



Wattleseed Centre WA

2023

**Art Therapy
Retrospective**

Wattleseed Centre WA

NDIS Provider of
Art Therapy & Counselling



Our Locations

Midland

11 Stafford Street, Midland

Fremantle

6/163 Canning Hwy, East Fremantle

Contact Us

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A word from our Principal Art Psychotherapist

What a privilege it has been to walk alongside all of the amazing people who have entered into the therapeutic space at Wattleseed Centre WA in 2023, and what a year it has been!

2023 saw Wattleseed Centre WA expand to the southern suburbs opening up our new Centre in Fremantle and growing the number of participants welcoming us into their homes in the Avon region.

Midland has been at full capacity all year so we have some great changes coming up to address that including moving to a larger premises and offering more sessions.

We value and respect all the work you do to support our people to sign up and get to their therapy sessions. We hope you enjoy looking at their work and learning exactly what it is they have been achieving by attending Art Therapy.

We look forward to continuing to work with you in 2024 and hope you have a wonderful break.

With gratitude,

Claire McWaters-Smith



Introducing Art Therapy

The first session

is an opportunity for the individual and therapist to introduce themselves. This is often done with a **self portrait**.

The individual is supported to lead therapy which means that they get to choose the medium and the theme.

This helps build the individual's capacity to develop confidence and **find their voice**.

They also help set the boundaries to keep themselves and others safe. **Boundary setting can be challenging but often maintaining them is harder.**

A lot of the therapeutic intervention aims at strengthening boundary setting skills.





Exploring the reality of living with a disability is the purpose of Art Therapy. Being able to express the struggle through image making and have that reality heard and understood is incredibly healing.

Art Therapy is not a silent space. The therapist is curious as to how the individual has been since their last session. Whilst talking about this experience the individual and therapist are creative. The artwork is a response to the stories shared.

Walking alongside people consistently for months, and even years, allows individuals to develop a sense of safety in the space and with their therapist.

Towards the end of the session we share our images.

“it is like walking through a hot desert filled with snakes, sometimes I cant go on and hope is just a mirage”

Identifying Challenges

Collaboration

Working together is a key aspect to Art Therapy. The space is not just art-as-therapy but has a foundation in Psychology. Art Therapy is backed by **evidence based research** that has found that creating a collaborative relationship with the therapist promotes significant healing from trauma.

One of the favourite activities is a turn taking process where images are swapped between the individual and therapist to add to and **complete together**.

In this example, what started as a laying down of colour and shapes ended up forming an image of a line of people going to or coming from somewhere.

Creating a story of what we see comes from our own inner world and these stories help us identify our worries and hopes.

What do you see when you look at this?

How does it make you feel?

What do you think happens next?



Acceptance of Identity

allows us to draw upon **our communities' strength** and find new ways to respond to life's challenges. Exploring what our culture is in the many ways in which culture is expressed is an important theme in Art Therapy.

We can show our connection to culture through **movement, tribal markings, and religious iconography**



If we know where we come from we can know where to go and how to get there.

Exploration of culture generates hope

Connecting to Culture

Generating Hope

Finding Resources which we may never knew we had is explored through image making and identified throughout therapy. Individual's are supported to recognise their skills and abilities to respond to challenge and **overcome helplessness.**

The steps to develop self confidence it to firstly recognise when life is becoming difficult, secondly identify the trigger blocking effective action and thirdly choose a response from a range of tools in our toolbox.



There may have been many instances in an individual's life where they had been told that they are not good enough and not worthy. This may become internalised and create a **core belief** about who they are.

Challenging that belief by identifying how good, talented and worthy they are generates hope that **they can become who they want to be and that it is never too late to learn new skills.**

Completing Therapy can be experienced differently by everyone. Sometimes it is because the funding allocation has been expended, other times it may be because of a circumstance change.

More often than not with each funding year the therapeutic space is continued and the individual is provided with ongoing therapy for years.

This **consistency of support** has been found to be essential to allow the individual to feel safe in their exploration as life changes around them.

However, all things must come to an end and it is affirming when an individual chooses to end therapy because they have **confidence in themselves to tune into their internal world, know themselves to be capable and able to self soothe.**

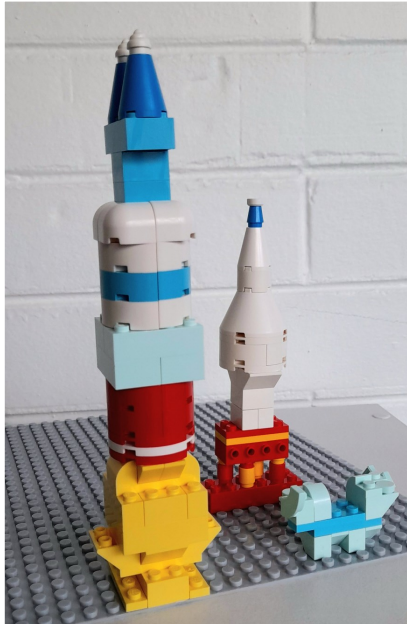


"I am full of wisdom"

Closure



Various art mediums



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We would have loved to print every image ever made in therapy as each image is important and amazing. The images chosen best exemplified the process of Art Therapy and we are grateful to the individuals and their families for allowing us to share them with you. All images remain the rights of the individual who created the image. The images are not to be shared or replicated without prior permission.

If you would like more information about Art Therapy at Wattleseed Centre WA or would like to refer individuals to our service please contact us by heading to our website

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