

“Art therapy was my lifeline, my reason for survival. I needed to create, to show the deepest aspects of myself and share that with others.”

– Art Therapy Participant

About Us

We are the Canadian voice of art therapy. We bring together art therapists to raise standards and advance art therapy practices.

What Can be Used in Art Therapy with Seniors?

- Painting and drawing
- Sewing and weaving
- Silk painting
- Pottery and clay
- Collage
- Woodworking
- Photography
- Creative writing
- Discussion

Contact Us

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CANADIAN ART THERAPY ASSOCIATION

The Voice of Art Therapy

Art Therapy for Seniors



Artwork: Spring Tree in Botswana by Haley Toll

What is Art Therapy?

Art therapy combines the creative process and psychotherapy, facilitating self-exploration and understanding. Using imagery, colour and shape as part of this creative therapeutic process, thoughts and feelings can be expressed that would otherwise be difficult to articulate.

- No art experience necessary
- Safety and confidentiality are always emphasized in the art therapy studio
- A trained art therapist will always be there to listen and support the individuals and their needs

Art Therapy Can Help With:

- Major physical, psychological and life changes
- Grief and loss
- Depression and anxiety
- Loneliness and isolation
- Sensory-motor difficulties
- Cognitive decline
- Addiction and mental health issues
- Trauma or unresolved conflicts

How Can Art Therapy Benefit Seniors?

- Creative process and opportunity to make own choices help to rekindle new energy
- Stimulating the senses and sharpening cognitive and perceptual skills
- Opportunity to learn compensatory techniques through the use of art material
- Preserving a sense of pride and dignity by creating a tangible art product
- Decreasing feelings of isolation and despair through social interactions and opportunity to gain recognition for one's achievements
- Provide visual focus for reality-orientation and non-verbal means of communication for individuals dealing with loss of cognitive and language abilities
- Support individuals to become aware of and work through emotional reactions to losses and limitations
- Structured activities of reminiscence and life review help integrate unresolved issues, take pride in one's past, and connect with inner strengths and wisdom

Professional Standards for Art Therapists

Art therapists are trained professionals with expertise in counseling psychology and fine arts. In Canada and the United States, art therapists must have at minimum a master's degree or a master's level diploma in art therapy before identifying themselves within the profession. This graduate level education includes supervised clinical practicum hours (700 hours for Canadian art therapists), thus ensuring the safety of the client as well as professional liability for agencies and employers offering this form of therapy.

If you are interested in education in art therapy, or looking for an art therapist in your area, please visit the CATA website at canadianarttherapy.org.

CATA hosts an annual conference that brings together art therapists and other professionals to promote and advance the profession of art therapy. For more information, please visit: canadianarttherapy.org/upcoming-conference/



Photo by Oona McClure