

THE UNION OF ART THERAPY AND LOGOTHERAPY:

LOGOART

Marianne da Silva Prado

Diplomate Project

Educator / Administrator

Viktor Frankl Institute of Logotherapy

September 1999

ABSTRACT

The intention of this Diplomate project is to join Viktor Frankl's philosophy and Logotherapy with Art Therapy in order to demonstrate how Franklian theories can be visually applied through art.

In Art Therapy, art is utilized as the way to wake up the patient's inner healing power; to help him find the connection with his healthy (noetic) core, and to use this natural healing power.

In this project the practical application of Logotherapy and the various steps of the healing process, become visible through Art Therapy. They are captured on Video and outlined in this manual.

Contents

ABSTRACT	2
INTRODUCTION.....	4
Chapter 1: Art Therapy and the Human Being.....	5
Chapter 2: Art Therapy as Therapy.....	7
Chapter 3: Different art forms used in Art Therapy.....	9
Chapter 4: Art Therapy with Logotherapy	10
Chapter 5: Painting a metamorphosis in seven steps	12
Chapter 6: A case from my own praxis	13
Chapter 7: Self-transcendence.....	15
Chapter 8: Self Distancing	16
Chapter 9: The life of the colors	17
Chapter 10: Art Therapy process.....	18
Conclusion	21
Bibliography	22

INTRODUCTION

For six years I have been working with Art Therapy in the capacity of therapist (working with clients) and as a teacher of Art Therapy. When I first heard about Logotherapy and subsequently read some of Viktor Frankl's books, I immediately said to myself: "This is a philosophy I have been applying all these years in my work!" I did not know it was called Logotherapy.

In LOGOTHERAPY I found the necessary vocabulary for naming the various steps in the therapeutic process.

The Art Therapy I practice and teach is based on antroposophy, a view of the human being formulated by the Austrian thinker, Rudolf Steiner, at the beginning of this century.

In Art Therapy, when the client is working under the guidance of the therapist, the work is always directed toward a goal. While working, the client is experiencing something meaningful, like moving from chaos to order... His work is symbolic of his real life.

Chapter 1

Art Therapy and the Human Being.

The human being is different from the other creatures in the world. Each person is *unique*.

Art Therapy looks at the human and says that we are an integration of physical, etherical, astral and I.

Physical: is the part in us that is like the minerals; they have a physical body, we can measure them. They are made of the elements and respect all the laws of physics.

Etherical: is the part in us that is like the plants: they have a physical body and life and all changes happen in time.

Astral: is the part in us that is like the animals: they have a physical body and life and an inner life with feelings, and they can move in the *space* by themselves.

I: is the part in us that makes us human: We have a physical body, we have life and the ability to move about. Beyond that we also exist on the *spiritual* dimension. (The *ideas* the **freedom** to decide what to do.)

In this division we can see the same order as in the Bible when we read the story of creation. First came the earth and water, then plants, then animals and finally the human being as the last one.

Here we can see the connection with Logotherapy when we think about what Frankl says of the three parts: soma, psyche and noetic

Soma is the physical and etherical

Psyche is the astral

Noetic is the I

Although we make these divisions, we must always remember that a human being is an individual functioning on many levels simultaneously.

For example in a factory we have the ones who have an idea ;then there are others who construct; and, again others who sell. Each one has his own job, but they work with one purpose to fulfill a meaning.

Chapter 2

Art Therapy as Therapy

Why is the sky blue and the sun, at sunset, red?

People normally don't notice these things. And do not stop to think about them either.

Art therapy uses this kind of knowledge in the process of healing, or better, "in the waking of the clients inner forces of healing."

The concept that our highest part never becomes sick is the same as in Logotherapy. What can happen, however is that the "I" can loose contact with the other levels.

We can look at depressed people and observe what colors they use to dress themselves. Do they prefer the color blue or the color red?

The colors are connected with the persons even if they don't think about it. For example, the depressed person: when he looks in the wardrobe to find something to wear, does he think, "I'm taking this dark blue cloth because I'm depressed?" Or does he just take it? If he was aware of WHY he chose the blue garment, he could dress himself in something red. This would change his mood...he would feel more cheerful.

Since we are looking at the sun and the sky from the earth, we have the atmosphere in between. This fact colors the sunlight red since it has to cross the atmosphere before reaching us. We can see this in the sunset, when the light has a longer way to travel through the atmosphere, then the color red is intensified. At noon, the sunlight is yellow! The same applies to the black of outer space. When we look at the sky, it looks blue to us because it is illuminated by daylight. At night, the sky is black...no light.

We see that between light and darkness all the colors appear.

Every color represents a mood. We automatically feel comfortable surrounded by a color representing our own feelings at that moment.

Yellow, orange and red represent light. Darkness is represented by blue and violet. Green is in between and is considered a calming color.

From this we see how an art therapist can see the mood of his client and in what direction the pathology is moving... For ex. a depressed person likes to paint dark blues and violets. So we have to try and bring him out of this tendency of looking into darkness.

In nature we can see this also The yellow flowers are open and big, the blue ones small and closed. Have you ever seen a blue "sunflower"?

Chapter 3

Different art forms used in Art Therapy

1. **Painting:** all the techniques we can make on paper like painting with different materials: aquarels, pencils, color pencils...

In this case we are using a two-dimensional process. Even if there is perspective, this is just an illusion, behind the paper nothing happens....

2. **Sculpting:** all the materials clay, wood, stones.

Here we have different ways of working depending on the material. When working with wood and stone we use the process of taking off the material that is around the form we perceive to be inside the block of wood or stone. But once we have taken it off, it's gone. We can't glue it back. (This can be used if a person is on a diet, to peel off fat..)

Clay is a material suitable for modeling. This is a three-dimensional process. To get an overall view, we must look at it from all angles. We use just these two kinds of techniques in Art Therapy painting and sculpting. In the world there are lots of different kinds of art: music, theater, cooking, dancing etc.....If I want to work with music, the idea is the same, but I must know music.

Chapter 4

Art Therapy with Logotherapy

Frankl has asked the question: what makes mankind emotionally healthy?

Art therapy answers this question like Logotherapy with "freedom to " and "not freedom from."

If a person is free, he can use all colors and forms, he can move freely among them from the darkest to the lightest...

If I have one dark blue dress in my wardrobe, does that mean I'm depressed? Of course not, but if I have only dark clothes, I must ask myself, "WHY ?"

In painting it is the same .The client makes some free-flowing (or free form) exercises where he is allowed to use all colors. I observe and draw conclusions: from the colors he uses, from the amount of paint, from the tonalities lighter or darker; where is the light? Is it inside the painting or outside the forms he paints, (abstract or figurative) and so on...

In psychotherapy people can hide things from their therapist (non-disclosure,for instance). In art therapy this is more difficult.

Because usually people don't understand that art is a subtle language, they do not know how to hide unpleasant facts. It becomes more difficult to hide something. In this respect it is easier to work with people who have never painted or worked with clay.

Chapter 5

Painting a metamorphosis in seven steps

Reference : Logotherapy and addictions Intermediate "C", unit 7a .

1. Chaos: experiencing loss of value and meaning
2. Start looking to the surfaces: identifying one's belief system
3. Giving life to the colors: begin to develop self-confidence
through the Power of Freedom
4. Near connections: exploring relationships. Developing a
meaningful relationship
5. Limitations: learning from past problems helps clients cope
with future challenges.
6. Finding meaning: focusing on their strength with dereflection
7. Contemplation: commitment

Chapter 6

A case from my own praxis

A client, 31 year old man, his presenting problem: back pain, suspected to be rheumatic . He is a nice person, always able to help people, his feelings appear closed. We started the therapy and his first painting was full of closed forms. The colors were far apart . There were no encounters of colors or different shades . The therapist tries to get the client to paint encounters of colors. For the first encounter, the therapist gives just two colors ,and the client must try to make as many shades as possible, having the colors meet on the paper. For ex. Yellow and blue meet; the result is green when the client has mastered the technique of painting "wet on wet" (watercolors on wet paper). This water helps to dissolve the hard parts of the painting and brakes the process of the mind ,that wants immediately to put FORM on the paper.

I gave him the task of doing the work step by step (like I show in the video). .He has been painting on the same paper for seven sessions (about ten hours) and he enjoyed the process so much that it was not a hard thing to do, but, a pleasure. This is also important. Even if it is hard

to change the painting, people start enjoying the work when they see how beautiful it is turning out to be !

The painting works on the client while he is painting; and, after that, it starts echoing inside him. Many times I have heard someone say , " I kept on painting in my dreams last night".

This man, after the process of transformation had started, began putting more limits in his life he decided not to do things against his will anymore (he had been complying to others; this had caused inner anger and bitterness in him).The pain was better. His wife came to me and asked what I had done to her husband; he was different, stronger, and not always accepting everything. He was more tender and attentive to her than he had been before. The contrasts came out stronger, there was purpose and meaning in his life now. It was no longer a luke warm soup..

Chapter 7

Self-transcendence

"Self-transcendence is the essence of existence" (Frankl WM, 50)

That means that to be a human being we have the capacity to make choices with *freedom* and *love*. From this choice comes action to promote the welfare of another person with nothing expected in return; the capacity of making a choice even if it's against our own desire.

For example: my daughter wants to go study in other country. For me it would be better if she stayed at home were I could "have" her with me, and don't have to be alone. But, I am thinking from her point of view (self-transcendence on my part) that it is an enormous step in her professional life. There will be a lots of people of the same age, and parties and new friends. My choice egoistically would be that she should not go. . But using self-transcendence, I will let her go and still be happy for the opportunity she has.

We help clients to learn self-transcendence by teaching them to look at their work. Where colors are disconnected in patches, we help them paint a bridge from one color to the other...

Chapter 8

Self Distancing

In Art Therapy we train clients all the time in self-distancing. The client paints, then gets up and looks at his work; like that, he gets a new perspective as he looks at it impartially. He can then make a choice to change the work. The work is his own life, symbolically. By changing his painting, he can start making changes in real life too. So, by using self-distancing he can see the overall picture and can change his attitudes slowly, he can start making changes in his own life.

We never discuss the life of a client with him. We always talk about his art work. Slowly and slowly he starts to make the connection himself. By getting more freedom in his art work, using more colors, less form (or more according to his situation) he manages to look at his own life also in a more relaxed way.

Chapter 9

The life of the colors

After a while, the painting starts to have its own life. Then the painter must work on it, listening to what the color is saying. It's totally different when we paint on a blank piece of paper. There we can do whatever we want. But, if we have a color on the paper, and we put a new color in, it must not "hurt" the one that was already there. Like in life, we are free to do what we want, but we must not hurt those we have contact with.

The "self-transcendence " in painting is giving to the colors what they want, not what I (like a dictator) want. We can train the client to help others to feel well, in this case the color, without expecting anything in return. How does the yellow feel when it is put into a box? Probably bad. But, does it not feel happy when we give it more space! Colors have personalities. Some, like yellow, want space; others, like blue, enjoy being in a box (contained).

Chapter 10

Art Therapy process

People come and do some art work, either painting or modeling with clay. The art therapist, by observing their works, gains insight into the problem of his client and can decide which direction the therapy must take to achieve a future cure. We ask the clients to tell something about themselves and their life and why they came to therapy. And we can see if what is said is the same as what shows in the clients' works. Normally it is the same. We always like for the art work and life to be correlated.

We can read in a medical book what symptom people have in different sicknesses. Specific symptoms are usually present in specific ailments. And we can look further and see that given sicknesses have specific kinds of pattern in painting or clay work. This pattern is always present just like the symptoms. One example: if a person is for some reason out of balance, the sculpture is going to be also, it will be lopsided! The painting will have something that shows this also. The lines will not be horizontal, or something asymmetric will appear.

In the therapy process we start from the point where the client is. This can be seen from his work. Then slowly, step by step, we start

changing his art work. The therapist doesn't touch the work; he just describes how it should be done. Then the client must grow inside himself the desire to change and to realize it. Because, if the therapist does the work, it can be too big a step and the client can have a big reaction. But, when he does it by himself, he can go at his own rhythm and speed.

This therapy is always very individual even if we have a group, The first day we can start together, and each person has his own rhythm. After three times the works can be at different levels.

When people make something, they become attached to it and they start loving their work. Then they must stop working, go some steps ahead, and look at the work. Maybe they can see something that must be changed, or maybe they think it is OK. The therapist can use maieutic questions like: How do you see the encounter of the colors? How is this color encountering the one that is next to it? Do they not meet at all? Do they not mix? Is there no green color surging from the encounter of yellow with blue? If people have problems in this area of communication (that is the biggest problem I've noticed), they can see in the painting how it is. Sometimes they realize this fact by saying, "it's exactly like at home" (or at work or with my mother...) "we never speak to each other."

When we continue to work, we can change the encounter and start changing the attitude between the colors. Doing this training with colors the clients develop an inner power that they can use in their relations with others. One important thing here is that the art therapist **never** talks about peoples' lives .We always talk about the art work very objectively. They must go home (one hour and a half are the time of the session), and came back for the next session. During this time there is "self-distancing" from this art work. Normally people want to start working immediately. Just going on.... Automatically in the same direction as before. However, after a rest they can look at their art work more impartially. Having this time between sessions they can again go some steps ahead and look at the art work Then we discuss the way to continue. Having some maieutic dialogue, we decide to go on the same way or to *change attitudes*.

The greatest point in the process is reached when they transcend the same pattern and have the courage to jump into the unknown zone .If we think that this is "just" a painting it should be very easy to change the work. But it's a real battle. If we manage to win here, we can win in life as well!

Conclusion

We can see from my example " a metamorphose in seven steps "(a purely logotherapeutic technique used in treating addicts) that this same procedure is used in Art Therapy, without any modifications whatsoever.

Logotherapy gives Art Therapy the vocabulary it is missing. Art Therapy gives Logotherapy the visible practice of the process.

The two complement each other in a wonderful way. Logotherapy brings supplementary assets like the maieutic dialogue that can help the therapist and the client together to find a new meaning for client's life.

I am forever thankful for having found Logotherapy! Thanks to it my results in treating clients have improved considerably and my Therapy has a new structure to it.

Bibliography

- Crumbaugh, James C. Everything to gain, Institute of Logotherapy press, Berkley, California 1988
- Dam, Joop van Parantavat Voimat Ihmisessä ja Yhteisössä. Suomen antroposofinen liitto. 1991
- Fabry, Joseph B. The Pursuit of Meaning, Institute of Logotherapy press, 1994
- Frankl, Viktor E. , The Doctor and the Soul , third expanded edition, Vintage Books, New York , 1986
- Frankl, Viktor E. , Mans search for Meaning, third edition, Simon and Schuster, New York. 1984
- Frankl, Viktor E., The Will to Meaning, New American Library, New York 1981
- Hauschka, Margarethe - Terapia Artistica vol III - Contribuicoes para uma atuacao terapeutica Editora Antroposofica, 1987
- Hauschka, Margarethe Dra. - Terapia Artistica vol II Natureza e Tarefa da Pintura terapeutica. Editora Antroposofica , 1987
- Heide, Paul von der Terapia Artistica vol I Introducao aos Fundamentos da Pintura Terapeutica. Editora Antroposofica 1987
- Jurvelius, Nelly. Taide Parantaa. Jyväskylän yliopiston.
- Lukas, Elisabeth, Meaning in suffering, Institute of Logotherapy press, Berkley, California, 1986
- Rodrigues, Roberto, Fundamentos da Logoterapia I + II , Editora Vozes, Brasil, 1995
- Stark & McGovern The Hidden Dimension of Illness, Human Suffering National league for nursing press, New York
- Steiner, Rudolf Aciencia Oculta. Editora antroposofica 1987
- Steiner, Rudolf e Ita Wegman Elementos Fundamentais para uma ampliacao da arte de curar. Associacao Beneficiente Tobias, Sao Paulo 1987
- Takashima, Hiroshi, Humanistic Psychosomatic Medicine, Institute of Logotherapy press, Berkley, California 1984