

The Emerging Artist with Dementia: A Search for Meaning and Emphasis in Therapy and the Art World

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Abstract

For persons suffering from progressive dementia, art therapy has become a profound tool for a client's understanding and awareness of their own individuality and depth. This investigation describes the journey of how art experience became an important and profound form of communication for one client living with a progressing dementia. While describing the developing importance of art for this client his art work was examined both in an art therapy context, and as 'art objects' in the wider context of the art world. The concept of 'outsider art' was investigated examining the validity of its implications.

This therapist's own countertransference issues were then examined, exploring emotional reactions of what may often be experienced when delving into another person's reality, particularly in the case of client's living with dementia.