

FATHER AND SUN: ART THERAPY AND EATING DISORDERS;  
MANIFESTATIONS THROUGH ART

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1999

Abstract

According to the literature, the sun is indicative of the patient's relationship with her father (Gibson, 1996, p. 8; Hall, 1994, p. 109; Fontana, 1993, p. 120; Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1996, p. 945). During my internship at Strong Memorial Hospital, the sun emerged as a consistent theme in patients' artwork. Over time, many patients revealed that they had poor relationships with their fathers. The high occurrence of the sun symbol coupled with the patients' report of their distant relationship with their fathers seemed very significant. My thesis will explore the sun as it was used in the artwork of my patients. I will also discuss the findings of research that have been done on the father/daughter relationship with women and eating disorders. In addition, I will investigate the implications for treatment that my findings suggest.