

Memory Is Not A Choice

Abstract

Currently, 50 million people are diagnosed with a neurocognitive disorder, and this number is expected to double every twenty years (Alzheimer's and Dementia, 2018). A neurocognitive disorder is commonly known as dementia, which is not a specific disorder but an overall term that is associated with diminishing memory and loss of daily living skills.

While some people would like to forget past events, others have no choice in what they remember. Art therapy shows promising outcomes for older adults who experience memory loss due to neurocognitive disorders (Beard, 2011). Art therapy may not stop memory loss, but it has been shown to improve cognition (Cantu, & Fleuriet, 2017) and bring relief and hope to those experiencing memory loss (Pike, 2013). It has also been shown to improve both psychical and mental heather, motivation and a sense of purpose (Stephenson, 2013), and gives older adults a sense of control and comfort (Ching-Teng, Ya-Ping, & Yu-Chia, 2019).

People with dementia who attended art therapy sessions also reported a decrease in isolation by working with various art forms including a focus on the colors, textures, and other sensory components of art making (Safar & Press, 2011). Emotional experiences prompted by art therapy allows participants to have increased access to long forgotten memories (Safar & Press, 2011). When these re-connections are made, it provides older adults with a sense of integrity.

This poster is an exploration of the literature related to older adults and art therapy as well as the student's response art related to a practicum experience in an assisted living facility.

References

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