therapeutic environment within the public school system presents special challenges which I would not worry about if I were a "typical" product-oriented art educator. I am often faced with a lack of administrative support or understanding. I am lucky in my present position, in that the administration for the most part respects my expertise in my field and allows me much freedom to conduct classes as I see fit. They differ in their orientation, and tend to place emphasis on the product, but over the years I have influenced them to become more aware of the therapeutic value in the creative process, and I have become more cognizant of the therapeutic value of the project - seeing it as a tangible representation of the process.

It is difficult to do therapy with students under these often negative circumstances within the public schools. I have developed solutions to some of these problems and learned to cope with those over which I have little control. The main coping methods I have learned over the years are as follows:

1. BE REALISTIC - accept the fact that you can't be perfect and you are only human. I have learned to be more aware and accepting of my feelings. I have learned how to effectively release tension and anger personally

Reach out.

VII

throughout a variety of therapeutic techniques to avoid repression which creates stress.

2. BE OPEN-MINDED - Look at both sides of an issue, be empathetic and look at the situation from the other's point of view to increase understanding and facilitate compromise.

3. STRUCTURE A SUPPORT SYSTEM - I have created a support system of staff members and administrators whom I trust for advice and encouragement. I have also contacted parents for support, especially with discipline problems.

4. USE ASSERTIVE DISCIPLINE - Assertive Discipline by Lee Canter influenced my discipline theories and techniques in the classroom. The teacher/therapist must be able to be flexible, should be prepared and organized in order to discourage discipline problems.

5. LEARN TO APPRECIATE THE LITTLE THINGS IN LIFE
Gear down expectations and look for even small accomplishments. I learned this lesson from working with chronic psychiatric patients in a state hospital setting. We therapists often had to be satisfied just in knowing that we were adding positive experiences to lives of the patients. I had to learn that it was unrealistic to think that I was going to create significant changes in the patients. I learned to appreciate their small accomplishments; choosing a color for a picture could be considered a major accomplishment even if the patients wouldn't actually color the pictures themselves.

In the classroom, I attempt to create a close therapeutic relationship with each student. The conditions are often undesirable and not conducive to therapy, but I do the best I can with what I have. I usually sit with the students while they work, sitting with a different table each time in order to circulate and establish closer contact with each student. I have also established special art therapy sessions with individuals or small groups of students who have learning disabilities, emotional disturbances or those who are gifted. I have worked in close



ASSERTIVE



contact with the school counselor and special education teachers, both referring students to them and working with those students they have referred to me.

As an art therapist/educator, I am dedicated to stimulating and encouraging individuals to reach their highest functioning level. I provide opportunities for my clients and students to enrich their lives through the use of the creative process. I emphasize an awareness of self (feelings, sensations, thoughts, intuitions) and of others and of the environment. Creative expression can help us communicate with others non-verbally as well as verbally. Art therapy can provide appropriate forms of tension release and can help individuals deal more effectively with stress and problems. It is hoped that the activities and lessons in this workbook and the theoretical foundation upon which they are based will stimulate creative ideas in other therapists and educators. I especially hope to increase an awareness of the fact that many people need help in dealing with life stress and problems. James C. Coleman, in Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life, says that if present trends continue one person in seven now living in the United States will at some time require professional treatment for emotional disturbances. Research also indicates that many other health problems result from stress. We must start finding effective ways of dealing with stress, and we must start exposing people to stress-relief methods early in their lives, before chronic problems develop.

The activities in this workbook are divided into three sections. Section I focuses on AWARENESS of self, others and the environment. Section II encourages ACCEPTANCE and Section III deals with EXPERIMENTING AND EXPLORING CHOICES. A fourth section includes miscellaneous material which may be valuable in conducting art therapy sessions with groups.

Art expressions can become vehicles for further development and growth. Art therapy can enrich our lives by integrating our inner selves with the external world.

that's a work of art.

art supplies that you will need:

1. A box or container to hold your stuff.
2. pencils
3. erasers
4. a thin black marker (like a "flair" or "expresso")
5. crayons
6. colored pencils
7. magic markers (thin ones like "fiddlesticks")
(thick ones like "crayola")
8. scissors
9. white glue
10. rubber cement
11. a ruler
12. watercolor paints and brush
13. a cover-up or smock for messy projects



OPTIONAL SUPPLIES

14. stapler
15. tape - scotch, masking, drafting
16. holepunch
17. stencils (like "School tools")

ART EDUCATION/ART THERAPY LESSON PLAN FORMAT

- I. TITLE
- II. MATERIALS AND TOOLS
- III. PROCEDURE AND DIRECTIONS
- IV. GOALS
- V. POPULATION
- VI. EVALUATION - INCLUDING STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF PROJECT,
POSSIBLE AND PROBABLE ISSUES RAISED AS A RESULT
OF THIS TECHNIQUE AND OTHER COMMENTS CONCERNING
THE USE OF THE TECHNIQUE.
- VII. REFERENCES, SUGGESTED READINGS, AND/OR NOTES PERTAINING TO THE
PROJECT.



Pass out the kisses.

Art Therapy Activities