Art Therapy: A Strengths-Based Approach to Improve Adolescents’ Identity of Self and Post-High School Decision Making

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MEMO

To: Jill McNutt, MA, ATR-BC, LPC, ATRL
    Jane M. Hintz, Graduate Student
From: Lamprini Pantazi, Ph.D., & Chair of the Human Subjects
      Institutional Review Board
Date: May 14th, 2014
Re: Human Subjects Institutional Review Board Application


The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College has approved your research. Unless renewed, this approval will expire on July 3rd, 2015.

If any changes need to be made during implementation of this research project, please submit those changes to the IRB for its approval. Also, if any incidents occur, please notify the IRB as soon as possible.

We wish you success with your research project.

Institutional Review Board members:

Lamprini Pantazi, Ph.D.
Joyce Cadwallader, Ph.D.
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Abstract

Theories of adolescent identity development emphasize the struggle adolescents go through to form a clear identity. This six-week single-subject, strengths-based art therapy study supports adolescents’ identity exploration. Subjects include fifteen male and female high school students. Each subject completed preliminary and concluding Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale surveys, drawings, and corresponding narratives to obtain and document perceived self-perception changes. The group setting supported adolescents’ development of a unified sense of self each week as they explored their self-perceptions through art interventions and had them confirmed by peers. The findings of the preliminary and concluding Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale survey support the hypothesized increase in adolescents’ perceived positive self-identity. Results of adolescents’ preceding and final drawings and narratives support the recognition of intrapersonal positive strengths and increased self-esteem. Limitations of the small sample size yield discussion and recommendations for future research.

KEY WORDS: adolescents, identity formation, self-esteem, group art therapy, after-school program, museum setting
Acknowledgements

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Immersion in a career-counseling course created an understanding that life-roles, life-settings, and life-events interact over a life-span and influence how we view others, ourselves, and the world in which we live. Career counseling supports an individual in gaining a representation of major life possibilities and responsibilities and developing the language to describe them. Part of that language is the ability to identify and describe personal strengths (Figler & Bolles, 2007). The identification of these strengths is an important part in the identity of self, positive perception of self, growth, and development. Having a strong sense of identity has been linked to individuals who have established well-developed career interests (Cohen, Chartrand, & Jowdy, 1995). According to Erik Erikson (1968; 1993), individuals achieve identity if they successfully pass developmentally through the adolescent stage of identity verses identity (role) confusion. If this crisis is resolved, they will establish their identity. Erikson’s work is central in understanding that a successful career development process starts during adolescence, when attention is given to realistic career possibilities. Adolescence is a time of reflection on past roles and interactions while maintaining active engagement with society to identify new roles; this process of self-differentiation supports identity achievement (Erikson, 1968; 1973; 1993).

Significance of the Problem

Erikson (1968; 1993) postulated the idea that individuals pass developmentally through stages across their life span. Adolescence is the developmental period between childhood and adulthood. Erikson proposed that adolescents enter into an Identity verses Identity (role) Confusion stage of development in which they struggle to establish their identity. Erikson
(1968) stated “It is true, of course, that the adolescent, during the final stage of his identity formation, is apt to suffer more deeply than he ever did before or ever will again from a confusion of roles” (p.163). Erikson used the term identity crisis to explain the period of conscious questioning and active struggle adolescents go through to form a clear identity. If the developmental crisis is resolved, the adolescent will emerge with a stable, positive, internally consistent sense of self, recognized as one with an achieved identity (Erikson, 1968; 1973; 1993).

Developing one’s identity requires establishing a unified sense of self, which is perceived by the person himself or herself and confirmed by others (Stepney, 2010). Recognizing intrapersonal strengths, self-awareness, and impact on others fosters identity development. Having an understanding of personal strengths, purpose, skills, and self-will provides a stronger foundation for adolescents to develop a satisfying career path post-high school (Kosine, Steger, & Duncan, 2008). Adolescents engaged in identity exploration become better equipped to match their own skills, talents, and interests with vocational goals (Yeager, Bundick, & Johnson, 2012). In addition, racial and ethnic development is often central to identity and creates an additional layer to the development of the self (Tatum, 1997). A “healthy” racial identity is reflected in adolescents’ positive self-concept, self-accepting behaviors, low susceptibility to peer pressure, and resistance to delinquent behaviors (Phinney, 1993).

Self-esteem is a central feature of self-concept. It has been defined as the value people place on themselves (Stepney, 2010). Adolescence is a critical time in the formation of self-concept. This period is marked by physical, social, and cognitive changes, which affect how the adolescents perceive themselves. Adolescents are searching for their own identification that
meets their self-perceptions and expectations of a unique identity (Erikson, 1968; 1973; 1993). High self-esteem is linked to adolescents who have achieved an identity (Stepney, 2010).

Adolescents’ self-esteem is a predictor of different behaviors and psychological adjustments. A significant relationship exists between low self-esteem and many severe and difficult situations young people face, including dropping out of school. High self-esteem is linked to positive effects on students’ academic development (Stepney, 2010; Zimmermann, Schütte, Taskinen, & Köller, 2013). Engaging adolescents in the exploration of their strengths, which include skills, talents, and interests, increases their self-esteem and self-concept empowering them to create their life goals and decisions (Brun & Rapp, 2001; MacArthur, Rawana, & Brownlee, 2011).

Creating art is based on spontaneity of expression and overcoming communication barriers. Art making in itself is an activity that can generate self-esteem, encourage risk taking and experimentation, teach new skills, and enrich one’s life. Making something with one’s hands and realizing that one can make something unique is a powerful experience (Moon, 2009; 2012). Art therapists can develop art interventions that focus on guiding the adolescent towards individuation by empowering him or her to use art as a tool to develop self-identity, social identity, and cultural identity (Hinz, 2009; Stepney, 2010). Formal operational thought can be stimulated in adolescents through art interventions using cognitive information processing on the Expressive Therapies Continuum (ETC) (Hinz, 2009). Formal operational thought enables adolescents to reflect on their experiences and make plans (Hinz, 2009; Roaten, 2011). Fostering positive self-identity and formal operational thought with adolescents will enable them to develop self-satisfying plans related to post-high school career decisions. Having a strong sense of identity has been linked to individuals who have established well-developed career interests
Research Question

Would art therapy be effective in improving adolescents’ post-high school decision-making skills by increasing self-identity, self-esteem, and the sense of belonging?

Rationale/Basic Assumptions

During the adolescence developmental period, individuals are trying to establish their identity. Art therapy provides strength-based art interventions that support the development of self-esteem. Those with high self-esteem are more likely to foster a positive sense of identity. Knowing one’s personal strengths and personal knowledge can be applied to future career paths. Adolescents need a strong sense of self-identity to make self-satisfying career choices post-high school.

Purpose of the Study-Objectives

The investigator’s goal is to develop and conduct a single-subject research study that will demonstrate the effectiveness of art therapy as a strengths-based approach for adolescents to gain a positive sense of self-identity. A positive self-identity will foster satisfying post-high school vocational decision-making skills. In addition, the investigator obtained approval from the Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College Human Subjects Institutional Review Board to conduct the pilot research study with human subjects. Consent from the institution where the research is implemented provided written approval for this study (Appendix F). Informed consent and assent forms were established for participants and their parent(s) to sign (Appendices A & B). Commitment was confirmed from a Board Certified Registered Art Therapist to serve as the supervisor for the study. The investigator’s study will add to the body of professional art therapy literature regarding the importance of positive self-identity in adolescents.
Hypothesis

Adolescents engaged in the six strengths-based art therapy sessions will experience a greater sense of positive self-identity; consequently making self-satisfying post-high school decisions as measured by the participants’ preliminary and concluding surveys and their individual narratives in response to their initial and final drawings.

Operational Definitions


Adolescent: A young person who is in the developmental period between childhood and adulthood (Erikson, 1968; 1993).

Developmental Crisis: A crucial moment, when development must move one way or another, to further growth and differentiation (Erikson, 1968).

Expressive Therapies Continuum (ETC): A framework used to classify art mediums used within client interactions and the way each processes information (Hinz, 2009).

Identity Crisis: The period of conscious questioning and active struggle adolescents go through to achieve an identity (Erikson, 1968; 1993).

Identity Development: Establishing a unified sense of self, as perceived by the person and confirmed by others (Stepney, 2010).

Racial Identify Development: The way in which individuals view themselves relative to his or her own ethnic or racial group and sense of belonging or attachment to that ethnic or racial group (Phinney, 1993).

Self-differentiation: When an individual’s sense of worth is no longer dependent on external relationships, circumstance, or occurrences (Gushue et al., 2013).
Self-esteem: When an individual views himself or herself as competent, effective, and worthy (Stepney, 2010).

Single-subject Research: Pre and post-test surveys are used as a measure with the same group of participants. One group serves as both the experimental and control group within the study (Kapitan, 2010).

Strength-based Therapy: Supporting an individual in recognizing his or her own strengths, which include skills, talents, and interests; empowering an individual to create life goals and decisions (Brun & Rapp, 2001; MacArthur, Rawana, & Brownlee, 2011).
CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

Adolescence Identity Development

The concept of identity formation in adolescence has been reasonably well established and has a place within known theoretical structure and relates to constructs in other theoretical systems (Marcia, 1980). Erikson (1968; 1973; 1993) and Marcia (1966; 1980) have been influential in developing the concept of identity formation within the ego psychoanalytic theoretical framework. Marcia (1980) gave the following description to understand identity construction:

... a self-structure – an internal, self-constructed, dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history. The better developed this structure is, the more aware individuals appear to be of their own uniqueness and similarity to others and of their own strengths and weaknesses in making their way in the world. The less developed this structure is, the more confused individuals seem about their own distinctiveness from others and the more they have to rely on external sources to evaluate themselves (p. 159).

Identity formation is a gradual change that encompasses a process of affirming and negating experiences in a non-conscious manner (Marcia, 1980). Adolescence marks a time of increased introspection; trying to understand one’s self is a strong desire for most adolescents (Keating, 1980). This change in thought occurs during adolescence between the ages of 15 to 20 years and corresponds to the aptitudes and interests of the individual fostering the construction of a life plan (Guiffrida, 2009; Inhelder & Piaget, 1958a; 1958b; Piaget, 2008). The adolescence period is the time adolescents think beyond the present and commit to possibilities. Formal
thinking abilities enable the adolescent to analyze his or her own thoughts and construct theories adapting to adult roles and future plans (Guiffrida, 2009; Inhelder & Piaget, 1958a; 1958b). The analysis of thoughts and the construction of theories create what Chen, Lay, and Wu (2005) defined as identity firmness. Through self-examination, an adolescent can construct personal goals, values, and abilities, which provide a sense of direction and purpose in life (Chen et al., 2005; Chen & Yao, 2010). In a study done by Chen and Yao (2010), adolescents who developed a strong sense of continuity and sameness or identity firmness improved their psychological and social well-being and fostered positive-growth in living a meaningful life.

Identity exploration with adolescents aids in developing new insight to make informed decisions regarding the process of career decision-making (Dunkel & Lavoie, 2005; Raskin, 1989; Vondracek et al., 1995). Raskin (1989) demonstrated the importance of self-awareness, self-exploration, and vocational decision making within an identity status orientation derived from developmental theory. Erikson (1968) indicated that forming an occupational identity is critical in resolving the identity crisis. Wallace-Broscious, Serafica, and Osipow (1994) examined a conceptual framework that integrated identity formation and self-concept with career development. They found that identity formation does play a clarifying role in career development, validating the self-concept theory of career development postulated by Super (1960; 1983; 1990). Self-reflection and the development of different perspectives promote and facilitate the resolution of identity-related crisis and ultimately foster the types of commitment that provide an authentic sense of personal identity and purpose in life (Allison & Schultz, 2001). Super (1960; 1983; 1990) indicated that vocational and career-decisions require a search of an individual’s developing interests, values, and aptitudes as well as a sense of autonomy, perspective, and self-esteem.
Racial Identity Development

Racial identity development adds an important layer to the development of self (Tatum, 1997). Inhelder and Piaget (1958a; 1958b) suggested that adolescence marks a time when individuals begin to internalize and act on society’s expectations. These increases in cognitive abilities become a crucial time for identity exploration and raise awareness of racism and inequality (Tatum, 1997). Phinney (1993) established a framework for understanding an adolescent’s racial and ethnic identity exploration. The framework supports that adolescents at some point encounter a situation that challenges their unexamined racial attitudes and questions their group attachment. Creating a sense of belonging by acknowledging diverse needs and experiences nurtures and affirms identity (Tatum, 1999). An achieved ethnic and racial identity is related to perceived academic and career self-efficacy (Smith, Walker, Field, Brookins & Seay, 1999).

The Self-Esteem Link

Traditionally, personality theorists proposed identity achievement as being linked with higher self-esteem (Adler, 1956; Adler & Fleisher, 1988; Erikson, 1973; Marcia, 1980). Campbell,(1990); Campbell, J. D., Chew, B., and Scratchley, L. S., (1991) supported the hypothesis that those individuals with low self-esteem have a less clearly defined concept of who or what they are in terms of their personality attributes and self-knowledge (p. 544). Self-esteem is the most familiar subject within the topic of self-concept. Self-concept is connected with identity; whereas, self-esteem refers to the self-evaluation and appreciation of oneself (Erikson, 1968; 1973; 1993). Developing an understanding of self-worth is at the core of a higher sense of self-esteem (Stepney, 2010). Art therapy offers an opportunity for individuals to enhance self-mastery, empowerment, and individuation supporting the ego and development of self-esteem.
Working with art materials and transforming them into an artwork becomes a metaphor for the process of framing the self through the active creation of an object (Franklin, 1992; Linesch, 1988).

**Group Art Therapy**

Adolescents’ future lives are greatly impacted by how they successfully negotiate through the developmental period in the later stages of adolescence. Often adolescents lack adult support, leaving them without guidance and direction as they strive to answer, “Who am I?” and “How do I envision my future?” (Fleisher, 2005). Adolescents benefit from the active and supportive presence of an adult (Jones & Deutsch, 2012; Sassen, Spencer, & Curtin, 2005). Art therapy and creative arts programs have been created within schools and after-school programs to guide students in understanding and developing their emerging identities (Fleisher, 2005; Jones & Deutsch, 2012; Nelson, 2010; Spier, 2010).

After-school programs held in a safe and caring environment support positive identity formation and promote interpersonal development (Dworkin, Larsen, & Hansen, 2003; Hirsch, 2005; Jones & Deutsch, 2012; McLaughlin, 2000; Sutherland, Waldman, & Collins, 2010). An art museum can provide a safe setting for adolescents in an after-school program. Providing after-school programs in a public space teaches adolescents to navigate the society in which they function. In addition, art museum collections offer access to the collective imagery of human existence, foster tolerance for differences, and generate conversations that develop representational diversity. Immersing oneself within a museum gallery can create a sense of universality, instill hope, impart information, and offer a context for life experiences (Silverman, 2010). Developing positive relationships within a group setting fosters healthy growth and
development. Feelings of belonging emerge for those participating in group art therapy, which nurtures self-esteem and self-confidence (Sutherland et al., 2010).

Participating in an interactive art therapy group provides a means of nonverbal exchange in areas of communication that may not be developed in many youth. Creativity is a method that allows bonding to occur within a group (Riley, 2001b; Sassen et al., 2005; Sutherland et al., 2010). Creating art can provide fresh viewpoints for problem solving (Riley, 2001b). Engaging in group art interactions builds awareness of one another’s strengths and reveals possibilities for personal change (Sassen et al., 2005; Sutherland et al., 2010; Veach & Gladding, 2007). Furthermore, self-expression and self-exploration through different art mediums does promote identity development (Veach & Gladding, 2007). According to Gladding (2008), “People overcome obstacles and progress towards a more actualized existence because of creativity in counseling” (p. 101).

Summary

Developmental theorists established the concept of identity formation during adolescence (Erikson, 1968; 1973; 1993; Marcia 1966; 1980). Affirming identity is supported by paying attention to adolescents’ emerging racial or ethnic identities and acknowledging their culture (Tatum, 1999). In addition, vocational and career decisions play an important role in identity achievement (Erikson, 1968; 1973; 1993). Developing a sense of self-esteem, perspective, and autonomy will enhance vocational and career decisions (Super, 1960; 1983; 1990; Super & Hall, 1978; Super, Osborne, Walsh, Brown, & Niles, 1992). Art therapy offers a means for individuals to develop self-esteem (Franklin, 1992). Group art therapy has proven effective within the adolescent population, providing a time-effective method for nurturing identity and connectedness with others (Riley, 2001b; Veach & Gladding, 2007). Adolescents exploring who
they are, what they find meaningful, and understanding their strengths and skills are more likely to make satisfying post-high school vocational or career decisions.
CHAPTER III

Methods and Procedures

Research Design

This research study measured the variable of self-identity in the adolescent high school population over six group sessions. Self-esteem is the dependent variable and the strength-based art therapy intervention is the independent variable. The study used a single-subject design, where the same group of high school students are both the experimental and control group (Carolan, 2001). A pretest and post-test given to the group measured the hypothesized increase in their self-identity (Kapitan, 2010). In addition, each participant provided a preliminary and concluding drawing and narrative to aid in obtaining and documenting perceived self-perception changes.

Selection Sample

Approval from the Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College Human Subjects Institutional Review Board to work with human subjects and site consent (Appendix F) were received prior to the start of the study. Adolescent students who signed up for an after school program held at an art museum participated in the research study. Transportation, a healthy snack, and all art supplies were provided at no cost to the participants. Parents and self-selected participants were informed of the study and its intent prior to the start of the study. During the initial meeting, the importance of attending all six sessions was stressed to the participants and their parents. Informed consent and assent forms (Appendices A & B) were distributed with the understanding that participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Participants and their parents signed a release (Appendix C) to photograph their art responses to document the pilot study and pre and post drawings supported by narratives.
Procedures for Data Collection

Participants were assigned a letter as an identifier used throughout the study. Actual names of participants only exist on the consent and assent forms. Preliminary and concluding surveys, narratives, artwork, and signed forms are kept confidential in a locked file cabinet. The locked file cabinet is maintained on site where the pilot program took place; only the investigator and her supervisor have access to the locked file cabinet. Artwork and narratives were returned to the participants upon completion of the study.

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale and Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory perform best in factor analysis (Demo, 1985). The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale extensively produces high internal reliability in self-esteem research. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale was designed as a Guttman scale, but is now commonly scored as a Likert scale (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991). Participants are asked to answer ten questions using a numerical value that represents strongly agree to strongly disagree. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1989) (Appendix D) is given as a pretest and post-test to each participant prior to the start and upon completion of the six strengths-based art therapy group sessions. Participants’ initial and final scores from the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale are compared and documented in Table 1.

In addition, each participant was directed to draw an image of “What they see themselves doing in five years?” prior to and at the conclusion of the six sessions. Upon completion of the preliminary and concluding drawings, participants were asked to write a narrative about what they are doing in their drawing. The narratives provide documented data to identify potential changes in the participants’ self-perception and post-high school choices (Kapitan, 2010).

The drawing of oneself doing something in five years reflects self-esteem as depicted in self-image. According to Coopersmith, Beardslee, and Coopersmith (1976) self-esteem is an
ART THERAPY TO IMPROVE ADOLESCENTS’ SELF-IDENTITY

important factor of the self-image and will be expressed in figure drawings. Aspects of figure drawings that express high self-esteem are realistic figures, with formed hands, depicting supportive and appropriate relations with the environment (p. 374). Participants were asked to complete a drawing depicting themselves in five years. The adolescent was not expected to be a skilled artist and any drawing made was accepted. Based on differences in graphic development the investigator relied on participants’ narrative to document perceived changes in self-esteem.

The six, one-hour session art interventions were specifically chosen to increase self-esteem through raising awareness of personal positive strengths. The detailed plans for the six, one-hour sessions can be found in Appendix E. The first few sessions focused on listing specific positive traits operating on the cognitive level of the Expressive Therapies Continuum (ETC) (Hinz, 2009). The first session comprised the naming of personal positive strengths and creating a collage of each within an art journal. The naming of specific traits and topic-directed collages operate on the cognitive component of the ETC (Hinz, 2009). The art journals given to the participants at their first session were used between sessions with directed homework. The homework, listed within each session plan in Appendix E, created a framework from which the adolescents can explore their identity, motivation, and preference for constructing their life story (Brott, 2004; Brott 2005; Gysbers, Heppner & Johnston, 2009). The second week reinforced identifying positive qualities and personal identity. Rock mosaics were created on wood bases with the participants’ positive qualities written on the rocks. Creating a rock mosaic is a complex procedural task that increases cause-and-effect thinking (Hinz, 2009).

The third and fourth sessions focused on building a sense of community. Through the metaphor of breaking plates to create mosaics, the participants developed an understanding of using personal positive strengths to create possible futures. The fourth session utilized rendering
images of a sculpture from different perspectives, including a detail drawing based on one of the already completed drawings. Each participant shared his or her three drawings within a group discussion. Discussion was directed as being based on what the participants see, not feel. This activity allowed the adolescents to practice and understand representational diversity. The activity aided the adolescents in understanding that people can view the same thing in different ways. Focusing on line, shape, and color keeps emotion from blocking communication and activates the perceptual component of the ETC (Hinz, 2009).

The fifth and sixth sessions focused on how personal strengths are represented to others and ourselves. Creating masks provided participants the opportunity to develop a self-symbol. Identifying inner and outer strengths can lead to a balanced sense of self (Hinz, 2009). Concluding the sixth and final session by connecting the body tracings with tissue paper streamers as suggested by Sassen, Spencer, and Curtin (2005). The activity started with each person having his or her body traced by a chosen partner or tracing a provided body-shaped template. Participants then drew and wrote personal qualities on their body tracings. The images were hung on a wall and participants wrote positive qualities and traits on one another’s tracings. The adolescents used crepe paper streamers to connect characteristics of their own tracings with other people’s tracings (Sassen et al., 2005). Writing on one another’s body tracings enabled the adolescents to express authentic sentiments toward one another upon group termination. Each session ended with an invitation for the adolescents to continue to use their art journals for self-reflection and self-expression (Linesch, 1988).
Ethical Implications

Participants and their parents were made aware prior to signing consent and assent forms that potential psychological risks could be associated with the study. Maintaining confidentiality within the group and the discussion of personal feelings and opinions could cause discomfort and uncertainty. The study was based on interactions within an art therapy group; the investigator cannot control what was discussed outside each session. Ethically to protect confidentiality, care was taken that the adolescents understood what is discussed within the group should not be talked about outside the group (Corey, 2012). Group members were reminded at the beginning of each session about the importance of confidentiality. Each member received a written statement prior to the start of the six art therapy group sessions explaining limitations of confidentiality in a group format (Corey, 2012). The research study was designed to meet the requirements of the Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College Human Subjects Institutional Review Board, which includes compliance with all relevant ethical standards, including the American Art Therapy Associations’ (AATA) Ethical Principles for Art Therapist, the Art Therapy Credentials Board (ATCB), and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA). The investigator remained under the supervision of a board-certified art therapist for advisement and consultation throughout the study. Although none of the participants expressed discomfort during the study, the supervisor was available to assist and support students participating in the art interventions and/or group discussions. The supervisor supported the investigator in addressing possible limitations, consequences, transference, and countertransference during each session. In addition, supervisory support allowed for consistency, reliability, and predictability within each session.
Analysis of the Data

The Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (1989) administered to the fifteen participants prior to and following the study reflected an increase of 0 to 8 points per participant in their overall self-esteem scores. The ten questions on the scale are assigned scores from zero to three, making the highest possible score 30 and the lowest possible score zero. A higher score reflects a higher self-esteem. Table 1 depicts the raw data entered from the pre and post Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. The data shows the first set of scores ranged from 13-26 points for each participant and the second set of scores ranged from 13 to 28, depicting a 0 to 8 point increase and in one instance a 2 point decrease.

Table 1.

Participants’ Preliminary and Concluding Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1989)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Pre</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>Points of Change</th>
<th>Number of Sessions Missed</th>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attendance affected the results of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1989). Those who attended five to six of the six-sessions comparatively showed a greater increase in their post scores than those who missed more than one session. The one participant who showed a
decrease in self-esteem attended only the first session. Figure 1 depicts the effect attendance had on the outcome of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem post scores.

![Figure 1](image)

*Figure 1.* The graph shows the correlation between sessions missed and the decrease in concluding Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1989) scores.

Disclosure prior to the start of the study allowed those who enjoy art to self-select and participate in the study. The self-selection process is believed to reduce anxiety or stress related to creating art during each session. In addition, the explanations of how to use art mediums and materials each week kept the stress related to new experiences minimal allowing for feelings of empowerment to develop. Working with a small self-selected group with an interest in art may account for the majority of the participants consistently attending five to six of the six-sessions.

**Observations during Data Collection and Art Directives**

Participants who started the study with lower self-esteem imitated their peers when stating positive strengths, abilities, and talents. This was indicated when participants were directed to write down on index cards the five positive strengths they illustrated in their journals. The cards were brought to the group circle. Moving around the circle, group members shared one strength from their index cards and placed it in the center of the circle. Group members with
similar strengths placed their index cards next to it on the floor. This continued until everyone’s index cards were in various piles in the center of the circle. Two sets of participants seated next to each other during the writing of the strengths shared identical index cards. One card within each set of duplicates used large handwriting and the other much smaller. The small handwriting could indicate lower self-esteem (Klimoski & Rafaeli, 1983). Samples of these cards are presented in Figure 2.

![Image](image.png)

*Figure 2. The image above depicts cards written by participants seated next to each other during session one. Two pairs of participants shared identical strengths. Each set presented with one having smaller handwriting, which could indicate lower self-esteem (Kilmoski & Rafaeli, 1983).*

Opening each session with a review of homework, followed by working as a group to define strengths, traits, abilities, and skills, developed the participants’ language and ability to describe them. The increase in vocabulary to describe strengths, traits, abilities, and skills between sessions one and two is depicted in Table 2. Figure 3 shares examples of the vocabulary used with the rock mosaics during session two.
Table 2  
*Vocabulary Comparison between Session 1 and Session 2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 1</th>
<th>Session 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical</td>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calm</td>
<td>Empathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controlling</td>
<td>Time Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Motivated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hard working</td>
<td>Hard working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun</td>
<td>Fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>Happy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respectful</td>
<td>Respectful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>Optimistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team work</td>
<td>Team player</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Creative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>Persistent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leader</td>
<td>Leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observe</td>
<td>Observant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kind</td>
<td>Kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different</td>
<td>Original</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity</td>
<td>Curious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organized</td>
<td>Organized</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Random</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Heart</td>
<td>Responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest</td>
<td>Trustworthy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>Caring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nerd</td>
<td>Intelligent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faith</td>
<td>Confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listen</td>
<td>Listener</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>Competitive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* The table illustrates the expansion in vocabulary used by participants between session one and two. The descriptive words were used to describe strengths, traits, values, and skills increased and expanded in session 2.
Through self-exploration and the empowerment created through the completion of each art intervention, the investigator started to witness true self-expression of positive strengths. Figure 4 and Figure 5 portray art responses and verbal reflections from the third and fourth art therapy sessions. The images and reflections visually and verbally illustrate increases in self-expression and self-exploration.
ART THERAPY TO IMPROVE ADOLESCENTS’ SELF-IDENTITY

N
Title: Blissfully Strong
The wind can blow and the flowers still stand strong. It represents persistence and personal strength.

P
Title: Proud Dragonfly
The dragonfly is proud to show off its wings. It represents showing my strengths to others.

A
Title: Cheerful
Christmas for me represents a time of happiness and cheerfulness. This is how I felt when making my mosaic.

T
Title: Juxtaposition
Interpretation of color can change when colors are juxtaposed. This represents that I can present myself in different ways.

O
Title: Elements
Green is grass, blue is water, and red is fire. The elements represent being alive and feeling wonderful.

Figure 4. Examples Glass Mosaics and Reflections from Session 3
Examples from session three illustrate self-expression and self-exploration.
Session 3 required the breaking of glass plates to create mosaics. Each participant selected a plate of a single color to break; to be able to add different colors to their mosaics they needed to ask another participant for some of their glass. This process was reflected on during discussion following the creation of the glass mosaics. Participants arrived at the conclusion that it was easier to give the glass pieces away than to ask to use someone’s glass pieces. This conclusion was used as a metaphor and discussion for the homework of calling someone and asking to interview or shadow a person in a career of interest to the participants.

I – Different styles of drawing could represent we are open to trying new things. We are each different and original.
P – Everyone has different view and those can change.
O – Different pressure is used with the pencil to make the lines. This could represent that everyone’s personality is not the same.
T – Everyone interprets things differently in the brain. This determines how you draw the sculpture.
R – Perspective based on our backgrounds. That is the “how and why” we perceive things a certain way.
M – One sculpture offers different points of views and each person sees different angle and point of views.

Figure 5. Examples of the Art Responses and Shared Reflections from Session 4
Drawing examples and discussion responses show continual increase in self-expression and self-exploration and an understanding and acceptance of his or hers peers’ worldviews.
Session 4 invited participants to sit in a circle around a sculpture of a penguin. The sculpture selected for this session offered familiarity of subject and a simple form, which supported successful renderings by the adolescent participants. Participants hung their artworks on a wall for group discussion. Personal views and perspectives were part of the discussion when comparing the different renderings of the same sculpture. The adolescents led discussion on why each drawing depicted a different view, leading to an understanding and respect for one another’s perspective. Gaining an understanding or perspective of how one sees and interprets the world in which they live creates greater empathy and support for change.

Figure 6 depicts the masks and reflections that encouraged explorations of self-identity, social identity, and cultural identity. The art response started with group discussion of understanding one’s persona or public self, and how-and-why we allow others to see this small part of ourselves is unique to our own personal circumstances. Developing individualization is a process aided by understanding the part of ourselves we share with others and the part we keep hidden, sometimes even from ourselves. The creation of the mask provides an intuitive function that may bring awareness to thoughts and feelings that cannot be expressed with words. The process of creating the masks is a way for adolescents to access insight into their self-identity (Riley, 2001a).
During the final session, members of the group made body tracings on newsprint using a life-size template or by tracing each other on the paper. Each person wrote their strengths on the body tracing, illustrating and embellishing them to represent their strengths. The drawings were hung on the walls around the room. The group participants were invited to write on everyone’s tracings the positive qualities and traits that they see in one another. Group members used crepe paper to connect the strengths they wrote down to similar strengths written on the others’ body tracings. The connecting of the images increased knowledge about self and others, which enhances self-worth. The experience creates empathy and authentic connections among group members, building positive relationships that foster identity growth. Figure 7 shows the room with body tracings connected by crepe paper and depicts written comments shared by group members relating to the experience.
Prior to the start and at the conclusion of the study, participants were requested to “Draw a picture of what you see yourself doing in five years.” The images on average, referenced in Table 3, reflect the expected results of visually supporting an increase in self-esteem by the rendering of a larger self (Hinz, 2011; Kim, & Suh, 2013). Figures 8a and 8b portray the comparison of first and second drawings for the majority of the participants.
Figure 8a. Participants’ Preliminary and Concluding Drawings

The drawing on the left for each participant depicts those done prior to the start of the study. Depicted on the right are the final drawings made at the conclusion of the study.

Note: Participant C and G were omitted since they did not produce a post comparative drawing.
Narratives written to support the preliminary and concluding study drawings were expected by the investigator to show an increase in the use vocabulary to describe positive-strengths, skills, and traits. The narrative findings did not show an increase in vocabulary use to represent strengths, skills, and traits. Instead, the narratives supported the participants’ growth and insight of self and personal needs.

Figure 8b. Participants’ Preliminary and Concluding Drawings

The drawing on the left for each participant depicts those done prior to the start of the study. Depicted on the right are the final drawings made at the conclusion of the study.
Figure 8a and 8b display participants’ initial and final drawings. Participant A’s initial drawing illustrates self as a radiologist and the narrative defines what a radiologist does. In participant A’s final drawing, the figure of self is larger and depicts a smiling social worker. The narrative states wanting to help others and making them feel proud of themselves. Participant B depicts in the initial drawing a figure with a diploma, a house, and a college. The narrative briefly states the goal of obtaining a house and a college degree in five years. Participant B’s second drawing depicts a much larger image of self and states having a bright future because of an inner light. Participant H in the first drawing depicted the self as married and the narrative states his or her mother’s dream is that all her kids be nurses. The concluding drawing by participant H illustrates a larger self and states being in college as a medical missionary. Overall, the final drawings take up a greater amount of space and the self is illustrated as a larger form, both indicators of increased self-esteem (Koppitz, 1966a; Koppitz, 1966b; Koppitz, 1969; Tielsch & Allen, 2005).

Participant G was the only participant to only attend the first session and demonstrate a decreased score on the post Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1989). Concluding narratives and surveys for participant G were collected by contacting the participant through an after-school advisor. The narrative depicted in Figure 9 states feelings of loss and fear. The investigator found the narrative concerning and follow-up was done to connect the participant with a school guidance counselor.
Group art therapy allows mentoring among those with a higher and lower sense of self-esteem. The group setting supported the adolescents in developing a unified sense of self each week as they explored their self-perceptions and had them confirmed by others in the group. Group interaction increased as self-esteem increased and confirmation of the perceived self was affirmed. Participants starting the study with a higher sense of self-esteem already have knowledge and understanding of their positive strengths and abilities. Participating in the art interventions enabled those with a higher sense of self-esteem to emerge with a more internally consistent sense of self. Formal operational thought is developed by art interventions that require cognitive and symbolic forms of processing on the ETC (Hinz, 2009). Each week, the art interventions developed used multiple steps to complete and metaphor as reflection; both aid in developing formal operational thought (Hinz, 2009). Observation of adolescents showed decisions to complete each art intervention became easier as the group progressed through the six weekly sessions. The observations are possible indicators of an increase in self-esteem and formal operational thought.
CHAPTER V

Results of the Study

Results/Discussion

The results of this pilot study support the information shared in the literature review and confirms the study’s hypothesis. The strengths-based approach to group art therapy supports adolescents in developing a greater awareness of their own positive strengths, which include skills, abilities, and interests, enabling them to discover their life goals. During the first session, some of the participants appeared unaware of their personal strengths and wrote down the identical strengths used by the participant seated next to them. The second session, started with a review of homework and the group describing and defining strengths, traits, abilities, and skills. The rock mosaics created showed an increase in vocabulary describing strengths as indicated in Table 3. This outcome supports Figler and Bolles (2007) identifying the need to develop the language to describe one’s strengths. The identification of these strengths and the language to describe said strengths are important parts of developing identity of self.

In addition, the study revealed the adolescents were able to increase their personal insight and assess their own personal needs and growth of self-identity. The weekly art interventions implemented aided in adolescents fostering a positive identity of self and formal operational thought, which empowered them to develop self-satisfying plans relating to post-high school decisions. Each weekly session provided ways for the adolescents to self-examine their abilities, values, and personal goals. Identity exploration strengthened their ability to understand the self and make informed decisions relating to personal needs. This is revealed in participant A’s preliminary drawing and narrative of self as a radiologist and the concluding drawing and narrative showing an interest in social work to assist making others feel proud of themselves.
Participant B’s initial drawing and narrative see the future as obtaining a college degree and a house; the final drawing and narrative anticipate a bright future because the process enabled him or her to find his or her inner light. Participants became aware of personal needs, gained insight of self, and increased self-worth. According to Stepney (2010), increasing self-worth is the core of a higher sense of self-esteem.

The narratives were written by participants to support preliminary and concluding drawings of what they saw themselves doing in five years. Overall, the concluding drawings visually displayed the use of greater space and the rendering of a larger self. These are indicators of increased self-esteem and expressed in the drawings as shown in Figures 8a and 8b (Koppitz, 1966a; Koppitz 1966b; Koppitz, 1969; Tielsch & Allen, 2005).

Increased scores on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1989) survey given to participants initially and following the study indicate increased self-esteem, which is linked with identity achievement supported by Adler, (1956); Adler, A., and Fleisher, L., (1988); Erikson, (1973); Marcia, (1980) within the literature review. Participants who attended the majority of the six-group sessions showed a greater increase in their post scores on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, as illustrated in Table 2.

The art therapy after school program provided the adolescents with the supportive presence of adults who guided them in developing identity of self. The investigator and supervisor introduced art mediums, processes, and reflection for the participants as tools for self-expression and self-exploration. Positive adult support was noted in Fleischer, (2005); Jones and Deutsch, (2012); Nelson, (2010); Sassen, Spencer, and Curtin, (2005); and Spier, (2010) as being of great importance while adolescents are developing their identity.
Art interventions focusing on the participants’ strengths within an art therapy group prove to be an effective approach for adolescents to gain a stronger sense of self-identity. Each week the investigator witnessed increased ease within the group as they shared reflections of art responses and processes. Session four showed growth in understanding and acceptance of how each member of the group interprets the world differently based on personal perspective or worldview. The concept of worldview works as a framework to support and nurture cultural identity and self-identity formation. Session five continued exploration and expression of social identity, cultural identity, and self-identity through the creation of masks and reflection on parts of ourselves we share with others in various situations. The final session increased participants’ knowledge of shared similarities within the group, promoting bonding and positive relationships.

Positive adult guidance, art therapy interventions and processes, reflection, directed self-exploration, and peer support led to adolescents increasing their insight of personal needs and growth in identity of self. The components of the study support one another and the success of the outcome for each participant. It is the belief of the investigator that each component independently would not produce the same outcome.

**Limitations & Recommendations**

Limitations of the study include the relatively small self-selected sample size and range of ages within the group. The investigator recommends that the study be effectively replicated to determine if comparable results would occur within a larger sample size. The use of randomized sampling likely ensures the population is unbiased, versus the self-selected population implemented (Kapitan, 2010). The investigator worked with high school students, which encompassed a four-year age range (ages 14-18), males and females, consisting of three freshman, three sophomores, five juniors, and four seniors. The members of the group may not
have been progressing at the same rate within the developmental task of identity formation due to a variation in their ages.

Potentially a number of other research studies could support the findings of this study. A longer study period could be implemented, with sample size delineated by grade. Each group would be with their peers by age and more developmentally similar. Numerous sample groups within an ongoing study would be more effective in determining art therapy as a standard to increase self-satisfying post-high school decisions. The investigator recommends each group permit no greater than fifteen members to enable the adult presence to be effective and supportive. The study outcome could be supported by soliciting the group, six to twelve months post study to assess their decision-making skills and determine if self-esteem gains were sustained.
References


doi:10.1037/10034-018


ART THERAPY TO IMPROVE ADOLESCENTS’ SELF-IDENTITY


http://search.proquest.com/docview/224016422?accountid=31228


*Personnel & Guidance Journal, 61*(9), 555.


APPENDIX A

Informed Consent to Participate

The purpose of this study is to measure any increased self-esteem that the adolescents gain through awareness of their own strengths, which include skills, talents, and interests. Gaining an understanding of their positive strengths potentially can aid them to make post high-school decisions that are more personally satisfying. Group participants will be enrolled in weekly art therapy sessions over a six-week period. The group session will include art making each week and discussion that focuses on personal strengths and skills. Group participants will be asked to complete a ten-question survey on the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale both before the start and at the conclusion of the six-weekly sessions. Student artwork will be photographed and pre and post narratives used to determine changes in awareness of personal strengths and skills. Results will be kept confidential through the omission of names or identifying factors from the participants or the participant’s family.

The Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College Human Subjects Institutional Review Board has approved this study. It is compliant with all relevant ethical standards, including the American Art Therapy Association’s (AATA) Ethical Principles for Art Therapist, and The Art Therapy Credentials Board (ATCB) and the Health Insurance Portability and accountability Act (HIPPA).

Participation in this group study is strictly voluntary. Participants have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences. This study is a partial requirement of Jayna (Jane) Hintz for the completion of her Master of Arts in Art Therapy Degree at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College.

You will receive a copy of this form.

Signature of Participant’s Parent or Guardian __________________________ Date_______

Signature of Researcher __________________________ Date_______

Contact Information

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Dr. Lamprini Pantazi, Chair-Human Subject Institutional Review Board lpantazi@smwc.edu
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College
1 Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876-1099

The Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum phone number is 715-845-7010
APPENDIX B

Adolescent’s Assent to Participate

This study is a way to measure increase in positive self-identity. Looking at what is great about you. This group will meet once a week for six weeks. We will use art to learn about personal strengths and skills, the good qualities that you have. You will be asked to answer a ten-question survey at the start of the group, and then again at the conclusion of the six weeks. Your answers will be kept private.

The Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College had approved this study. The investigators’ supervisor will be available to help if needed. Being part of this group is your choice. You can leave the group at any time if you choose not to participate. This study is a partial requirement of Jayna (Jane) Hintz for the completion of her Master of Arts in Art Therapy Degree at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College.

If you have any questions, please feel free to ask the investigator or her ATR supervisor.

You and your parents will receive a copy of this form.

Signature of Participant __________________________________________ Date __________

Signature of Researcher __________________________________________ Date __________

Contact Information

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The Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum phone number is 715-845-7010
APPENDIX C

Consent to Photograph Artwork

The investigator will only photograph your artwork with permission from you and your parent or guardian. There will be no negative consequences if you choose not to have your artwork photographed. Please read the following statements and sign below if you chose to participate:

I understand that the artwork is being photographed for the purpose of a study that is a partial requirement of Jayna (Jane) Hintz for the completion of her Master of Arts in Art Therapy Degree at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College.

I understand that this artwork belongs to me and I can take it home with me. Because of confidentiality, neither my name nor a picture of me will be shown with my artwork.

I understand that the results of this study may be published in a scientific journal and/or may be presented in an educational setting or a professional conference.

You will receive a copy of this form.

Signature of Participant_________________________________________ Date_______

Signature of Participant’s Parent or Guardian ___________________________ Date_______

Signature of Co-Researcher ___________________________________________ Date_______

_______ I choose to opt out of my artwork being photographed but still wish to participate in the study.
APPENDIX D

ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE (Rosenberg, 1989)

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feeling about yourself. If you strongly agree, circle SA. If you agree with the statement, circle A. If you disagree, circle D. If you strongly disagree, circle SD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>Strongly Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I feel that I’m a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I feel that I have a number of good qualities.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>I am able to do things, as well as most other people.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I feel I don’t have much to be proud of.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I take a positive attitude toward myself.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I wish I could have more respect of myself.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>I certainly feel useless at times.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>At times, I think I am no good at all.</td>
<td>SA</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E

Six-Session Plans

Session-One

**Title:** Collaging Five Personal Strengths  
**ETC:** Cognitive/Symbolic Component  
**MDV:** High-structure and complexity, resistive  
**Materials:** 9”x12” drawing journals, scissors, tacky glue, magazines, pencils

**Procedure:**
1. Discuss and define personal strengths.  
2. Ask group members to generate a list of their strengths.  
3. Direct group members to select five of their strengths to illustrate in their journal.  
4. Direct group members to illustrate one-strength per page in their journals, completing three collages during the session and two independently.  
5. Direct the students to write their five-positive-strengths on index cards, one-positive-strength per index card.  
6. End of session the group meets in circle with index cards.  
7. Going around the circle have members share one-strength from their index cards and place it on the floor in the center. Invite group members with similar strengths to place their index cards next to it on the floor. Continue around the circle until everyone’s index cards are in various piles in the center of the circle.

**Rationale:**
- Promote introspection of personal qualities, traits, or characteristics  
- Promote feedback about perception of self and others.  
- Increase understanding and acceptance of self.  
- Increase self-identity and self-esteem.

**Homework:**

**Title:** Autobiography: Chapters of My Life  
(based on the qualitative procedure of the lifeline explained by Brott, 2005)  
**Level of ETC:** Cognitive and Symbolic (Hinz, 2009)  
**MDV:** High-structure and High-complexity  
**Materials:** Sketchbook 5.5” x 8.5” 100 pages, book tabs  

**Procedure:**
1. Each student will be given a sketchbook and book tabs and directed to divide their journal into equal sections for every five years of their lives plus two.  
2. A book tab is placed on each section and something is written on it to distinguish each section.  
3. Direct the group members to think about interests and activities that are visible in each section of their lives and write them down in each section of the journal.
4. On the first page of each chapter, direct the group to create an image that represents their most memorable activities or interests from each section of their lives.

**Rationale:**

The art journal creates a framework from which the adolescents can explore their identity, motivations, and preferences for constructing their life story (Brott, 2004; Brott 2005; Gysbers, Heppner & Johnston, 2009). The art journal is the start of an ongoing process enabling the adolescents to look at events, strengths, interests, experiences, and accomplishments in their past and present to determine what they would like to continue or see happen in their future. The journal becomes a tool for the adolescent to understand their life story (Brott, 2004; Brott 2005; Gysbers, Heppner & Johnston, 2009).

**Session-Two**

**Title:** Five Personal Strengths Stone Mosaics  
**ETC:** Cognitive Component  
**MDV:** Medium-structure and high-complexity, resistive  
**Materials:** Wood base, paint pens, variety of rocks, grout-adhesive, pencils, paper

**Procedure:**

1. Define/discuss personal strengths; think about strengths listed during the last session.
2. Demonstrate how paint pens can write on stones, and how the one-step grout-adhesive works for adhering stones to the wood base.
3. Direct group members to trace wood bases on piece of paper and work out their stone designs on the paper to be transferred to the wood bases once the grout adhesive is applied.
4. Students write five strengths on their stones. Suggest writing one word per stone or break up words and write one letter per stone.
5. Once the letters/words are written on the stones, make a layout of the stone designs on paper.
6. Apply grout-adhesive wood bases.
7. Transfer stone designs to grouted wood bases.
8. Place completed stone designs on a table that has been placed in the center of the group gathering.
9. Share within group discussion positive strengths incorporated into the stone mosaics.

**Rationale:**

- Highlight personal qualities, traits, or characteristics.
- Promote feedback about perception of self and others.
- Increase understanding and acceptance of self.
- Increase self-identity and self-esteem

**Homework:**

Reflect on positive events that happened in each section of your life represented in the journals. On the second page of each section draw or illustrate one of the positive events.
Session-Three

**Title:** Broken Plate Mosaics  
**ETC:** Kinesthetic/ Symbolic/Cognitive  
**MDV:** High-structure and complexity, resistive  
**Materials:** Variety of plates, hammers, wood bases, grout-adhesive, safety glasses, canvas cloth, duct tape

**Procedure:**
1. Direct each student to select a plate.
2. Each group member wraps a plate in canvas cloth, and covers it with duct tape.
3. Group members while wearing safety glasses take a hammer and break the plates that have been wrapped in canvas cloth and duct tape.
4. Canvas cloth and duct tape are carefully removed. The broken plates are placed in bowls or boxes.
5. Students will layout a design for their mosaics. Group members are invited to ask each other to borrow specific colors of glass to create their mosaics.
6. Once mosaic designs are done, grout-adhesive is applied to the wood bases and the designs are transferred to the grouted bases.
7. When mosaics are complete, place them on a table in the center of the group.
8. Discuss and share mosaics and the experience. Ask the group if it was easier to give away a piece of glass or ask for a piece of glass to finish their mosaics.
9. Discuss the metaphor of using broken plates to create an artwork.

**Rationale:**
- Allow group members to give and receive in a nonthreatening way (Stepney, 2010).
- Gain an understanding of the impact they have on one another.
- Kinesthetic activities can increase group cohesiveness (Hinz, 2009).

**Homework:**
Reflect on people or places you could contact to find out about careers or vocations of interest. Make a list in your journal in the section that represents your current life chapter. Create an image of yourself contacting one place or person on your list. Try giving that person or place a call to inquire about your interest.

Session-Four

**Title:** Changing Point of View Drawings  
**ETC:** Perceptual  
**MDV:** Medium-structure and high-complexity, resistive  
**Materials:** Drawing pencils, 11” x 14” drawing paper, drawing boards

**Procedure:**
1. Give each member in the group three pieces of 11”x 14” white drawing paper, a drawing board, and a set of basic drawing pencils.
2. Seat the group members in a circle around a sculpture.
3. Demonstrate hard and soft drawing pencils, direct group to experiment with pencils as they draw.
4. Direct each group member to draw what they see, focusing on lines, shapes, and forms.
5. Have the students move to a new chair and complete a second drawing of the sculpture.
6. Direct each person to create a close-up view of one his or her drawings.
7. When completed, group members hang pictures and describe the drawings, using only line, shape, and form in their description.
8. Discussion follows on the different lines, shapes, and forms used to draw the same sculpture.

Rationale:
- Utilizing changing point of view drawings allows for the use of the perceptual level of functioning; containing their emotions and allowing for communications based on what they see, not feel.
- This activity allows the group members to practice and understand representational diversity (Rubin’s vase – seen as a vase or two faces).
- The activity should aid the group members in understanding that people can view the same thing in different ways.
- Focusing on line, shape, and color keeps emotion from blocking communication (Hinz, 2009).

Homework:
Invite the group to reflect on their public self and the parts of ourselves kept hidden. Direct the group to create an image in their journal of how this hidden self would look to the public.

Session-Five

Title: Collage/Mix-Media Self-portrait Mask
ETC: Cognitive/Symbolic
MDV: High-structure and complexity, resistive
Materials: Paper-pulp mask forms, tacky glue, scissors, magazines, fabric, decorative-papers, paint, paint brushes, water cups, buttons, hair dryer (to quickly dry paint and glue)

Procedure:
1. Explain/discuss that sometimes we wear a mask or persona of what we want the public to see when inside we feel much differently.
2. Give the directive to create the outside of the mask depicting how the public perceives you and on the inside of the mask depict how you identify yourself.
3. Group discussion follows between adolescents to explore and share the meaning of their work.

Rationale:
- Creating a self-portrait using collage on a pre-formed mask provides the opportunity
to process information using the cognitive/symbolic component of the ETC to further the development of formal operational thought (Hinz, 2009).

- Use the creation of the mask as a tool to develop self-identity, social identity, and cultural identity.
- Adolescents, especially females, can be sensitive and critical of their own artwork; collage allows distance from their work and they can still make a personalized statement (Riley, 2001a).
- Understanding one’s persona or public self, and the how and why we allow others to see this small part of ourselves is unique to our own personal circumstances. Developing individualization is a process aided by understanding the part of ourselves we share with others and the part we keep hidden, sometimes even from ourselves. The creation of the mask provides an intuitive function that may bring awareness to thoughts and feelings that cannot be expressed with words. The process of creating the masks is a way for adolescents to access insight into their self-identity (Riley, 2001a).

**Homework:**

Invite the group to reflect on past activities or interests and if they would like them to be part of their future. Direct the group to create an image of how this activity or interest will look in their future in the last two sections of their journal.

**Session-Six**

**Title:** Connecting Body Tracings (Sassen, Spencer, and Curtin, 2005)  
**ETC:** Perceptual/Cognitive/Symbolic  
**MDV:** High-structure and high-complexity, resistive  
**Materials:** Roll of paper, body templates, scissors, pencils, slick sticks, tape, rolls of crepe paper

**Procedure:**

1. Explain to the group how a body tracing is made. Ask the group to find a partner to work with, if anyone feels discomfort with body tracing offer to make an approximate body shape for them to work on.
2. Rip newsprint off the role for each participant.
3. Partners trace each other on the newsprint.
4. Each person then writes their strengths on their body tracing and illustrates or embellishes their body tracings to reflect their strengths.
5. Each member hangs-up his or her body tracing on the wall.
6. The group participants are invited to write on each other’s tracings positive qualities and traits that they see in others.
7. Group participants are given a roll of crepe paper (Place rolls of scotch tape on the floor around the room) and directed to use the crepe paper to connect the strengths they have written on their body tracings with similar strengths written on the other member's body tracings.
8. A web is created by the crepe paper connecting strengths.
9. Sit as a group amongst the crepe paper web and discuss what members gained from the experience.

**Rationale:**
- The experience creates empathy and authentic connections between group members.
- The building of positive relationships fosters identify growth.
- Increases knowledge about self and others enhancing self-worth.
- The symbolic and cognitive aspect of processing used during this art invention fosters the development of formal operational thought (Hinz, 2009).

**Homework:**
Invite the group to keep working in their art journals, exploring their positive strengths, traits, talents, and interests.
APPENDIX F

Site Approval Letter

April 2, 2014

Dr. Lamprini Pantazi
Institutional Review Board
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College
1 Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College
Saint Mary-of-the-Woods, IN 47876-1099

Dear Dr. Pantazi,

Jayna (Jane) Hintz serves as curator of education at the Woodson Art Museum.

To satisfy a partial requirement for her completion of a Masters of Arts in Art Therapy Degree at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College, Jayna will undertake a study titled, “Art Therapy: A Strengths-Based Approach for Improving Adolescents’ Self-Identity and Post-High School Decision-Making Skills,” at the Woodson Art Museum, working with an after-school student group.

This project has my approval to be conducted at the Woodson Art Museum during fall 2014 under the supervision of a Board-certified Art Therapist.

Sincerely yours,

Kathy Kelsey Foley
Director