
Winthrop Faculty and Staff Publications

Fall 10-15-2015

Examining assisted living residents' participation in a group-based art therapy program

Ainsley Hebert

Winthrop University, heberta2@winthrop.edu

Tanwanda Smith

Winthrop University, smitht52@winthrop.edu

Danielle Silberman

Winthrop University, silbermand2@winthrop.edu

Allison Gibson

Winthrop University, gibsona@winthrop.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.winthrop.edu/fac_pub




Part of the [Social Work Commons](#)

Publisher Citation

Hebert, A., Smith, T., Silberman, D., & Gibson, A. (2015, October). Examining assisted living residents' participation in a group-based art therapy program. Presented at the Winthrop University's Department of Social Work Brownbag Presentation. Rock Hill, SC.

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Winthrop University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Winthrop Faculty and Staff Publications by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Winthrop University. For more information, please contact bramed@winthrop.edu.



Examining Assisted Living Residents' Participation in a Group-Based Art Therapy Program

AINSLEY HEBERT, TANWANDA SMITH & DANIELLE SILBERMAN, MSW CANDIDATES

ALLISON GIBSON, PHD, MSW



Art Therapy with Older Adults

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Art Therapy

- ▶ “The art process allows them to express themselves and discharge much of their affect fearlessly and unselfconsciously” (Gussak & Virshup, 1997, p.10).



Older Adults

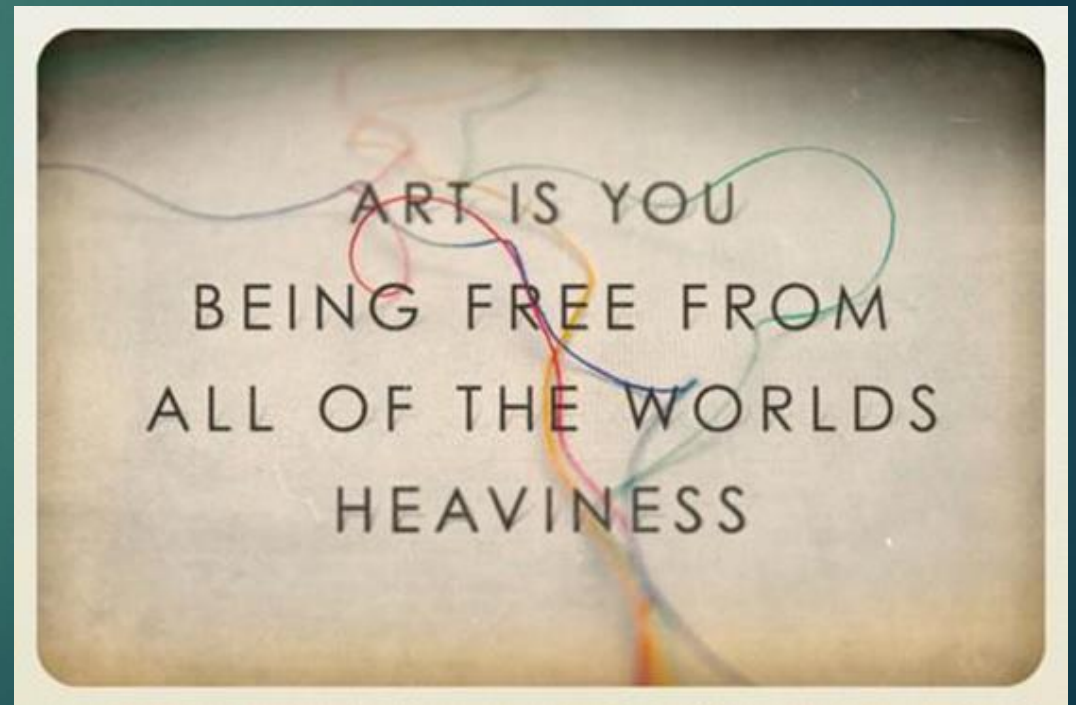
- ▶ **Role theory: role participation establishes the bases of our identity and successful role performance develops a sense of competence and self worth (Hooyman, Kiyak, 2010).**
- ▶ **Difficulties transitioning into long term care facilities**
- ▶ **Loss of a sense of autonomy**
- ▶ **Identity crisis often emerges out of the loss of significant roles within his/her community**
- ▶ **Loss of social networks**

Benefits of Art Therapy with Older Adults

- ▶ Social well-being
- ▶ Personal growth
- ▶ Social connections
- ▶ Emotional and physical health
- ▶ Coping strategy

Benefits of Art Therapy with Older Adults

- ▶ “Art is a process of self expression leading to self discovery” (Gussak, p.39)
- ▶ Strong sense of belonging
- ▶ Improved self esteem
- ▶ Sense of autonomy
- ▶ Improved quality of life



Limitations/ Challenges of Art Therapy

- ▶ Age appropriate activities
- ▶ Participant interest in art
- ▶ Confidence in artistic ability
- ▶ Ability/health status
- ▶ Researching effectiveness of Art Therapy
 - ▶ Difficult to measure effectiveness (not cut and dry)
 - ▶ Lacks value, interventions are not seen as very meaningful

Overview of Our Study

INTRODUCE AND EXAMINE AN 8 WEEK ART THERAPY PROGRAM W/ OLDER ADULTS IN ASSISTED LIVING

DETERMINE IMPACT OF ART THERAPY PROGRAM FOR ASSISTED LIVING RESIDENTS

REVIEW TARGETED OBJECTIVES FOR:

- SENSE OF COMMUNITY AMONG RESIDENTIAL PEERS (SOC)
- PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL BEING (PWB)
- QUALITY-OF-LIFE (QOL)
- SENSE OF IDENTITY IN THE ASSISTED LIVING SETTING (SI-AS)

WAS THERE AN IMPACT, IF SO WHAT?



Methodologies

➤ Data collection was triangulated with...

- 1) a pre-test/post-test survey administered first and last day of group sessions to assess PWB, QOL, and SIC
- 2) 1-on-1 interviews w/ each group participant allowed co-investigator familiarity w/ participants' life narrative and characteristics of their identity
- 3) daily observations of researchers using an inter-rater observation tool to assess quality of group session



Observation Tools

- ▶ Observation tool
 - ▶ Interaction
 - ▶ Supportive Environment
 - ▶ Engagement



Observation Tools

continued . . .

One-on-one Interviews

- ▶ Identity Status Interview

Pre and Post Test Surveys

- ▶ Quality of Life Scale (Q-LES-Q-SF)
- ▶ Chavis & Acosta (2008)'s Sense of community scale (SCI-2)
- ▶ MIDUS Perceived Well-Being (PWB)

Limitations

- ▶ Problems with timeline
- ▶ Communication issues between involved parties
- ▶ Small sample size
- ▶ Attrition

Attrition

- ▶ Not what they expected
- ▶ Health concerns
- ▶ Confidence in abilities/ stress
- ▶ Pre-existing friendships



**WHAT
IS AN
ART THERAPY
SESSION
LIKE?**

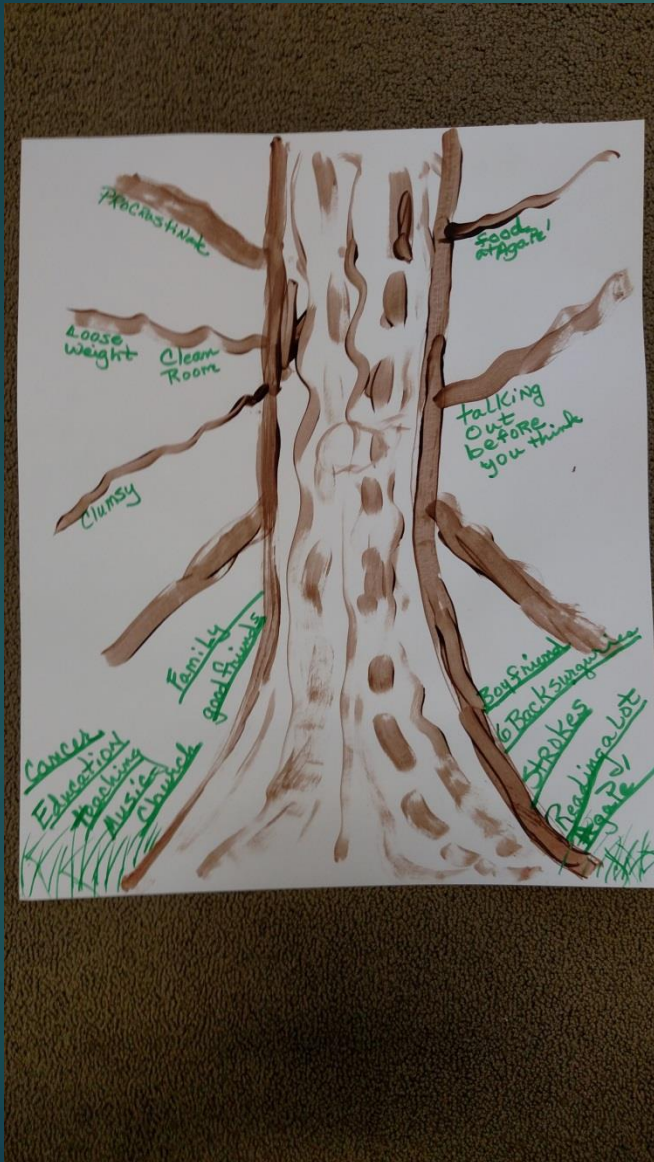
Ink Blot Activity

Recommendations for Future Groups:

- ▶ Consideration of the group offering time)
- ▶ Need to improve communication
- ▶ Group formation process
- ▶ Pre-existing friends in the group impacted group dynamics
- ▶ Mixed cognitive abilities
- ▶ Our current model allowed for great session facilitation



Recommendations for Future Activities:



- ▶ Diversity of activities went well
- ▶ Some supplies and activities were perceived as “childish”
- ▶ Wanted to learn new artistic skills as part of the program
- ▶ Giving residents more choice in selecting which activities

Recommendations for Future Research:

▶ Data Collection

- ▶ Triangulation of data
- ▶ Measurement tools - shorten surveys
 - ▶ Use larger font with this population
- ▶ Shorten interviews
 - ▶ Unintentional results from these interviews
- ▶ Observational tool worked great
 - ▶ Need for more of these in research

▶ Data Analysis

- ▶ Need for a larger sample size
- ▶ Observe multiple program offerings for individual differences to help determine what factors are most important in quality group-based art therapy programs.



Questions?

▶ Contact Us:

- ▶ Ainsley Hebert: heberta2@winthrop.edu
- ▶ Tanwanda Smith: smitht52@winthrop.edu
- ▶ Danielle Silberman: silbermand2@winthrop.edu
- ▶ Allison Gibson: gibsona@winthrop.edu
<http://faculty.winthrop.edu/gibsona/>

References

- ▶ Archer, S.L. & Waterman, A.S. (1993). Identity Status Interview: Adult Form. In J.E. Marcia, A. S. Waterman, D.R. Matteson, S.L. Archer & J.L. Orlofsky (Eds.) *Ego identity. A handbook for psychosocial research* (pp. 318-333). New York: Springer
- ▶ Chavis, D.M., Lee, K.S., & Acosta J.D. (2008). *The sense of community (SCI) revised: The reliability and validity of the SCI-2*. Paper presented at the 2nd International Community Psychology Conference, Lisboa, Portugal.
- ▶ Dabelko-Shoeny, H. (2013). *Observation tool*. (Unpublished resource).
- ▶ Endicott J, Nee J, Harrison W, Blumenthal R. (1993). Quality of life enjoyment and satisfaction questionnaire: A new measure. *Psychopharmacology Bulletin*, 29, 321-326.
- ▶ George, L.K. (2010). Still happy after all these years: Research frontiers on subjective well-being in later life. *Journal of Gerontology, Social Sciences*, 65B(3), 331-339.

References (cont.)

- ▶ Gussak, D. & Virshup, E. (1997). *Drawing time: Art therapy in prisons and other corrections settings*. Chicago, Illinois: Magnolia Street Publishers.
- ▶ Hooyman, N. & Kiyak, H.A. (2010). *Social gerontology: A multidisciplinary perspective (9thed.)*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- ▶ Phinney, A., Moody, E. M., & Small, J. A. (2014). The Effect of a Community-Engaged Arts Program on Older Adults' Well-being. *Canadian Journal On Aging*, 33(3), 336-345. doi:10.1017/S071498081400018X
- ▶ Stephenson, R. C. (2006). Promoting Self--Expression Through Art Therapy. *Generations*, 30(1), 24-26.
- ▶ University of Wisconsin, Madison (2011). *Midlife in the United States (MIDUS)*. Available from <http://www.midus.wisc.edu/>