



Therapeutic Arts

Creativity and the Art of Imperfection

Part of the **Open Minded Chats** series created in partnership with:



Perlin Foundation
for Wellbeing



CALGARY
PUBLIC
LIBRARY



Time to Break Out the Crayons



Everyone is born creative; everyone is given a box of crayons in kindergarten. Then when you hit puberty they take the crayons away and replace them with dry, uninspiring books on algebra, history, etc. Being suddenly hit years later with the 'creative bug' is just a wee voice telling you, 'I'd like my crayons back, please.'

-- Hugh McLeod, "Ignore Everybody: and 39 Other Keys to Creativity"



Your Guide on Your Journey



Who am I?

- A professional digital & acrylic painter
- An active status member of the Federation of Canadian Artists
- Received my Therapeutic Arts Practitioner certification from the Canadian International Institute of Art Therapy



What is Therapeutic Arts?

- Therapeutic arts believes in the transformative nature of art-making as a means of personal discovery and expression.
- The emphasis in therapeutic arts is on the creative ***process*** and not the final art ***product***.
- My role is that of a facilitator to guide you along your journey, but the journey itself belongs to you.



The Value of Creativity

- Our brains are meaning-making machines, however we can get stuck in cognitive loops of language causing us to go back and re-tread old territory.
- Art-making and creativity are ways to by-pass language and use our imagination in a different way. This can lead to new insights and discoveries that you might not have stumbled upon otherwise.



What's Your Colour Today?



There are no
wrong answers
or secret
metaphors.



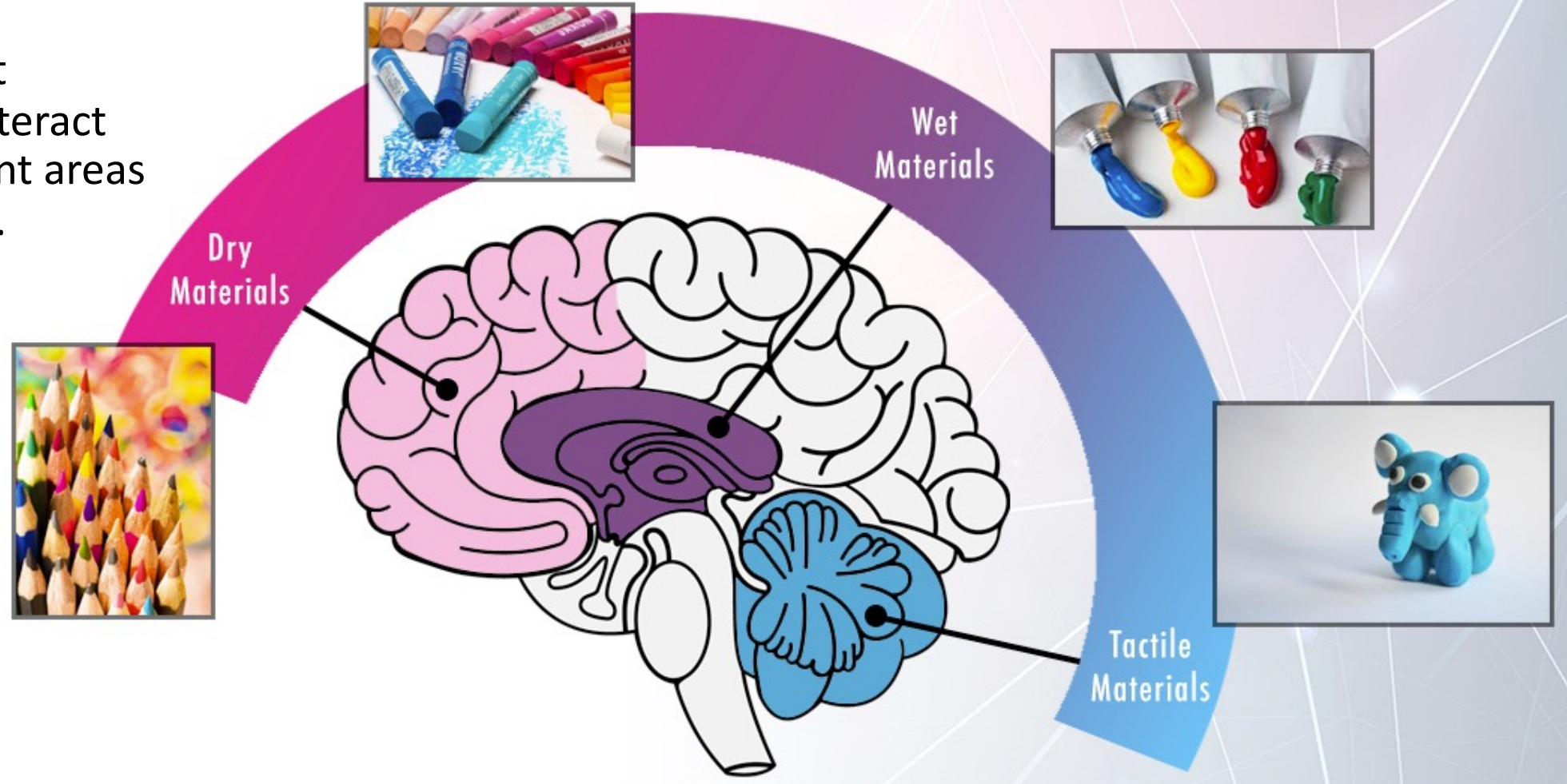
Playing With Materials





Art Materials and the Brain

Different art materials interact with different areas of the brain.





Exploring the Act of Painting



- The act of painting “tickles” the limbic area of the brain or its emotional core.
- Because painting is a wet material it requires that a person be in the moment with it in a mindful way.
- Paint as a material can be unpredictable and encourages a person to simply go with its flow.



My Paint-by-Number Healing



- This paint-by-number project was a way to give my cognitive brain a rest and soothe the emotional anxiety in my limbic brain.
- I could focus purely on the ***act of painting*** without worrying about the need to make any creative or aesthetic decisions or concern myself with a final product.



Creative Resistance

“The more important a call or action to our soul's evolution, the more Resistance we will feel toward pursuing it.”

-- Steven Pressfield, “Do The Work”





Common Roadblocks to Creativity

- “I’m just not creative.”
- “It’s a waste of time.”
- “I can’t even draw a stick figure.”





Healing Old Creative Scars



- If you hold a belief that you aren't creative, ask yourself... how long have you held this belief? Where did it come from?
- Sadly, our education system puts so much focus on comparison and criticism. This can plant the seeds of shame and resistance around art-making.



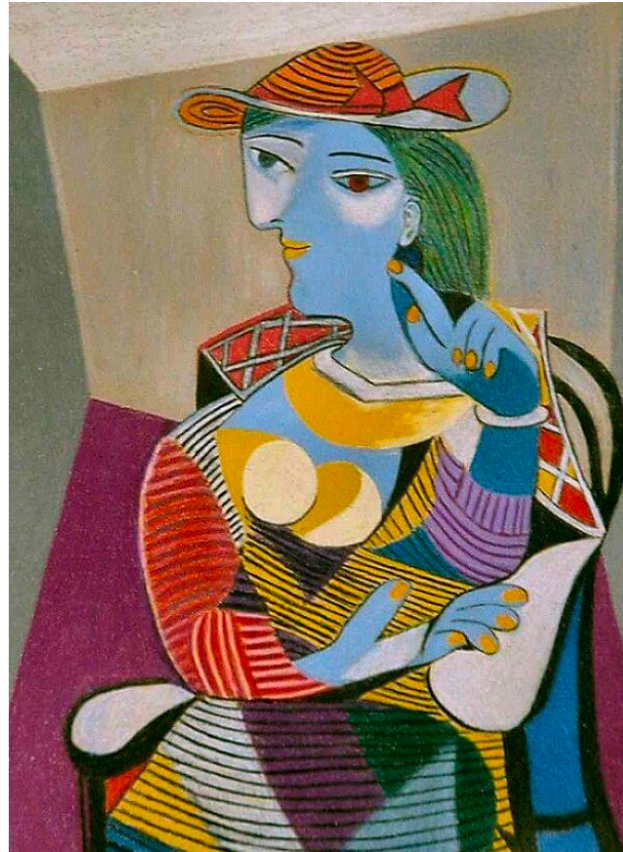
Productivity vs. Creativity



- You don't have to be an Olympic athlete to benefit from taking a walk in the sunshine.
- You don't have to be a chef to enjoy a good meal.
- Making art doesn't have to lead to anything. It can just be about exercising that creative muscle.



Room for Every Kind of Artist



- “The artist is not a special kind of person, rather that each person is a special kind of artist.” -- Ananda Coomaraswamy
- If you want to express yourself with stick figures, go for it!



What's in a Name?

Without writing the word itself,
create an image that represents your own name.



Tilted Windmills
HEALING CENTRE



Tilted Windmills is a family-run creativity and mental health initiative with workshops, one-on-one sessions and content resources.

To learn more about what we do visit www.tiltedwindmills.com

or follow us on

