

What Others Are Saying About Art Therapy: Healing with the HeART

“As an art therapist for over 50 years, my belief in its healing power has actually deepened over time. In a world where trauma is ubiquitous and trust is often fragile, art therapy offers a powerful way to help those who suffer to express in images what cannot be said in words. I am grateful to Mrs. Pence for recognizing the uniquely restorative potential of the discipline to which I have devoted my professional life. If its availability were expanded, many more people in pain could be helped by competent art therapists, who grasp both the vulnerability and the resiliency of the human spirit.” **–Dr. Judy Rubin, PhD, ATR-BC**

“Art therapy is a regulated mental health profession that enables people to express themselves through the creative process, especially when words fail them,” said Donna Betts, President of the American Art Therapy Association. “As the Second Lady’s initiative shines a spotlight on art therapy, the American Art Therapy Association serves as the nation’s leading resource for expanding access to art therapy services. It is my personal conviction that the Second Lady Mrs. Karen Pence’s initiative is a gift to all Americans and will enrich the profession so that more people can be helped, and more lives can be improved by the power of art therapy.” **–Donna Betts, PhD, ATR-BC, President of the American Art Therapy Association & Associate Professor of Art Therapy, George Washington University**

“Having worked as an art psychotherapist for over 40 years, I’ve seen a wide range of clients—from institutionalized adults to incarcerated youth to school-aged children and their families—benefit tremendously from art therapy. Mrs. Pence’s initiative will certainly help promote the efficacy of art therapy among these and many other diverse populations. I hope that it will also inspire those interested in the creative arts and psychology, particularly young people and people from diverse backgrounds, to enter the profession.” **–Dr. Cheryl Doby-Copeland, PhD, ATR-BC, LPC, LMFT, Art Therapist**

"I have seen first-hand the healing power of Art Therapy. It is integral to the holistic, patient centered care provided to service members and Veterans who receive care at the National Intrepid Center of Excellence and across the Creative Forces Network. As Art Therapists work side by side with other clinicians, they are healing our Nation’s Heroes. Demand is high for the compassionate, professional care that Art Therapists provide. That makes this an exciting time for anyone who has the skill, interest, and dedication that it takes to pursue a career in Art Therapy." **–Dr. Sara Kass, Retired Navy Captain, Creative Forces: NEA and DOD/Va Healing Arts Network**

"Art helps Veterans to 'flip the switch' that allows them to utilize their innate creative talents in order to acclimate and eventually thrive on the home front." —**Rusty Noesner, Art Therapy Participant**

"After 23 years and 7 deployments with 3 to combat zones in both Iraq and Afghanistan as a bomb technician, I was left with several mental health issues requiring therapy on top of cognitive impairments due to blast exposure (severe PTSD, depression, and TBI). Over the span of 5 years, I was treated with every known accepted approach, ranging from psychotherapy and medication, to biofeedback and Prolonged Exposure Therapy. After marginal results in previous therapies, I was referred to a Complimentary and Alternative treatment program that focused on Art Therapy. I can say without reservation that Art Therapy saved my mental health, my marriage, and ultimately my life. I was on the verge of giving up on ever getting better I found Art Therapy. I continue to use art therapy to this day." —**Chris Stowe, United States Marine Corps Master Gunnery Sergeant (retired) 1993-2015**

"Art therapy has been shown to be effective in the treatment of trauma, especially for our injured service men and women. At the National Intrepid Center of Excellence, Walter Reed, art therapy is an integrative treatment for traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress. The process of putting psychological pain into physical form is powerful, and allows the service members to safely work through the pain with the guidance of an art therapist." —**Melissa Walker, MA, ATR, Healing Arts Program Coordinator/Art Therapist, NICoE, WRNMMC**

"Art therapy can help people of almost any age and ability. Senior citizens, service members, children with emotional or physical challenges, people trying to rebuild after natural disasters or episodes of violence all use art therapy to relieve stress, express feelings, and build hope and resiliency to meet life's challenges." —**Tracy Councill, Program Director for Tracy's Kids**