

R-E-S-T MODULE AN APLICATION OF EXPRESSIVE ARTS FOR DEPRESSION AMONG WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

This review explores the relationship between efficiently of counseling session with the expressive art outcome specifically on depression among women. The use of art therapy can improve the effectiveness of the counseling process. This is because the use of expressive art helps the counselor to explore client issues by combining visual arts such as drawing and painting in the process. Although there is evidence that art-based interventions are effective in reducing adverse physiological and psychological outcomes, the extent to which these interventions enhance the sustainable development goals is largely unknown. Additionally, discussions also touch on sharing experiences of the client's setting and background. Our hope is to establish a foundation for continued investigation regarding depression issues and to generate further interest in researching the sustainable development goals among women with expressive arts approach.

Key words: Expressive arts therapy, counseling, depression,

INTRODUCTION

Although the idea of applying variety of art activities in the counseling process is not new, it's still growing in definition. Thus, the term of expressive art also used interchangeably with expressive art therapy (Malchiodi 2003). Expressive art defined as using the art and their products to foster awareness, encourage emotional growth and enhance interaction and communication during counseling session. As in expressive art session, counselors used various arts activities, for example drawing, painting, sculpting, making collages, movement or music; in a therapeutic setting to facilitate an individual's or group's self-expression. Hence this article emphasized on artistic approach is the use of art as a tool or 'tool' for interaction, as well as communication medium in the counseling process. Thus, the beauty of the art work is not primary. The arts used to encourage the clients feel comfortable to express their feelings or emotions and to gain insight.

Drawing and painting are forms of creative expression activities that can help clients process and cope with emotional issues, including depression. It can be challenging for certain people. Clients may experience excruciating and feeling apathetic and drained of their willpower. This is where expressive art therapy plays a vital role in counseling session. Expressive art therapy goes beyond traditional talk therapy. It focuses on creative outlets as a means of expression (Kahn, 1999). Images, object, color, words, stroke, form or anything that come out on the paper once created allowing development of insight, containing difficult emotions and coping with the many physiological changes that result from stress, depression, trauma or illness. This therapy can be especially helpful for people who find it difficult to talk about their thoughts and emotions. In these forms of expression, arts modalities and creative processes are used during counseling session to increase insight towards the issues and foster positive mind.

According National Institute of Mental Health (2018), depression is more common among women than men likely due to certain biological, hormonal, and social factors that are unique to women. Depression affects how you feel, think, and handle daily activities like sleeping, eating, or working. People who are facing depression issues need a good support system of the people around them. There is still a need to maintain relationships and connect with others. In fact, people with depression have the same physical, emotional, expressive, social, and spiritual needs as everyone else.

Expressive art therapy has become an effective treatment in supporting, releasing, and integrating the symptoms of depression. The use of expressive art in counseling session is identified as a form of alternative treatment. People with depression are often focused on what has happened in the past. In order to help them, counselor should be essential to discern what clients are saying to themselves to help them address their negative self-talk. During counseling session, the counselor will help clients to recognize when they're having negative or anxious thoughts. In order to help client, the counselor can use breathing technique to make the clients feel calm and relax before the modality of art use in the session.

This study will examine which areas of expressive arts are being used as tool or medium of communication to encourage client dealing with depression to express feelings and to assist in making connections with others. The use of art modalities such as drawing and painting in counseling session is identified as a form of alternative approach. By the way, expressive art therapy has been used with people who have mental illness, which focused on the end product of the art, as a way to gain insight into the psyche and to aid in diagnosis (Ulman, 2001). More recently, art has been showing up in hospitals and clinics with a different focus. The process of creating art is becoming more valuable than the end product.

SIGNIFICANCE STATEMENT

According to the National Institute of Mental Health (2018), the number of women who are dealing with depression is steadily growing from year to year. People dealing with depression issues looking for alternative therapies to meet the needs of the mind, body, and soul. The use of art as therapy in counseling considered an alternative approach in counseling. It could positively impact a person's overall, in order to increase the ability to help the person divert attention from dwelling on his or her fate, to aid in self-expression and to recognize the importance of engaging in meaningful counseling session.

Despite, the helping profession is renewing the importance of using meaningful and/or purposeful approach to the individual or client while treating the whole person. This is an opportune time to include the use of art with people who have depression especially women in helping profession's scope of practice. The research from this study could also spark the interests of other area in helping profession such as occupational therapists, speech therapist and lead to further research in this area.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The primary question is: could art be used within counseling session to help people meet the needs of those with depression? Sub-questions include:

1. Could the use of art help people who have depression express feelings?
2. Could expressive art such as drawing or colouring, within the context of counseling assist in connecting with others?

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

The basic premise through a client-side of expressive art therapy approach it seeks to explore and seek the meaning behind the creative process that has been passed and promote the sharing of client experiences with counselors or therapists (Malchiodi, 1998). This is also confirmed by Sommers-Flanagan (2007), found that this approach is a modern approach to counseling and psychotherapy based on the Carl Rogers Human Convergence approach. This approach has been developed by Rogers (1993) by emphasizing the role of therapist or counselor as an honest, open, empathy, congruent, caring, deep listening ability faced by the client and able to facilitate individual or group growth.

Through the process of expressive art therapy, client can explore and have the ability to define meaning of the creative process, thus can share their experience with the counselor or therapist (Malchiodi, 1998). Hence, the expressive art therapy is used as a tool for interaction and communication in the counseling session. Art making provides a way to externalize and translate body sensations and emotions into concrete form. The client can draw or sculpt what the body feels like. Based on a study conducted by Sommers-Flanagan (2007), art therapy offers a modern approach toward the counseling process and psychotherapy. This is in line with person-centered theory as proposed by Carl Rogers in 1940. Rogers (1993), explained further on this theory that emphasize on the therapist or counselor role as an honest, open, empathy, congruent, caring with the ability to listen attentively which make the counseling session easier to be carried out either in individual session or in group. In addition, the use of expressive arts in a safe and supportive environment offers clients a new way to enhance awareness and communicate what they might not be able to say in words (Rogers, 1993).

OVERVIEW OF DEPRESSION AMONG WOMEN

Depression among women is very common but serious mood disorder. It causes feelings of sadness, hopelessness, helplessness, and worthlessness. Depression can be mild to moderate with symptoms of apathy, little appetite, difficulty sleeping, low self-esteem, and low-grade fatigue. Or it can be more severe. Although the causes of depression are still being studied, current research suggests that depression is caused by a combination of genetic, biological, environmental, and psychological factors. Most people with depression need treatment to feel better.

Women are nearly twice as likely as men to be diagnosed with depression. Depression is more common among women than men, likely due to certain biological, hormonal, and social factors that are unique to women. According to World Health Organization (WHO), depressive disorders account for close to 41.9% of the disability from neuropsychiatric disorders among women compared to 29.3% among men. Furthermore Girgus, Yang and Ferri (2017) reports have found that adolescent, young adult, and middle-aged adult girls and women are more likely to be diagnosed with unipolar depression and report greater symptoms of depression when compared to boys and men of similar ages.

According to Weisman (2014), the risk factors that had the greatest impact on liability to major depression in women were neuroticism, divorce, and absence of parental warmth, social supports, and marital satisfaction. She further explained that that woman's depressions are defined by deficiencies in caring relationships and interpersonal loss and men's by failure to achieve expected instrumental goals and lowered self-worth. In perspective taking, Neitzke (2016), mentioned that in terms of risk, women are said to be 70 % more likely to experience depression in their lifetime.

GUIDANCE ON APPLICATION OF EXPRESSIVE ART IN COUNSELING SESSION

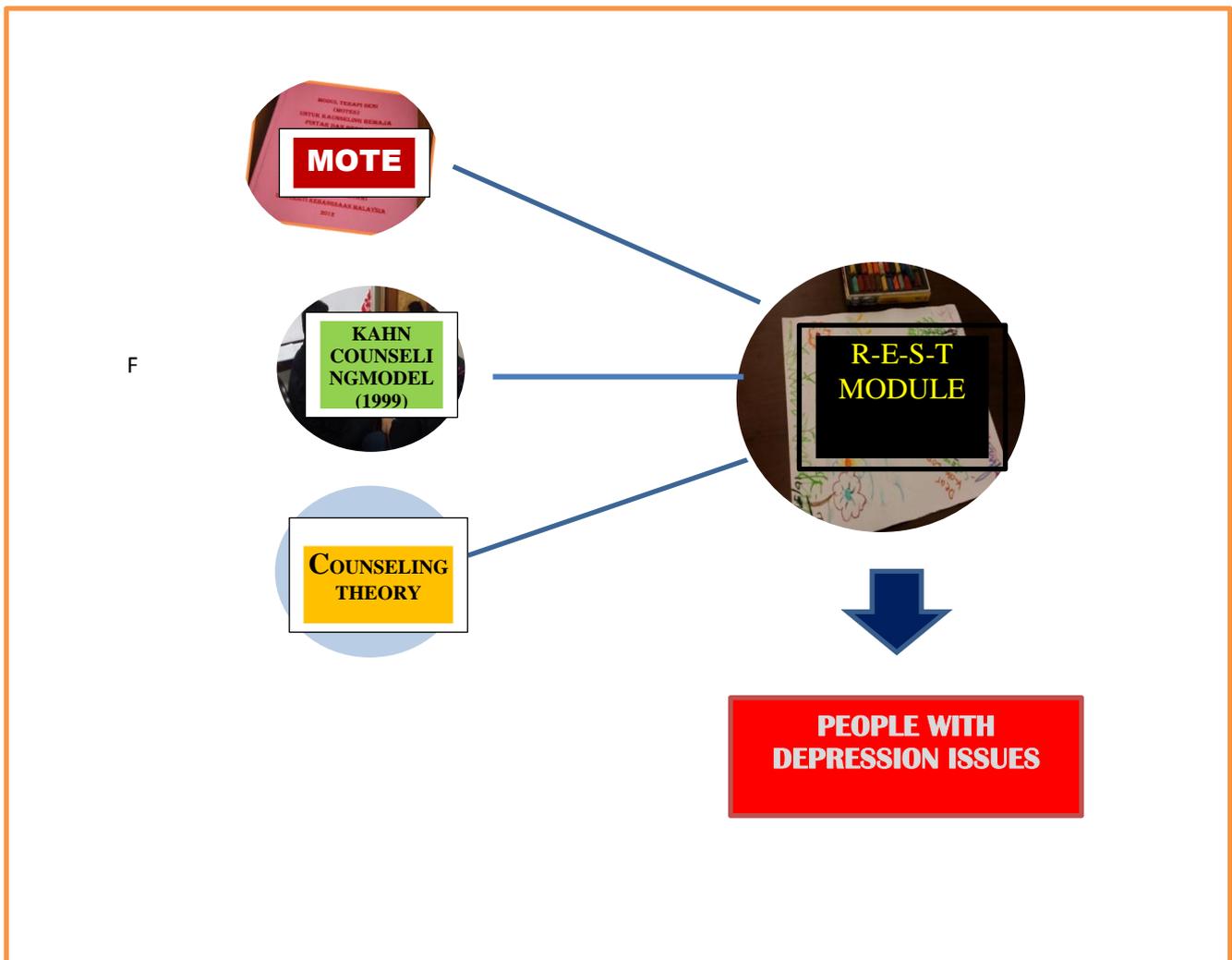
Expressive Art Therapy approach in the counseling process is aimed at improving the client's ability to express emotion and feelings securely without any threaten and coercion. However, R-E-S-T Module is one of the modules in helping setting, designed using the conceptual framework of art therapy studyin Doctor of Philosophy (Guidance and Counseling) as below (Figure 2). Drawing in these content, acronym R-E-S-T represent as below (Figure 1) :

Figure 1: Acronym of R-E-S-T

R	: Reveal and Reflect
E	: Emotion and Feelings
S	: Sensibility
T	: Tangible

This module is produced using the MOTES conceptual framework, where the three stages in the counseling process of Kahn's (1999) counseling model are used as the main guide. Meanwhile, the theory of humanistic counseling founded by Carl Rogers became the basic principles of this module. The R-E-S-T module application of expressive art therapy can be applied to all age groups in any problem settings and client background. In this module, art serves as a tool or medium of facilitator in helping relationships. This is because the art is non-threatening, has no expectation, giving new and fun experiences to clients; making this module able to meet individual psychological needs with its own impact on the individual.

Figure 2: Theoretical Framework of R-E-S-T



Art therapy is an expressive language of the conscious and the unconscious minds. Art therapy approach has been proven to help facilitate the counseling process, as well as in other helping profession setting. However, most practitioners lack the proper exposure of this approach. Nevertheless, the art therapy approach in Malaysia is still considered new. This approach requires more research involving its effectiveness in various helping settings. Here are some of the advantages found in the expressive art process in counseling:

1. Counselor or therapist must have the ability to touch the subconscious mind of the client and facilitate the client to express and share about the conflicts that the experienced by the client. This create the awareness on the buried or hidden conflict that unnoticed by the client before the session (Liebmann, 1990).
2. Ulakand Cummings (1997) explained that art is the portrayal of conflict, emotion or situation that experienced by the client.
3. Furth (1998), in the view that counselor must not interpret the art done by the client but emphasize more on the feeling that the client felt from the art process.
4. Rubin (2001) explained on the role of counselor or therapist to help client explains about themselves or client's issues or conflicts through concrete or objective manner.
5. Art therapy session is a process of facilitating the client to take action on the issues rather than just merely thinking about the issues or conflict. This process involves more active participation from the client, not just a conversation (Kahn 1999).
6. Mc Niff (1997) proposed that art therapy approach can be easily combined with other modality of expressive art such as music, movement, creative writing or visual art.

Counselor must understand the counseling goals and carefully select the most suitable art medium based on client's need (Kahn 1999). This process involves the counselor's wisdom to helping clients enable to find out the right solution for his or her issues or problems:

'What needed to be expressed by this art at this stage?' as well as "will this art activities enable client to move forward in the counseling session?"

Based on Kahn (1999) three stages of art therapy application are: the beginning phase, exploration phase and action phase. In the beginning phase, art are able to build positive and friendly rapport in the counseling process, with the advantage of genuine, empathy and unconditional acceptance shown by the counselor. In the exploration stage, art enable the counselor to explore the client's world, issues or conflicts. In addition, Gladding & Newsome (2003) described that during the exploration stage counselor should select the suitable art instruction to make confrontation toward inconsistent issues as well as pertaining client's thought and behavior.

By using art, counselor can facilitate a therapeutic relationship with the client. Hence, it can be used as a tool for the client who did not wanting to talk, to actually engage in the counseling session by instilling confidence that art therapy is not about artistic intelligence but a tool that enable the client to do self-exploration by using other medium rather than expressing themselves just by talking. At the end of the stage, the use of art is seen to have the client get the idea to act towards the desired goal. Clients are more specific towards achieving those goals.

CASE: EXPRESSIVE ARTS FOR DEPRESSION AMONG WOMEN

A bipolar patient used expressive art to identify the feeling that she experienced during depression or manic. Expressive art therapy provide a fun tool for the client to explore her own feeling that all this while buried in her heart or mind due to in denial of the mental illness that she has. Beside taking medication, going for Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and joining a support group, the client relies on art for self-insight. Client applied REST module application of expressive art therapy that she learned for self-healing. Client now is happier as she now can channel her negative or positive energy through art.

Figure 1: Beginning Stage



This is the beginning stage, this drawing portraying the client life that full of challenges in every direction. The client feels overwhelmed and tired. The client feels sad and all the problem seems entangles in client mind and life. Client just gives time for her to 'feel' the feeling and contemplate. The black branches mean the non-stop trial and tribulation in client life. The branches are all over the place since client feels overwhelmed by the sadness. The rock signifies the support system that the client has. The sunset is representing the client favorite time which is sunset.

Figure 2: Middle Stage



After 20 minutes contemplating, the client drew another drawing based on her 'feeling'. Client closed her eyes for few second and then gave meaning to the second drawing. In the second drawing, the client realized that although her life full of challenges, she has the foundation to stand still. Client realized that she has strong determination to succeed and be happy in her life no matter what problem that she has to face in her life as a bipolar patient. In this picture, the tree with few branches, represent the strong will that the client have. The grass and the rock represent the present of client's friend and family support in her life. The sunset has more red in it than the first picture since it represents the brave move that the client is willing to take in life.

Figure 3: Maniac Period



This picture is actually portraying the client brain during manic, has somany running ideas and they are not connected to each other. After the manic, come the depression waves again. The severe the manic, the worst depression will be experienced by the patient. The weird branches tree is actually represent the client mind that is full of running thought in all direction. The blue

background is the client, still beautiful although the manic drive the client crazy, less sleep and many other challenges. The soft moon means, there will comes day after night, happiness after sadness. The stars are symbolized of hope.

Figure 4 : Final Stage



In this picture, the client drawing indicate after the storm of manic and depression, the client manage to find peace, the 'calm' and the 'stable' client without manic and depression. Every time relapse, the client need to rebuilt her life and her self-confidence. It is not easy, but is possible with courage and strong determination. The mountain is representing the client's heart, remain strong despite whatever challenge that she faces. The cloud and sky represent the calmness in client mind and heart. The beautiful waves indicate the beauty of life despite up and down.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The first question the researcher asked was, could the use of art help people who dealing with depression express feelings? In this study, the researcher guided the subject about expressing feelings through drawing and painting. Subject was given an art tools and was free to choose what tool and color to be used. Specifically, the researcher and the subject discussed ways to express themselves through art. The researcher made it clear that it was their own painting and they were totally in control of what they put on their paper. The participants noted to paint anything of their choice. This gave them the freedom to express themselves through color and forms. More specifically, they said that it was their choice of colors that allowed them to openly express themselves non-verbally.

According to the subject being studied, the used of art help and guide the subject to express what buried in her mind or heart through the art that the subject draw. The subject was surprised that she could understand herself and her feelings better after the art therapy session. Here the art provide a tool for the subject to explore and express what she actually felt deep inside her. It later helps the subject to discuss her issue with the counselor. According to Grumman (2013), expressive therapy goes beyond traditional talk therapy as it focuses on creative outlets as a means of expression and especially helpful for people who find it difficult to talk about their thoughts and emotions.

The final question was could expressive art such as drawing or colouring, within the context of counseling assist in connecting with others? However, this question was supported by the findings of this case study in two ways. One, through doing art, the subject connected with each other and the researcher during informal discussions; and two, participants connected with family and friends by sharing their work. All the participants expressed their pride in sharing what they had created. This research question was supported by the findings of this study as well as by the literature. In one qualitative study of depression men and women inmate conducted by Gussak (2009), women show greater changes in mood and locus of control than men after the art therapy service. Based on study by V. Korostiy and S. Hmain (2013), 90% of patients have drawn interpretation of the content of their subjective experiences, 70% of patients reduced the level of anxiety, 75% of patients experienced improvement in mood between sessions, 77% of patients self-esteem has increased, 80% of patients had sustained remission, and 68% - a positive outlook for the future has appeared. This finding suggests that that art therapy can be used to help depression patients.

CONCLUSION

Expressive arts applied in a counseling process as a medium for self-expression and self-healing. In this process, the use of artistic modalities serves as a tool for the emotional enhancement of a person dealing with depression. This process involves sensory function including sensory vision, hearing, smell, touch and taste. Through this process, participants also 'see', smell, touch each other's feelings through their respective artworks. In the process, talent or art in art does not important. Similarly, this process does not involve any interpretation process of a person's artwork. Furthermore, client had an opportunity to express his or her feelings and emotion through the artworks. Hence, this process does not emphasize on the beauty of the art made by the client but rather as a tool to help the client to explore their problem through art and to gain insight from it. Therapeutic environment help the client to express the deep feeling that the client experience and enable the client to feel relief after the counseling process.

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