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ADDICTION AND RECOVERY: A HUMANIZING AND HEALING JOURNEY WITH ART THERAPY

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, rt therapy has been well established and evidenced in the literature since the 1950's. Art therapy has various forms of application and has been successfully employed in substance abuse treatment in the following ways: to help clients grapple with the 12 steps; to explore connections between thoughts, feelings and behaviours as related to substance abuse incidents (Cox and Price, 1990); to recognize and express internalized shame (Wilson, 2002); and to develop healing symbols for recovery (Matto, 2002). Understanding substance use disorder, treatment modalities, and utilizing appropriate terminology is vital in efforts of increasing successful recovery efforts and decreasing the stigma related to people in recovery. Innovative treatment strategies are critical in helping individuals to end their destructive patterns and learn to live without substances. Solution-focused techniques in combination with art therapy methods, offer a strengths-based treatment structure for helping individuals move into more functional behaviors, without getting stuck in the shame of past dysfunction. Appropriate ethical practice in confidentiality, as well as the ability to determine adherence to the appropriate ethics of Art therapists, counselors, social workers, psychotherapists and current regulations and laws is crucial when providing services for the well-being of our clients. These concepts will be disseminated and discussed. A journey of healing will be explored through visual examples of art therapy intervention in substance use treatment. Author will create personal healing symbols of recovery through technique of mandala making, processing and discussion of resulting insight. Each participant will create their own personal healing symbol mandala.

