

HOW CAN CLIENT-LED SPIRITUALITY IN ART PSYCHOTHERAPY SUPPORT TRAUMA WORK?

Spirituality can play an important role in trauma work as it protects against emotional and physiological strain (Park, 2012), supports the construction of meaning, nurtures forgiveness (Curry, 2009), and during adversity, people deepen their spirituality (Pargament, 1997). Similarly, growing evidence suggests that art therapy is uniquely suited to addressing the aftermath of trauma (Chapman et al., 2001; Johnson, 1987; Kapitan, 2014; Lusebrink, 2004; Pifalo, 2007; Rankin & Taucher, 2003; Talwar, 2007). Art therapists have found that people naturally turn to art after a traumatic event and have developed interventions to reduce symptoms, improve daily life, and increase positive experiences. Because art therapy does not rely on language or memory, it can create a direct experience of relaxation and well-being. Trauma intervention from this approach includes safe planning, self-management, processing the trauma story, addressing relational issues, and developing a new vision of the world and self (Rankin & Taucher, 2003).

Exploring the intersection of spirituality and art psychotherapy takes on heightened significance within a diverse and inclusive nation like the United Arab Emirates (UAE), where many spiritual beliefs coexist. The authors will combine models for culturally adapted art psychotherapy (Powell et al., 2021) and client-led spirituality developed in the UAE (Powell & Gómez-Carlier, 2022) to suggest interventions to address trauma and briefly discuss Islamic psychotherapy and its parallels with art psychotherapy.

In this workshop, participants will be invited to explore their definitions and relationship with spirituality, trauma, and the intersection between spirituality and art psychotherapy. The use of art materials will deepen the exploration as healing and the arts have been interconnected ancestrally (Feen-Calllgan, 1995), and art psychotherapy creates an experience of the present that can reveal a spiritual dimension (Farrelly-Hansen, 2001). In this art psychotherapy workshop, traumatic experiences can be reframed, and new knowledge can reveal the depth of human potential, resiliency, and spiritual connection.



17th October 2023
14:00 to 16:00



Erth, Abu Dhabi



Presented by
Natalia Gómez-Carlier



Presented by
Sara Powell



Presented by
Mariam Halawani



Register Now

