



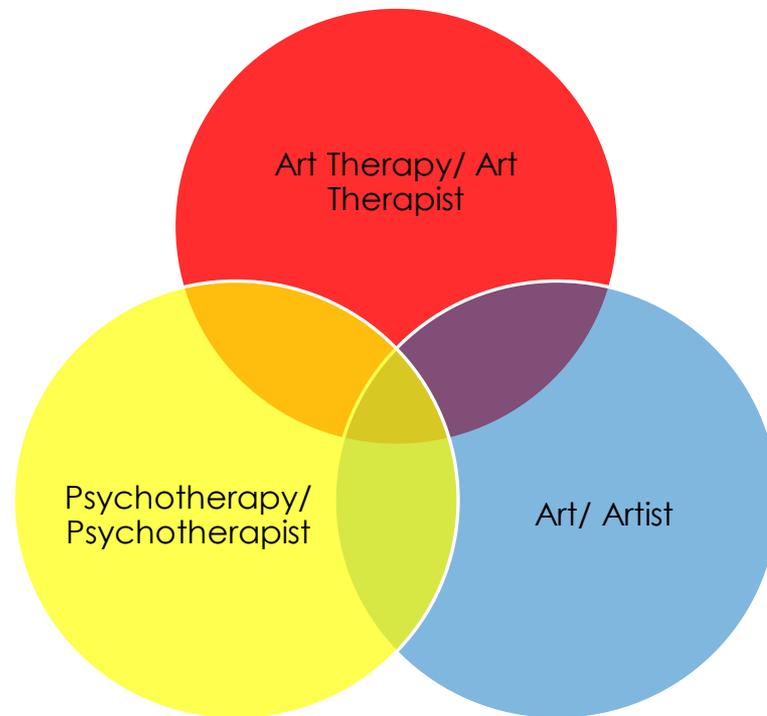
# COLOR

In Art Therapy

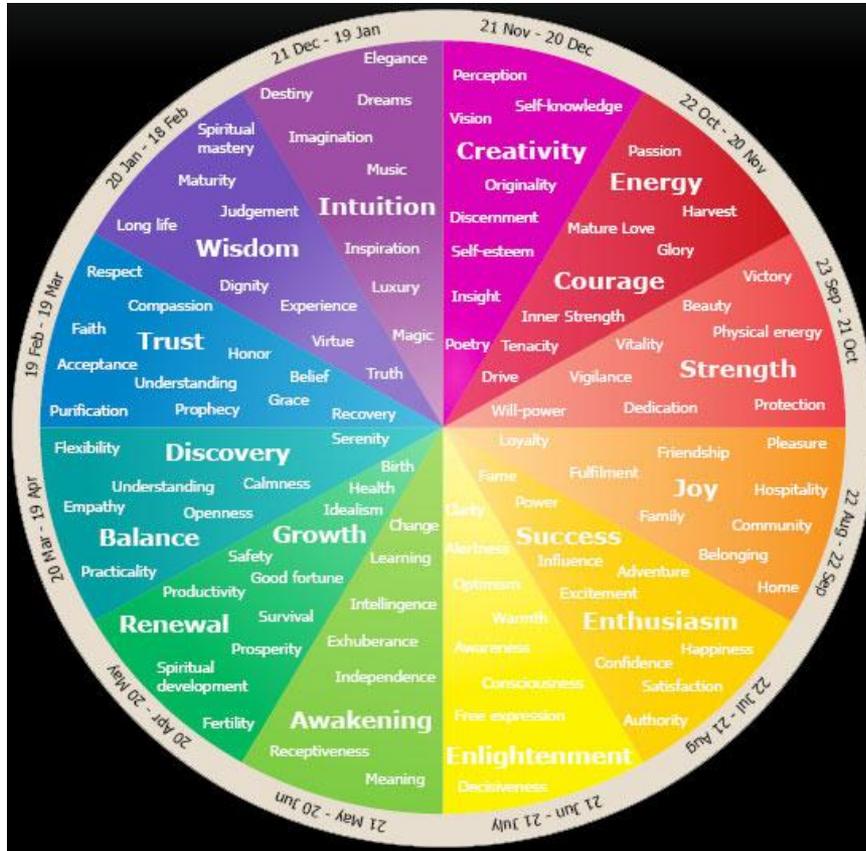
# What is Art Therapy?

- Art therapy is a **profession** that uses the **creative process of art making** to improve and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals of all ages.

# Concepts



# Colors and Emotions



Creative self-expression through art-making often involves combining colors based on decisions, preferences, mood, and emotional responses.

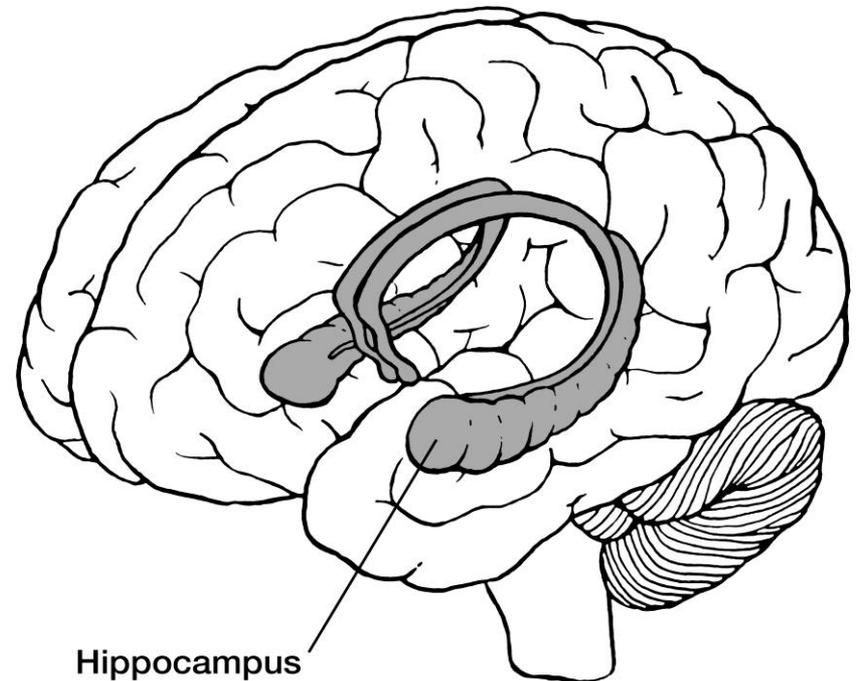
# Primary Colors

- People cross-culturally tend to choose color-emotion pairings
- "Cool" colors, such as blue, may be associated with alpha brain wave related states
- "Warm" colors, such as red, may relate feelings associated with beta wave states;
- Yellow is said to be a "mind-color" and may relate to gamma brain wave states

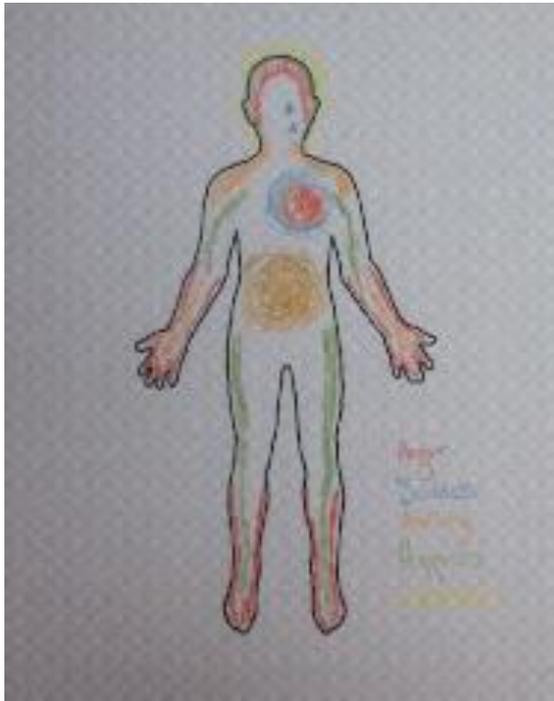
Brain Wave	Experience	Effect
Gamma	Enhanced memory, speed of thought, improved learning, intellectual functioning	Assists memory, provides inspiration
Beta	Energy, excitement, focus, attention, activities and interaction, concentration	Increases cerebral blood flow; creates motivation
Alpha	State of balance, meditation, enjoyment, pleasure	Calms the mind and body; aids visualization

# Color and the Brain

- Color has a profound impact on the brain. Color is a fundamental aspect of human perception, and it influences cognition and mood. Color affects performance on cognitive tasks such as memory, and different colors elicit different cognitive skills



# Activity Time



good mad  
pitied afraid  
miserable tired  
jealous  
pessimistic bad troubled shy agitated  
greedy exasperated stressed out  
wiped out  
foolish gullible out of control  
frustrated anxious happy generous kind joyful spiteful  
frantic restless giving doubt self  
alone ugly

# Color as Emotion

- A knowledge of color theory helps us to express our feelings in an artwork. The language of color has even entered our vocabulary to help us describe our emotions. You can be 'red' with rage or 'green' with envy. We often speak of bright cheerful colors as well as sad or dull ones. A 'grey' day may be depressing and result in a feeling of the 'blues'.

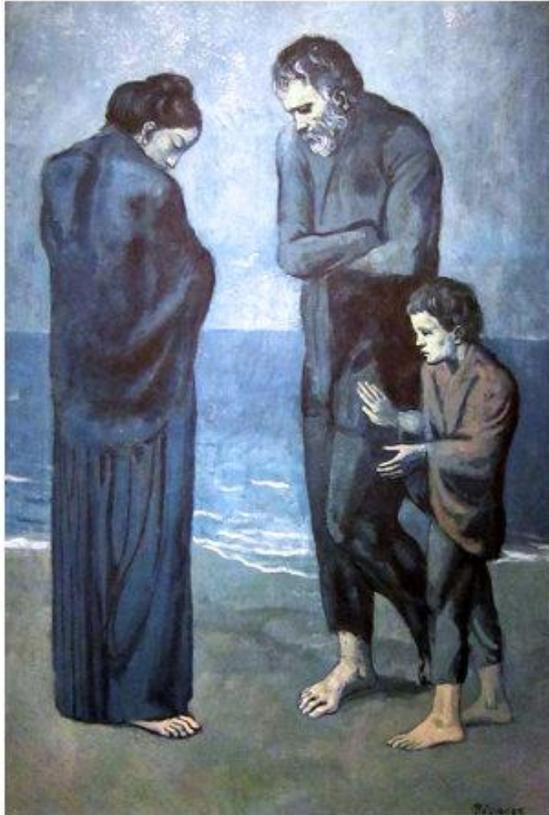
# Hope and Joy



The paintings of Vincent Van Gogh show an instinctive understanding of the emotive properties of color. In this version of 'Sunflowers' from the National Gallery in London, he uses warm yellows to create an energetic image that radiates feelings of hope and joy. On the gallery wall this painting is surrounded by a thick dark brown frame and glows like a backlit image from within.

VINCENT VAN GOGH (1853-1890)  
'Sunflowers', 1888 (oil on canvas)

# Sadness and Despair



Another effective use of emotive color is found in the paintings of Pablo Picasso. Between 1901 and 1904, Picasso painted in monochrome tones of blue which reflected his low psychological state. This was triggered by the death of his friend. This chapter of his work became known as his 'blue period'. In 'The Tragedy' (1903) he uses cool blues to evoke the chill of sadness and despair in a typically gloomy subject from this period.

PABLO PICASSO (1881-1873)  
'The Tragedy', 1903 (oil on canvas)

# Fun and Excitement



Jim Dine is an artist who uses common objects and shapes as templates. In 'The Circus #3', he applies vibrant primary colors with expressive brushstrokes in a color chart of emotion both inside and around the symbolic arena of the heart, evoking the excitement of the crowd, the energy of the performers and the fun of the show.

JIM DINE (b.1935)  
'The Circus #3', 2007 (acrylic and charcoal on canvas)

# A Radiant Energy



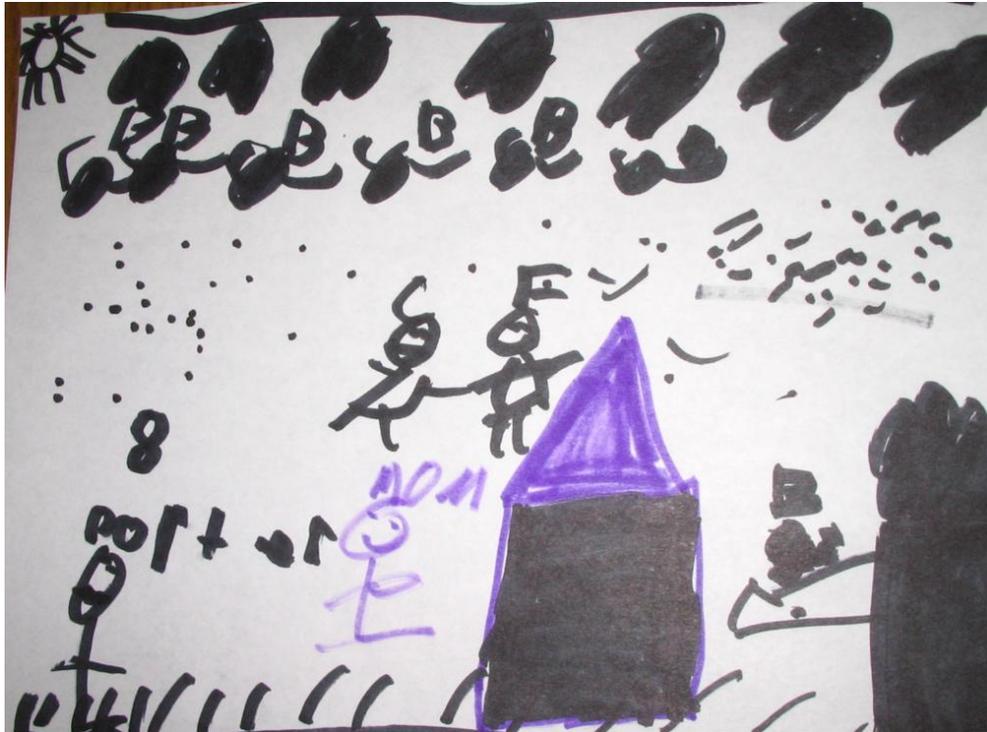
This work generates the radiant energy of color as the subject matter of the picture. The artist uses a simple perspective grid with a graduated blend of transparent colors ranging across the spectrum to create an abstract image of refracted color.

JOHN MACTAGGART

(b.1952)

'Rainbox', 2005 (Giclée print)

A nonverbal expressive therapy that bypasses verbal defenses ...



- For young children who have experienced trauma at the hands of a parent or caregiver, verbalizing their experiences may feel like a betrayal to the parent or even unsafe.
- Research demonstrates that traumatic memories are stored in the right hemisphere of the brain make verbal recall of these memories more difficult. This is especially true for young children. Even developmentally appropriate children lack the verbal capacity of adults by which to relay their experiences.
- Then as adults, we become very adept at “talking around” our feelings. And these are just a few of the many benefits of art therapy.

# Art Therapy Resources Online:

- **AATA Approved Graduate Programs:**  
<http://www.arttherapy.org/educationalprogramsschools.htm>
- **Extensive Catalog of Art Therapy related Books for purchase:**  
Jessica Kingsley Publishers - <http://www.jkp.com/catalogue/art>  
Stern's Books - <http://www.sternsbookseller.com/>
- **Art Therapy Organizations:**  
Art Therapy Association of Colorado - <http://www.arttherapy-co.org/ataco/>  
American Art Therapy Association - <http://www.arttherapyassociation.org>  
The Society for the Arts in HealthCare - <http://www.thesah.org/events/webinars.cfm>  
International Art Therapy Organization - <http://www.internationalarttherapy.org/>
- **Art Therapy and Social Networking Sites:**  
Art Therapy Alliance: <http://www.arttherapyalliance.org/> - Organization of Art Therapists on Linked In
- Art Therapists who use Twitter:  
@arttherapynews, @erinbrumleve, @kellydarke, @PoppyATR, @verdissage, @turningturning, @LaniPuppetmaker, @gretchenmiller  
Go to [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) to get a free account
- IATO and Art Therapy Alliance both have Facebook pages
- **Art Therapy Credentials Board – Codes of Professional Practice**  
[http://www.atcb.org/code\\_of\\_professional\\_practice/](http://www.atcb.org/code_of_professional_practice/)

# Resources

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