

# **A CASE STUDY OF CREATIVE ART THERAPY INTERVENTION: AN PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH**

**Mei-I Chen**

Doctoral student, Department of Guidance and Counseling, National Changhua University of Education  
Taiwan (R.O.C.)

**Tsung-Chain Huang**

Department of Guidance and Counseling, National Changhua University of Education, Professor/Chair  
Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Keywords: Creativity, communication, existential phenomenology, art therapy

Introduction: As professional helpers, communication skills and creative abilities at work are necessary and often challenged from time to time. A non-verbal approach of art making intervention can play an important role in creativity and communication to enhance the self-efficiency and working efficiency for professional helpers.

Body of paper:

As professional helpers, especially nurses on the front line, communication skills are necessary and often challenged, especially when they are providing services for the clients and their families, and when they are facing clients' need. The professional helpers' communication skills and creative abilities are helpful in improving self-efficiency and working efficiency. Therefore, it is beneficial to make creativity and communication an important part of the training for professional helpers. By using art making as an intervention rather than using a verbal approach, students are invited to art making, reflection and feedback. Further investigation was made with the structure of students' experience. Through experiencing the hands-on approach, students can practice the technique at present and use it in their work field in the future. Participants are 47 students from the department of nursing who took the creativity and communication course. There are two parts to the course design. First part, in order to avoid and reduce the conscious defensive mechanism of verbal expression, students are asked to express themselves through the non-verbal and indirect approaches of image making. Second part, in order to obtain reflection and insight, students are asked to write down their experience, including thoughts and feelings that surfaced during the art making process. The whole class last for 18 weeks in total with two weeks of mid-term and final exams, therefore there are 16 weeks of art making. Art making is conducted by individuals, pairs, and in groups. Medium such as crayons, water colors, pencil, and clays, etc., were used. Not only are these materials common, easy to prepare, and also easy to use by non-art major people. Each student has to select 10 out of the 16 weeks of art works, and using free writing methods to document the process, and attach art images as well.

The phenomenological research approach was used, and Situational Structure Analysis method was conducted to reach the ontological description. The results of the structure of the experience are as follows: A, by using images to express the existence of self, it changed from being difficult and broken to becoming more connected. B, through images and sharing, participants' interpersonal relationship changed from minimal interactions to more enriched relationship. C, Through sharing, the interpersonal relationship that was once estranged became more intimate.

Figures:

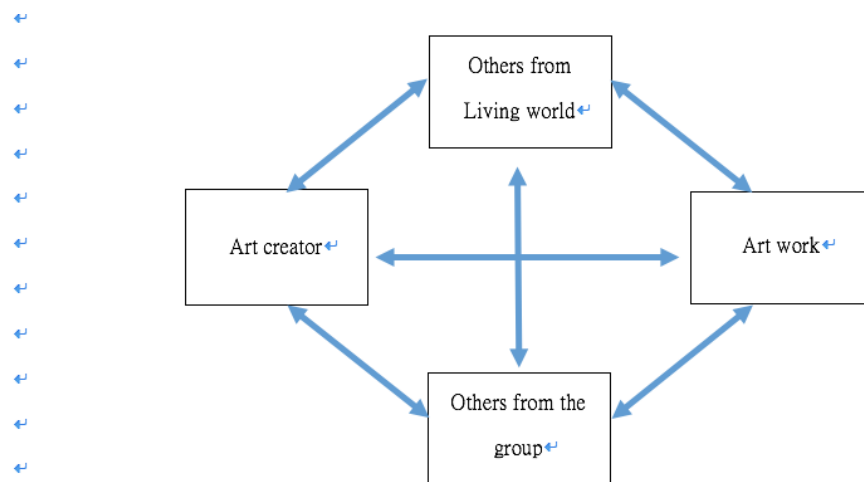


Figure 1. Situational Structure Analysis

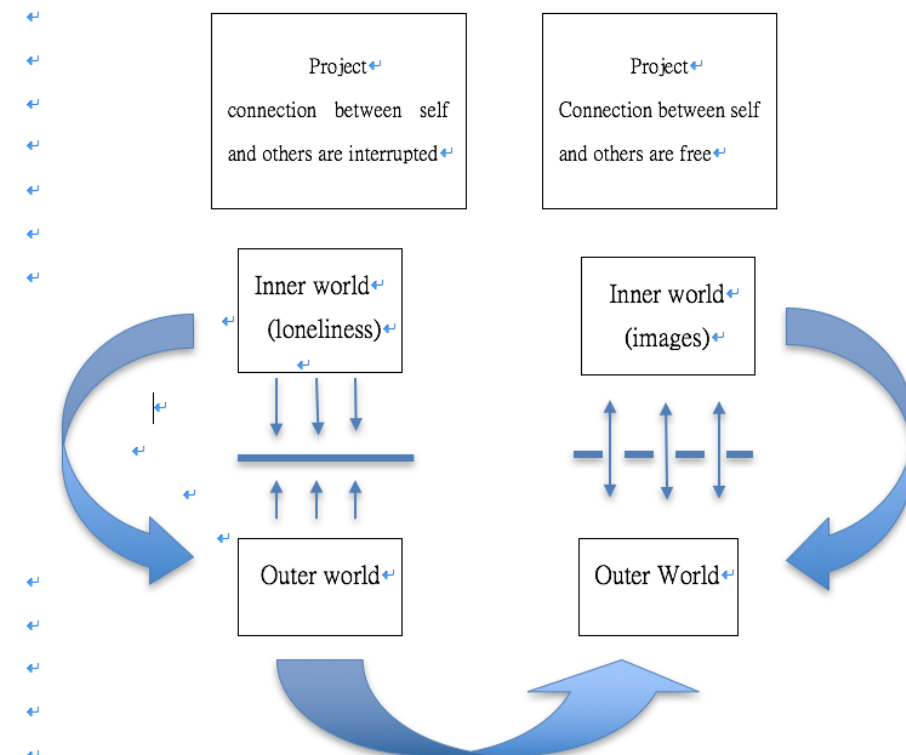


Figure 2. Ontological Description of Situational Structure

Conclusion:

As professional helpers, communication skills and creative abilities at work are necessary and often challenged from time to time. A non-verbal approach of art making intervention can play an important role in creativity and communication to enhance the self-efficiency and working efficiency for professional helpers. The results of the structure of the experience are as follow: A, by using images to express the existence of self, it changed from being difficult and broken to becoming more connected. B, through images and sharing, participants' interpersonal relationship changed from minimal interactions to more enriched relationship. C, Through sharing, the interpersonal relationship that was once estranged became more intimate.

Brief biography of author:

1Mei-I Chen

1Doctoral study in Department of Guidance & Counseling, National Changhua University of Education

MA in Art Therapy, University of Taipei

2Tsung-Chain Huang,

2Department of Guidance and Counseling, National Changhua University of Education, professor/ chair.

References:

Academia Sinica (2010) .International Encoded Han Character and Variants Database. [Web blog message]. Retrieved from <http://chardb.iis.sinica.edu.tw/meancompare/6e9d/5193> (in Chinese)

Amendt-Lyon, Nancy. (2001). Art and Creativity in Gestalt Therapy. The Analytic Press, [Gestalt Review]. 5(4):225-248.

Davis, Barbara. (2010). Hermeneutic methods in art therapy research. The arts in Psychotherapy, 37(2010), 179-189.

Fish, Barbara. (2016). Therapist as artist—Response art. In Rubin, J. A. (Eds.) Approaches to art therapy: theory and technique [3rd edition] (pp.45-49 ). New York, NY: Routledge Press.45-49.

Mildred, Chapin. (2016) . The therapist as artist. In Rubin, J. A. (Eds.) Approaches to art therapy: theory and technique [3rd edition] (pp.33-45 ). New York, NY: Routledge Press.

Ministry of Education(2015). Revised Dictionary of Chinese Character [Web blog message]. Retrieved from [http://dict.revised.moe.edu.tw/cgi-bin/cbdic/gsweb.cgi?ccd=\\_3rJIU&o=e0&sec=sec1&op=v&view=0-1](http://dict.revised.moe.edu.tw/cgi-bin/cbdic/gsweb.cgi?ccd=_3rJIU&o=e0&sec=sec1&op=v&view=0-1) (in Chinese)

Stein, Murray. (2006).The Principle of Individuation: Toward the Development of Human Consciousness. Chiron Publication, Wilmette, IL

Stephenson, R.C. (2015). Communication and Dementia: Painting a New Path through Art Therapy. American art therapy association. Retrieved from <http://www.multibriefs.com/briefs/aata/Dementia112515.pdf>

Taiwan Art Therapy Association (2014) . Characteristic of Art Therapy [Web blog message]. Retrieved from [http://www.arttherapy.org.tw/arttherapy/post/post/data/arttherapy/tw/what\\_is\\_art\\_therapy/](http://www.arttherapy.org.tw/arttherapy/post/post/data/arttherapy/tw/what_is_art_therapy/) (in Chinese)

Zdic.net. (2015). Shuowen Jiezi [website data]. Retrieved from <http://www.zdic.net/z/1d/js/6E9D.htm> (in Chinese)