

FAQ about Art Therapy (For Students)

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WHAT IS ART THERAPY?

Art Therapy is a mental health profession which combines knowledge and understanding of human development and psychological theories and techniques with the use of art materials to help individuals resolve trauma, manage behavior, reduce stress, increase self-esteem and self-awareness, and achieve insight. Like other forms of counseling, art therapy happens within the relationship between an individual and a licensed art therapist. It is not possible to receive art therapy from coloring in a coloring book or engaging in other types of art making by yourself.

HOW ARE YOU QUALIFIED TO ADMINISTER ART THERAPY?

I am a Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor (LCMHC) in the state of NC, and a Board Certified Art Therapist (ATR-BC), which is a national credential.

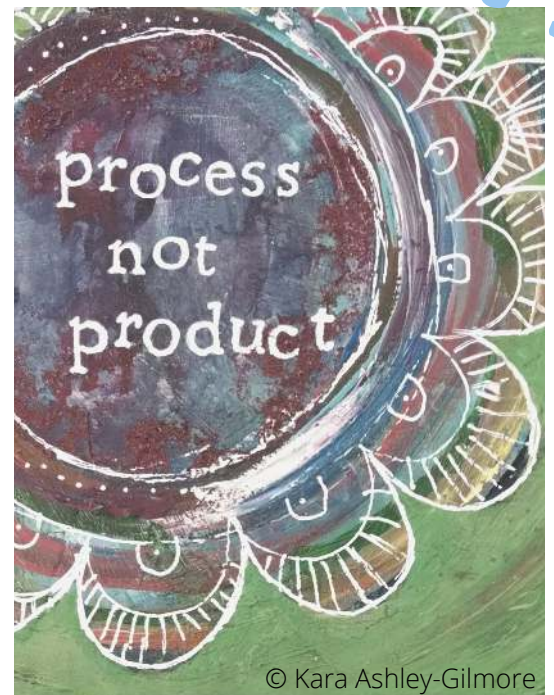


WHY DID YOU CHOOSE THIS CAREER?

While studying to become an interior designer in college, I noticed that a lot of what I was experiencing in my personal life was coming out in the art I was making for class. I had developed an interest in psychology during high school, and researched the possibility of using design or art to help people cope and heal. I discovered the field of art therapy, and it felt like the perfect way to combine all my interests. I love psychology and art. I saw how much art helped me through tough times, and I wanted to learn how to do the same for others.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ART THERAPY?

Sometimes, people don't have words for the things that are going on in their lives. Sometimes, talking about their problems is too hard, or they don't have memories of the traumas that have happened to them. This information can be accessed through art therapy because art-making allows what is unconscious to become conscious. Furthermore, art expression activates both hemispheres of the brain, helping the body to regulate its reactions to memories of traumatic or stressful events.



WHAT IS AN EXAMPLE OF AN ART THERAPY INTERVENTION?

During the first few sessions with a new client, I may ask clients to create a timeline using drawing and collaged magazine images. A long, rectangular sheet of paper is divided into three sections. Clients are then asked to add images reflecting their past, their present, and what they hope for the future after completing therapy. We discuss the images presented, and use the collage as a way to formulate a treatment plan that can best help them achieve their goals.



DOES ART THERAPY HAVE A TARGET AUDIENCE?

Art therapy can be used effectively with individuals of all backgrounds, ages and abilities. Currently, there is an emphasis on research about the use of art therapy with veterans, refugees, cancer patients, and with individuals suffering from trauma/PTSD.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN PRACTICING?

I have been working in the field of mental health since 2007. I have been in private practice as an art therapist since 2014.

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE IN YOUR PRACTICE?

Success looks like clients making connections between their past experiences, thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and sensations; clients gaining increased clarity about who they are versus who they've adapted to be; and clients changing long-standing patterns of behaviors that no longer work in their best interest.

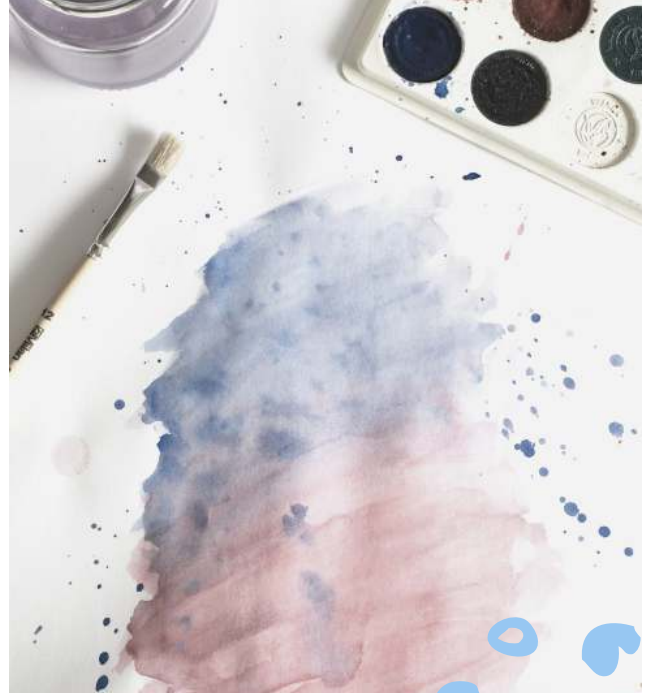
WHAT TRAINING DID YOU COMPLETE IN ORDER TO START PRACTICING AS AN ART THERAPIST?

Art therapists need a Master's degree from an accredited institution in order to be credentialed. To be accepted into a Master's program, most grad schools require a background in psychology and studio art—including classes in psychotherapy, assessment, counseling, creativity development, painting, sculpture, and drawing. During the Master's program, individuals must complete 400 hours of supervised internship experience in art therapy. In NC, art therapists practice under the North Carolina Board of Licensed Professional Counselors. They require 3000 hours of supervised practice, three references, a passing score on the National Counselor Examination and an ethics exam, a background check, and 40 hours of continuing education every two years. To become a Registered Art Therapist (ATR), individuals must complete 1000 hours of supervised practice with an Art Therapist

Resources

DR. CATHY MALCHIODI ON BECOMING AN ART THERAPIST

- Part 1: [Art Therapy as a Career Path](#)
- Part 2: [Art Therapy Education](#)
- Part 3: [Art Therapy Credentials](#)
- Part 4: [Getting a Job](#)
- Part 5: [The Tale of Two Art Therapists](#)
- Part 6: [Should you Get a Doctorate?](#)
- Part 7: [Art Therapist Identity](#)



ART THERAPY ASSOCIATIONS

- [American Art Therapy Association](#)
- [Art Therapy Credentials Board](#)
- [The Art Therapy Alliance](#)
- [Art Therapy without Borders](#)
- [National Coalition of Creative Arts Therapies Associations](#)

MOUNTAIN CREATIVE ARTS COUNSELING IN THE MEDIA

- [The Phoenix Soul Blog](#)
- [The Mindfully Creative Podcast](#)
- [Blue Ridge Now: "Blooming into a Creative Life"](#)

