

Children & Young People



Improving Outcomes



**Cambridgeshire
Expressive Arts
and
Counselling Centre**

Maximise Your Wellbeing

Eleanor Port-Burke

MBACP(Accred), MA Expressive Arts Therapies

CambridgeshireExpressiveArtsandCounsellingCentre@mail.com

What is Creativity?

- *Creativity: The use of imagination or original ideas to create something; inventiveness.*
- Oxford Dictionary
- *Creativity is a phenomenon whereby something new and somehow valuable is formed.*
- Wikipedia
- *"Not just a quality of a person, but an outcome of interactions"*
- Eleni, Mellou, Therapist
- *"Creativity is seeing what everyone else has seen, and thinking what no one else has thought"*
- Albert Einstein
- *"It's not what you look at that matters, it's what you see"*
- Henry David Thoreau
- *"No one can step twice in the same waters of a river."*
Ancient Greek saying.



Tom, 11



Sophie, 7

"My Strengths"

Creativity: Nature or Nurture

From infancy, we explore the world through feeling, hearing, seeing, and tasting. Our interactions with colours, shapes, sounds, tastes, and textures form our interpretations and responses.

Whether we believe that creativity is innate or nurtured, the creative process extends our interactions, perspectives, and understandings. An inner compass navigating our journey.

As children grow, constructive use of the creative process is a vital part of their development. Arts, imagination and play increase skills, self-expression and self-esteem.

However, as we age, we often grow apart from our creative core. We lean on a second language to channel our communication and self-expression through: words.

And while the ocean of words is abundant and vast... does it fully compensate for our creative tongue? Do we stop being creative? Imaginative?

What happens when words are unfound or unspoken? How do we communicate with ourselves and others...? Carl Jung developed the idea of Active Imagination in the early 1900's, a process that uses imagination to connect conscious and unconscious. The insights gained from Active Imagination are thought to increase self-understanding and wellbeing.

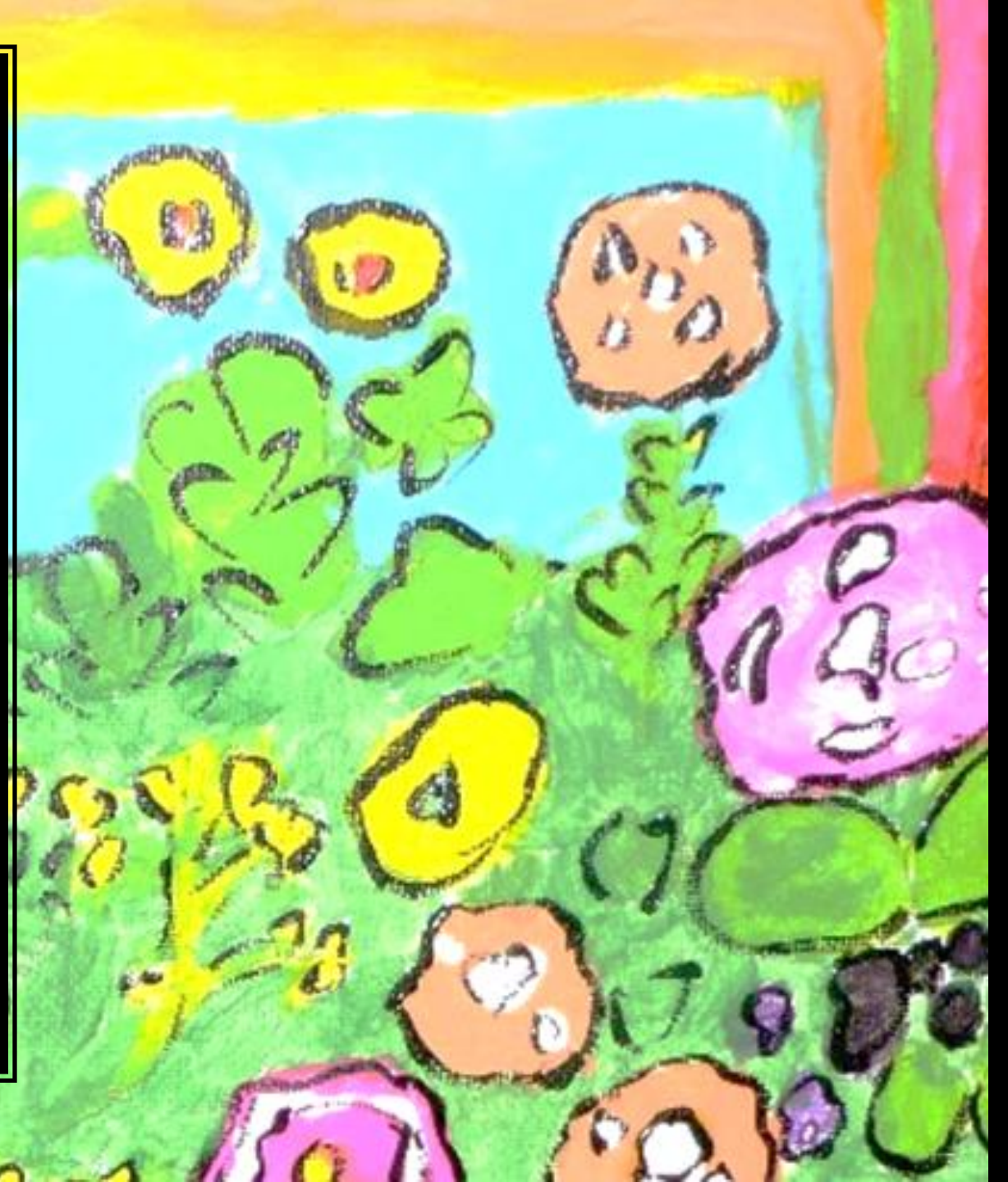
So what happens to our creativity imagination between child and adulthood. Does it change or do we change? *Creativity... a fallen compass on the ocean floor.*



My Needs Garden

Short Activity

- Take a moment to think about the different areas of your life...
- *Family, friends, health, money, relationships, self-care, work etc.*
- Identify 5 important areas and match each with a colored flower/ item (in your pack)
- Then place the figure in front of you, and position the flowers/items around you.
- Close= you feel positive about this area in your life.
- Further away= you don't feel satisfied about this area in your life/ needs change.
- What do you need in your life to bring parts closer? What's missing? What needs to change?



My Needs Garden

Thoughts?



This activity can be adapted with many children and young people. Different objects can be used depending on gender/ needs/ preferences etc.

Goals/ outcomes:

- ✓ Increased expression around different areas of their life.
- ✓ Increased identification where change needs to happen and leads to
- ✓ Increased discussion about what and how change will happen.
- ✓ Increased reflective practice on self-management & wellbeing.

Many young people will photograph their “garden” each time they make one. This enables them to increase their wellbeing insight and management.

Making and keeping their own version of this activity can also increase a sense of control, confidence and self-esteem.



Different ways to explore and express emotions...

Creativity in Counselling

"Think left and think right and think low and think high. Oh, the thinks you can think up if only you try!" - Dr. Seuss



Artwork: Melissa, 12

- Creativity is one of several key factors in counselling.
- Counselling can already be described as creative because it nurtures new ideas, perspectives, and knowledge.
- Increasing creativity, mindfulness, and openness to other expressions can extend the dialogue and depth of therapy.
- *"Words are hand-me-downs, versus original products. They do not tailor fit a person's experiences exactly. They are tracks we have to fill."*
Nucho
- Language can be a barrier as well as a gateway to understanding. Words can be misunderstood, incomplete- images can bridge and fill gaps.
- Using art, movement, music, and writing can also:
 - Extend the role of the client from responder to doer.
 - Extends thoughts and details, especially as art making is often "non-routine".
 - Extends interactions between systems.



Creativity with Children and Young People

- Childhood and adolescence can change from hour-to-hour (vs day-to-day or month-to-month), and are often periods of constant change and transition.
- There is no singular lens or approach to view or explore childhood or adolescence through.
- However, a creative approach is significant in expanding our insights and understanding of a child or young person's emotions/ experience.
- Creativity is often familiar and normalizing, and extends the limitations of words.
- Eg. A CYP says, "I was really scared when I heard..."
- Depending on the individual, this statement may only be expanded to: "I was really really scared when I heard..."
- How much does this tell us?
- CYP don't always have confidence or experience using complex vocabulary.
- Using a creative modality provides opportunity for so many further details and descriptions.
- Creativity encourages CYP to tell their story their way.

Left: Part of a visual narrative by a young person processing trauma.

Creativity is Adaptive

Like all individuals, CYP bring a unique set of qualities into the counselling and therapeutic space.

In working with CYP, we consider multiple factors including age, abilities, background, culture, developmental stage, education, family, gender, health, social identities, significant life events... the list is exhaustive.

With CYP, the client's age, abilities and developmental stage, impact how the individual will understand and engage with the process of counselling/ therapy, and influence the approaches and interventions we integrate into our work.

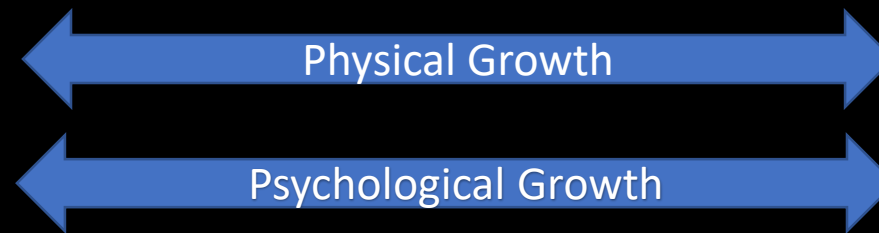
CYP automatically use images/ metaphor to express themselves.



"Not in school today. Not feeling gd."

“There is no one “right” way to help adolescents with their problems. No single theory can be the complete answer since each adolescent presents a unique combination of difficulties.” Shirley Riley- Family and Art Therapist

- For many CYP, physical and psychological growth do not synchronise, and can be hard to consider from a chronological lens alone. Differences can be subtle with small implications, or significant with marked implications. Delayed cognitive processing can have a critical effect on how a CYP understands their self-concept, environment, and relationship to the world around them.



- As professionals, we assess and gather information about our clients (including age, ability and developmental stage), by talking with the CYP, care-givers, parents, other professionals, and sometimes assessments and reports. Often, we can develop a good understanding of the CYP's qualities, needs and wellbeing, but it is impossible to completely understand the needs and worldview of any CYP.
- Even without a discord in age and development, CYP think very differently to adults; experiences that are normal for CYP (e.g. magical thinking, play), have difficulty translating into an adult world. Even teenagers often chose to communicate through imagery or sound rather than verbal conversation.
- Creativity is not instructed by age or development, it allows each individuals to find their own outlet of expression.

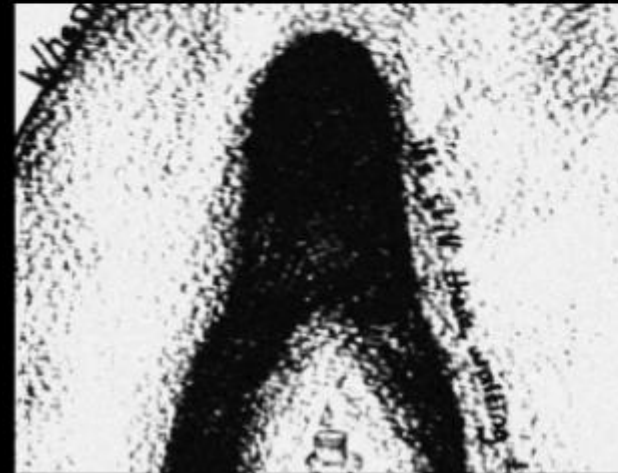
Historically, counselling is a talking therapy.

However, for CYP, recognising thoughts and feelings can be hard, let alone translating them into words and conversation.

For many CYP, understanding expectations and engaging in counselling is confusing and overwhelming.

Adding creativity into the process transcends talking, and connects with emotions and thoughts struggling to be explored verbally.

Art making, dance, music and other creative outlets, carry across developmental stages, and offer extended platforms to explore and process within.





Arts, music, and play are normalizing experiences for children, and encourage active, multi-sensory participation.

Creative interventions help individuals become aware of sensations, emotions, images and relationships.

Expressive modalities are particularly useful in helping individuals communicate aspects of memories and stories that may not be readily available through conversation.

Memories in particular have been reported to emerge through touch, imagery, music, movement

(Malchiodi, 2003).

Other barriers to talking e.g. ESL, disability, culture... Creativity enhances the talking process, going where words cannot, and draws the forms of expression together.

Creativity taps into genuine interests and modes of expression, especially for adolescents (e.g. doodling, taking photos, videos, listening to music and generally finding visual metaphors to express how they feel).



Alice, 5

- Alice is 5 years old.
- She lives in a small village with her parents.
- She is an only child in a secure financial home.
- No history of events that significantly effects wellbeing.
- Alice attends mainstream primary school, and engages with extra curricular activities including piano and dance.
- Alice came to counselling in response to her parents' increasing concerns around her anxieties, negative thinking and self-esteem.
- **Anxieties:**
 - Fear of failure: "I won't be able to do that, I'm not good at that..."
 - Possibility of disasters happening e.g. car accidents, fire, floods, and war etc, "There might be a war tomorrow and we will all die..."
 - Separation anxiety at school and certain situations (observed by teachers and other people).
- **Thoughts:**
 - "I'm not good enough, no one likes me..."
 - "I'm scared so I want to peel my skin off..."
 - "I don't want to be alive anymore..."



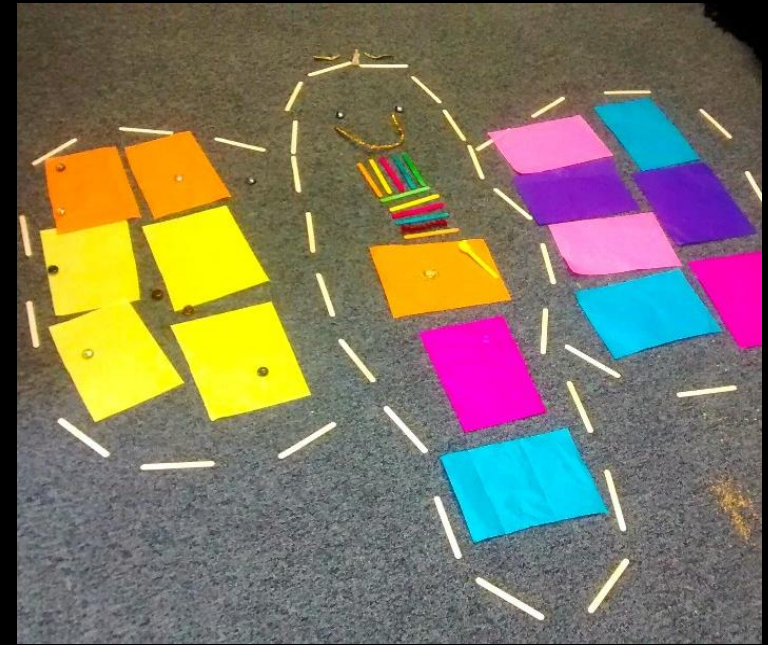
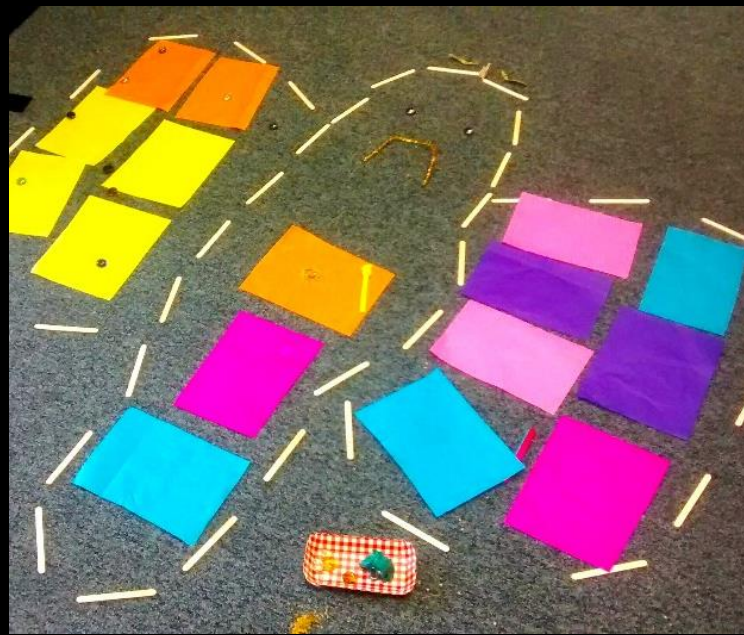
Week 1: "About Me: Clay/Plasticine"

- Increases dialogue about self/ self-expression.
- Increases self-reflection.
- Tactile but structured mediato increase/ maintain concentration.
- Can be used in further work e.g. role-play.

Developing Self-Esteem Creatively

- **My Shield:**
 - What are my strengths? How do I look after myself? What do I need?
- **My Island:**
 - What is my island like?
 - What/who do I need on my island to feel good and safe?
 - What skills do I have?
 - *How does it feel to talk to others about my island?*
 - *Is there anything I would like to change in my home/life?*
- **Achievement/ good experiences pots:**
 - Safe places to keep achievements/ positive memories.
 - Can be used at home/ school and reviewed.





Alice's Butterflies

Using self to create the outline of a butterfly/ animal.
Using spontaneity & mixed media within a structure to express
emotions/ needs of butterfly- leading to narratives about self.

*"The butterfly was sad, so I looked after it and gave it lots of
love." - Alice*

Developing Strategies to Understand and Manage Anxiety

- Where is my anxiety/worry?
 - How does worry effect us? Mentally/ physically?
 - Can we draw/ create auditory/ visual symbols of where we feel worry/ other symptoms?
 - Let's talk about this...
- Affirmations... "I can..."
 - Using pipe cleaners to make "Power Dolls"
 - "What does 'Worry' look like?"
 - Can we draw/ make a worry/ worries.
 - Increases self-expression.
 - Leads on to role-play; increased ways to explore how to manage worry/issue.
 - Increases confidence on self-implementing strategies.
 - "I can control my worries."
 - Can be used at home/ school/ range of environments etc.



Developing mindfulness and skills to self-sooth and manage emotions...



Above: Artwork created after a winter light meditation.

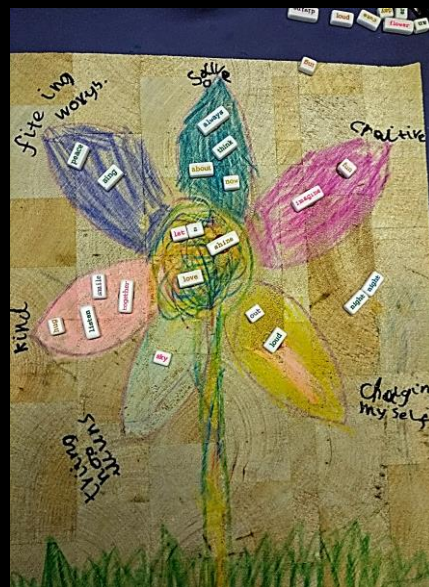




Memory
Bunting



Increasing healthy/positive
thought processes about self.
Increasing reflective thoughts
and ability to see change.
Developing self belief &
self-esteem,
"I value myself."



Celebration Tea
Party

Celebrating Self

"I still have small worries, but I talk about them more now,
and know what to say to them."

"I know I am good at lots of things... I like trying new things
now and I feel happier."

An aerial photograph of a landscape with vibrant, swirling colors. The terrain is covered in patches of green, blue, and purple, creating a complex, abstract pattern. The colors appear to be layered or mixed together, giving the impression of a natural phenomenon like a flower field or a geological formation. The overall effect is one of organic complexity and vibrant beauty.

Free

Gillian, 12

reach

through

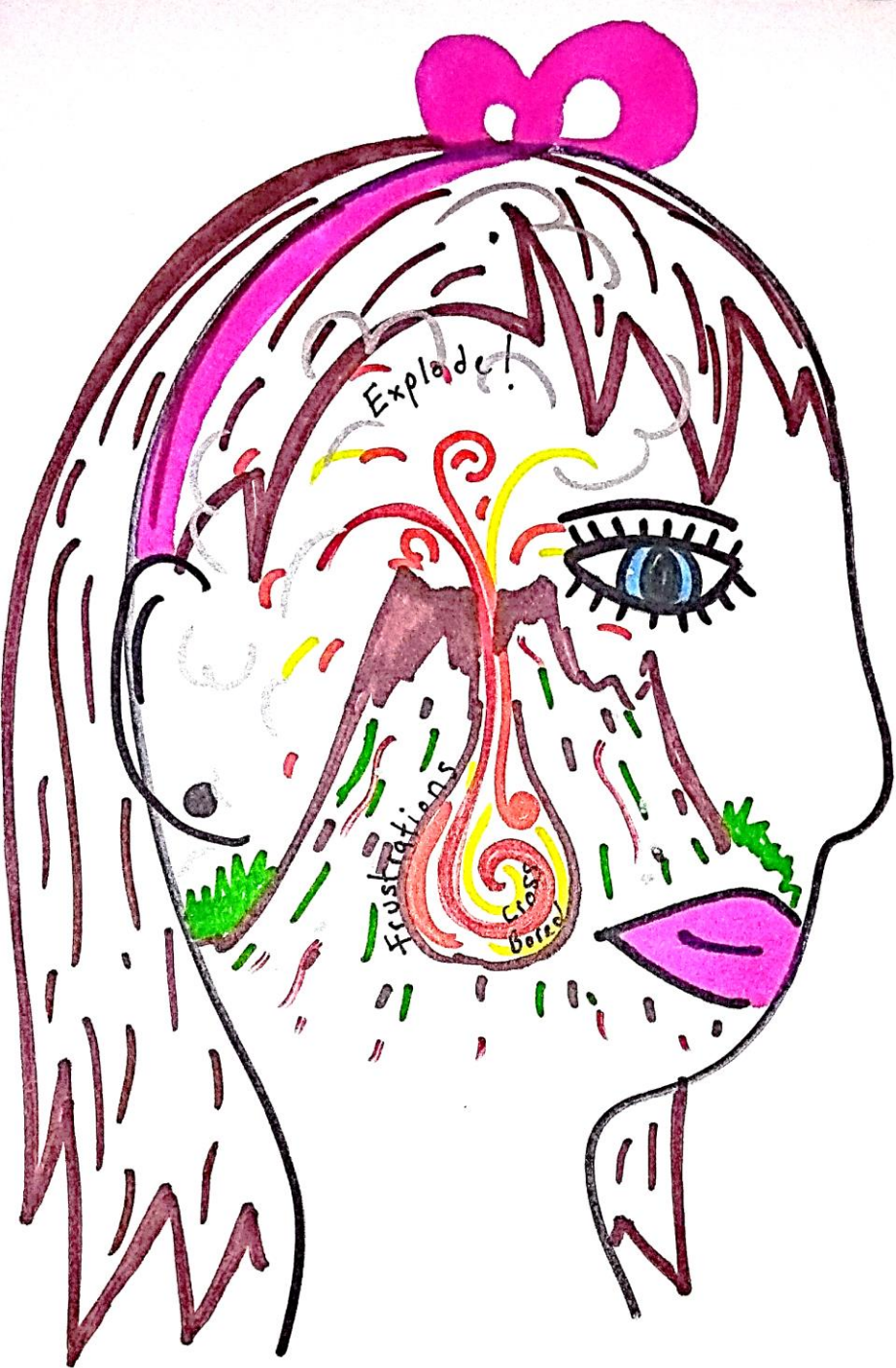
feel

free

Gillian



- Gillian is 12 years-old. She presents as a healthy, well-groomed individual.
- Her mum enquired about counselling after noticing a decline in Gillian's mood and behavior spanning several weeks.
- Gillian lives with her mum in a small town; and comes from a background of average socio-economic status.
- Gillian's mum is a wheelchair user, and has carers to support with personal and domestic needs.
- She has an older brother (21), who lives away from home while at university
- Gillian's dad died when she was 8 years-old, a year after being diagnosed with cancer.
- Gillian attends mainstream secondary school, and achieves academically.
- She participates in extra-curricular activities including dance and netball.
- During our initial consultation, her mother told me that Gillian can have several "good days", followed by a tipping point. At this point Gillian exhibits symptoms of low mood and becomes verbally (& occasionally physically) aggressive.
- Her mother said that she finds it very hard to talk about emotions, and admitted that Gillian's father was the more "talkative parent when it came to feelings".
- Gillian received 6 counselling sessions after her father passed away from a bereavement service, and describes finding this as "helpful to talk to someone afterwards".



Gillian's Volcano

Gillian seemed positive about counselling. She told me that sometimes she doesn't feel great, but doesn't know why. She said, "I don't want to shout and throw things at mum because I love her, but I just lose control."

I asked Gillian to draw picture of how she feels when she doesn't "feel great". I gave her a choice of pencil, colored pencils and markers. These materials are usually familiar and non-threatening for CYP, and generally have structured properties (allowing individuals to create precise colors, lines and shapes etc.). 2-D materials can be particularly good for early sessions, where clients may be more anxious about therapy (and as a practitioner you are getting to know the client and their abilities).

In response to my request, Gillian drew a face with a volcano inside it.

- "These are all my frustrations," she described pointing to the swirls of lava in the magma chamber, "sometimes they just burst out and I lose control!"
- "Do you know what makes you feel frustrated?"
- "Bored, not being able to do the things I want, not being listened to, not being able to do normal things with mummy."
- "Have you ever said these things to anyone?"
- "No, they just keep going round and round inside me, I try not to listen to them most of the time."

From the art-making process and dialogue, Gillian was able to identify some triggers to her frustrations and possibly low mood.

By the end of our first session, Gillian was able to identify her own goals for counselling:

- To improve how I understand myself.
- To express myself in better healthier ways (especially to mum).
- To feel happier.

Gillian expressed satisfaction that she understood and had ownership over the direction of our counselling sessions.

Colours and Feelings

In our second session we worked on:

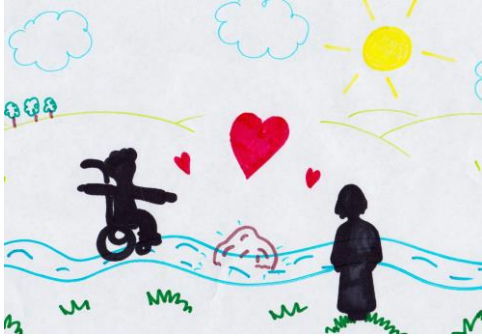
- Increasing self-understanding and self-expression
- through creative mind mapping
- and exploring vocabulary.

Gillian thought about the feelings she encounters (both regularly and occasionally, and wrote these down in a list.

Then she carefully matched each feeling with a colored gem. Next she positioned them around a sun to create a solar-system representation of how strong her feelings were. The sensory experience seemed to help Gillian sustain concentration, and the choosing of each gem prompted greater verbal description of her feelings.

Once completed, Gillian was able to step back from her solar-system and reflect. She was able to identify what she wanted more/less of, and this opened a discussion about positive change.





- After a few sessions, Gillian showed increased insight into triggers.
- Her verbal communication was becoming more descriptive.
- Gillian was able to explain, "I just find it hard to talk with mum. We eat and watch TV together, but we don't really talk."
- I asked Gillian if she could draw or write more about this experience and her feelings. Gillian drew a landscape using coloured markers depicting two people standing opposite each other on two sides of a river.
- "It's like we are on different sides of a river... sometimes we need a stepping stone."
- After further exploration, we came up with the idea of a "living memory bowl"- a vessel that could be placed in the home, in which notes or objects could be put to later talk about.
- Although nervous about trying unfamiliar media, Gillian expressed that she would like to make the bowl out of clay.
- At first, Gillian found it hard to work with the damp, powdery consistency of the clay, and had to regularly wash her hand to feel clean and in control of the medium. However, after a while, Gillian seemed to relax into the process, frequently smiling and expressing how much she was enjoying working with clay.
- After completing the bowl, she embellished the clay with marks and patterns. At the end of the session she expressed, "I didn't think I would be able to make something that good, but I have!"
- The bowl took 2 sessions to complete. Gillian decorated her bowl using beads, and oil based paints. The process combined using structured (beads) and unstructured media (paints).
- Gillian expressed that the beads allowed her to pinpoint thoughts and ideas, while the running paints (merging and swirling) ignited a creative openness. She said, "I like the way the paints blend... you can see all different things."
- Gillian decided that as well as putting notes/objects into the bowl, she wanted to use the glass gems from her solar-system as additional items to put in her bowl, so her mum could know how she felt on different days.
- When mum came in at the end of the session, she was openly delighted in the outcome of Gillian's bowl, "That's beautiful... did you make that?!" Gillian immediately seemed proud of her work, and ready to talk to mum about where they could put the bowl, and how they were going to use it.



In another session, we used sand-tray to explore Gillian's belief systems, interactions, and perceptions with her community/environment. Gillian took her time choosing miniature figures to represent her family, friends, teachers, peers, activities, home and school. Like clay, sand seemed to facilitate a reflective openness for Gillian, and as she created a miniature world, she talked freely about social difficulties, worries, events/issues that happened in the past and issues that still affect her.

Gillian used dozens of black pebbles to "protect" certain figures. We explored the use of these pebbles, and Gillian was able to increase her verbalisations around needs and relationships.

As her sessions continued, Gillian talked more about her father. Sometimes she recalled memories from when he was ill, but mostly fond and funny memories. "Dad would play games with me, or take me out for a hot chocolate and to the park..." Together we explored how greatly grief affects us, but also how differently grief can be experienced for different people. Gillian described sometimes feeling sad and missing dad, and not always be able to bring this up with mum.

In response to this, we explored whether it would be possible to make something to represent dad for her "living memory bowl". Gillian expressed that dad was "too big" to be in the bowl with everything, but she liked the idea of a memory object that she could share with mum and brother.

Gillian told me that her father's birthday was near Christmas. We talked about how Gillian had celebrated his birthday in past years, and how they marked his birthday now. Gillian explained that her dad loved the festive season, and decided to combine a candle with a landscape in her design. She thought carefully about the materials needed, and called her design, "Dad's Christmas Log".

Gillian worked with the plaster-of-paris and materials almost independently. When it came to sprinkling glitter onto the log, she shook the glitter pot excitedly saying "there needs to be lots and lots of sparkles". Only when the log was almost completely covered in gold glitter did she feel there was enough and said, "there, that's perfect, I loved doing that."

When mum collected Gillian, we talked about "Dad's Christmas log". Gillian explained, "We can light it for special occasions and when we want to think about him. Gillian expressed how pleased she was with the log, and that she thought dad would like it too.

"All the glitter would have made him smile! And he'd like the robins too.... One for each of us in the family."



Don't Be Stubborn ☺
No Stop The Volcanoes
No More Reason No Jealous
★ Tidy Loyal To Moes
MY ROOM MYSELF ♡







East Anglia's
Children's Hospices

East Anglia's Children's Hospices

- EACH hospices are not just about end of life care; they are often happy and fun places, where children and young people (CYP) can live life to their full potential. They are places where families feel safe, relaxed, and where they can spend quality time together.
- EACH supports CYP with life-threatening conditions across Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk.
- EACH works from a needs-lead, family-centred approach and offers: specialist nursing, symptom management, short breaks, spiritual care, groups and other wellbeing activities.
- Targeted support including art therapy, counselling, family therapy, music therapy, psychological support, and specialist play services are available for families.

Creativity to Strengthen Family Systems

- EACH supports families through a systemic lens; seeing the child integrally to the family system.
- In working with families, EACH aims:
 - To be needs lead.
 - To maintain and develop family strengths.
 - To increase independence and resilience.
 - To be goal focused in short and long-term work.
- When a child or young person has a life-limiting or threatening condition, the whole family system is impacted.
- Adjustment, change, and loss impacts family members emotionally and practically.
- For many EACH families there is not the language, space, or time to fully process and express emotions around what has happened or happening.
- Creativity is a universal language, that holds no recipe. All family members (spanning ages and abilities) can use it to communicate through.
- For EACH families, using creativity within services, helps family members to express emotions and narratives in their own ways, and also nurtures interpersonal bonds and memories.



Families

(Wellbeing Needs)

- To process the experience of having a child with complex, life-limiting or life-threatening health needs.
 - This experience and journey starts with beliefs and expectations pre-birth of the child.
- To develop bonds and relationships with children despite complexities, changes, and challenges.
- To process developmental stages and milestones e.g. birthdays.
- To process adjustment to caring and medical responsibilities (including increased interactions with professionals in and out of the home).
- To process the greater family's decisions and needs.
- To process self-care, development and identity.
- To process emotional symptoms including anxiety, guilt, and low mood etc.
- To process historical or unresolved issues.
- To explore and process the idea of mortality and the unknown.
- To process bereavement, continuing bonds, and spiritual needs.



Above: Family art-making project in which clay and mixed media was used to explore and capture summer-time memories.

Mixed media provided a sensory-tactile experience that facilitated increased communication and connections between family members.



Creativity Helps Children and Adults

Creativity is **normalizing** and **restorative** for children. Through the arts, adults (family members) can help children and young people to express their thoughts and emotions around complex topics such as:

- Diagnosis and prognosis.
- Difficult health and wellbeing questions
- Identity, Development, Relationships
- Mortality.

When language is limited or unavailable, the arts make communication **possible**. Where there is some language, the arts **extend** communication so that more processing can take place for individuals and groups.

The **active participation** that creative communication involves helps individuals feel like **doers** and not just responders, which is particularly important given that individuals and families are constantly responding to the nature of chronic and severe illness.

Creativity helps to join thoughts and experiences together:

- Characters, puppets, small toys are used in role-play to process loss.
- Drama, music, song-writing, journaling help to express emotions and identify ways to manage and move forward.

Lollipop stick Ice-breaker:

- Using sandtray or a pot, put several coloured lollipop sticks with emotive endings face down.
- Take it in turns to choose and talk about the last time you experienced the feeling.
- Children and young people who are verbal will often use the sticks as a prompt to offer much more information into their experiences and wellbeing.
- The activity increases vocabulary and confidence about feeling words.
- Although it is talking about emotions, it is more normalizing and non-threatening for children.
- Used with all children and their families.

Siblings

(Wellbeing Needs)

- To process emotions and experiences of having a sibling with an illness or disability.
 - Developing secure attachments and bonds with family members.
 - Coping with limited 1:1 parental time; not having all needs met.
 - Coping when siblings are unwell or in hospital.
 - Helping with caring responsibilities and living alongside medical interventions.
 - Not always able to attend extra-curricular/ social activities.
- To explore self-identity, goals and motivations.
- To explore what “my voice” means.
- To explore sibling dynamics/ rivalry with an ill/ or possibly dying sibling.
- To explore negative thought processes, “It should have been me.... It would be better if...”
- To explore issues such as change, loss, mortality.
- To process bereavement and continuing bonds.





Lead Children and Young People (Wellbeing Needs)

- To explore self-identity.
 - At home, school, socially (bullying).
 - Personal acceptance, aspirations, goals, motivations, self-esteem.
- To explore and develop relationships: family members, peers, siblings etc.
- To explore emotions and experiences impacted by diagnosis and health needs.
 - E.g. development, growth and loss.
 - Increasing disability, illness, mortality.
 - Unpredictable change.
- To explore challenges, frustrations and limitations.
- To explore healthy and improved ways to express emotions.

Case study: Laura

- Laura is an 8 year old girl with a diagnosis of mitochondrial disease.
- Mitochondrial disease is where mitochondria in cells are not producing enough energy.
- Mitochondrial disease presents differently in each case, however it generally affects muscles and sometimes other body parts such as brain and eyes.
- The disease is progressive and can be life-limiting.
- Laura lives with her dad, mum and sister. She attends a mainstream school, and participates in activities including horse-riding and swimming.

- Laura has limited ability to walk, and uses a wheelchair for most activities.
- She has mild speech & language difficulties, and mild learning delays.
- Laura generally presents with a positive affect, and perseveres to participate in a range of activities including singing and tennis.
- However, in the last 6 months, her parents have reported an increase in frustrated outbursts and general moodiness.
- Despite ongoing talks with Laura, her parents expressed a lack of clarity as to the cause of her frustration and moodiness.
- While they reflected that some symptoms could be related to developmental stage, they remained concerned that Laura's anxiety, behaviour and frustration was also connected with her health needs.
- They expressed particular concern around how her disability and health impacted her self-esteem and sense of identity.
- To further explore and support Laura's wellbeing needs, I suggested using art-making as a vehicle to increase her confidence and self-expression.
- In Laura's case, I worked with the parents to increase their confidence in supporting Laura through creative means.
- To begin with, I suggested a whole family activity that involved each person making a communication bowl.
- I facilitated the activity using model-magic clay: a soft, tangible material that is air drying. Model magic is particularly good when there are motor, physical, or sensory difficulties that affect movement. It is also good for younger children who don't have the coordination or strength to work with harder materials.
- The family sat around a table together and each made a bowl embellished with beads, gems and decorations.

- Throughout the activity there was focused individual work and interactive communication (and laughter). Each person managed to participate fully, and inability did not seem to affect the experience. In this way, art fuses abilities and celebrates strengths rather than being a fragmentary experience.
- The family came up with their own discussions and ideas on how to use the bowls in every day life.



Outcomes:

- Increases communication and expression for individuals and families.
- Increases identification of needs.
- Increases confidence as strength-based.
- Decreases stress and tension through sensory, tactile experience.

- Laura expressed enjoying the model magic and asked to do art with it again.
- I talked with her parents about building expressive-art time into their day-to-day routines.
- Even simple directives such as, “Let’s make or paint how we feel today” provides a healthy outlet and space for self-expression and communication.
- Art making can reduce the build up of internal tension (and negative behaviours/ symptoms that occur as a result). Stuckey, 2010
- Over the weeks working with the family, I supported the parents to implement their own art activities with Laura/ family group.
- The parents observed a link between art-making and improved affect with Laura, and this increased their confidence in being able to support their daughter.
- The family worked with Laura to make 2D and 3D art projects including nature-art, painting, and sculptures.
- The parents noticed how creativity naturally enhanced conversations, and Laura started to open up more about peer and social issues, and her perceptions and perspectives.
- At Christmas time, I supported the family to make festive bunting. The family worked together using their different sized finger prints to decorate fabric flags. The bunting was a collaborative effort that brought positive memories and unity together.



Summary

Creative Outcomes: Process and Product

- Encourages & increases emotional expression.
- Encourages and increases expression around pain and physical symptoms.
 - Research indicates that if you can express pain, you are more likely to manage it (McGrath & Vair)
- Encourages and increases communication (especially when words are unavailable).
- Encourages narratives for complex events, feelings and situations.
- Encourages processing of change, loss and grief.
- Encourages and increases exploration around existential and spiritual beliefs/ thinking.
- Encourages & increases space for self-understanding.
- Continues and develops bonds through interactive and sensory experiences.
- Encourages & increases exploration of physical states, treatments, prognosis etc.
 - Symbolic nature of art provides an outlet to explore and describe the physiological impact of a disability or medical condition.
- Encourages & increases sense of competence and control.
- Encourages & increases interactions between individuals and opportunities to support each other.
- Enjoyment: the fun of art-making/ arts has value alone, especially for children and individuals impacted by chronic health needs and worries.
- Art making can assist in pain management because it can help to (1) increase awareness and control, (2) encourages relaxation, and (3) distracts from pain (McGrath & Vair, 1984, Malchiodi, 2000)





**Cambridgeshire
Expressive Arts
and
Counselling Centre**

Maximise Your Wellbeing

Contact:

Eleanor Port-Burke

Cambridgeshire Expressive Arts and
Counselling Centre

Suite 4, Alexander House, 38 Fore
Hill, Ely, CAMBS, CB7 4AF

07704065442

CambridgeshireExpressiveArtsandC
ounsellingCentre@mail.com

www.cambridgeshireexpressiveartsandcounsellingcentre.com