

**Articulating Art therapy Workshop
GP Student Training 2006**

Students were asked prior to the project what they thought Art Therapy was;

Art therapy is:

“Expressing emotion through the medium of art to greater understand ones emotions”.

“Expressing emotions through art”.

“Using ‘art’ as a form of ‘treatment’ may be more ‘individual’”.

“A mode of treatment to make patients better”.

“Using art to treat patients through identification, exploration and treatment of underlying psychological problems”.

“The use of art to help people express themselves”.

“Drawing to relieve stress”.

“Method of helping people cope with and work through physical and psychological problems”.

“Expressing thoughts and feelings through art”.

“Art acts as a release; to release the yin that you bottle up...and release the yang that you seldom let people see”.

“Using drawing and painting to help patients through their illness”.

“The use of art to allow someone to express and understand their thoughts and feelings to allow them to improve in their well being”.

“Art therapy can help understand yourself and is something that can be enjoyed”.

“Art therapy is a form of relaxation and expression; aimed at anyone”.

“Art therapy is drawing pictures, expressing feelings/ ideas, exploring and discovering yourself”.

“Using art to relax and think about stuff that effects you”.

“Art therapy is freedom of expression of thoughts and feelings, fears and emotions through the creative medium of art; a personal response to inner self”.

Students were asked to write down what they understood by the term 'Art Therapy' after partaking in the workshop. Here are a few quotes. Ones repeating their initial explanation have been left off the list.

“Art can be liberating”.

“The workshop helped me to understand the type of patient which could benefit from being referred to Art Therapy”.

“Art Therapy is a method of helping those patients with psychological stress by differing forms of expression”.

“It is a psychological method of exploring people’s emotions and issues through images.”

“I have learnt how important it is not to project ones own feelings onto the art of the client.”

“Art therapy is a form of Psychotherapy.”

“Art Therapy is open to everyone irrespective of artistic ability.”

“Art Therapy is a psychodynamic process”.

“I have learnt about subconscious thoughts and how they can effect art expression.”

“Expression and art form can help individuals understand their emotions better.”

“Art Therapy is therapeutic and not just for fun”.

“Art Therapy can be very powerful”.

“The workshop was not scary and it gave me a fascinating insight into Art Therapy.”

“It increased my understanding of art and the use of metaphor.”

“Everyone has their own interpretation of a single image and this shows how powerful the use of art can be in communication of thoughts and feelings”.

“I have learnt how powerful the medium of art is at allowing personal expression.”

The workshop enabled students to learn that Art Therapy is a form of psychotherapy which encompasses psychodynamic processing of clinical material. It highlighted the reasons why Art Therapy is not a ‘diversional’ or ‘relaxation’ treatment whilst providing a hands on experience of how it can feel to use art materials and how this may benefit patients and the therapeutic process. Many students commented on the powerfulness of their creative experience.

