



How Art Heals Us

By Anna Reyner, MA

Art is a language that gives voice to how we feel inside.

How does art magically help us heal our pain and reconnect to each other? How does art help us to get in touch with our true selves, our authentic feelings - even the feelings we may hide from the world and from ourselves?



As we experience the world we face pains and disappointments. Especially if we come from a home with violence and abuse, painful feelings are often debilitating and devastating. Whether our traumas are mild or severe, we may try to “suppress” our hurts and fears so we can move on with our lives. In some cases we have become so successful at ignoring or stifling our feelings that we may have no idea how we actually feel. We have lost touch with our authentic self and may either be trying to feel nothing at all, or be living in a state of anxiety and confusion about our conflicting feelings. In other cases, we may actually be in touch with our feelings but not know how to articulate them or put them into words. Or we may even be afraid if we talk about them that we will become overwhelmed and feel vulnerable or unsafe.

Art is a safe way to express our feelings; it helps us express ourselves slowly and at our own pace. Art goes beyond words and tells our story for us. It helps us delve into our true selves and express our pains and heartaches that language does not have the ability or power to convey.

Feelings that stem from trauma, violence, or abuse are often overwhelming and words alone rarely capture or convey their true intensity. Pictures tell us far more than words can ever express. Tapping into our artistic selves and creative mind can help provide a whole world of self-discovery.

Art is the best healing tool possible when we are feeling emotions that are too painful, too deep, too hidden to access—much less to express.

Sometimes we have mastered defending ourselves from our pains and we tuck them away even from ourselves. In an attempt to get clear of or avoid feeling pain, we lock ourselves away from all our feelings, both good and bad. Art is the bridge that allows us to reconnect to those feelings.

Why art? By participating in art we suspend our everyday logical thinking and place ourselves in a relationship with lines, colors and the flow of active discovery.

We disconnect from our left-brain “logical” selves when we engage in art activities. Art provides the medium through which we stop thinking and start a more direct form of expression; the language of sensations, emotions and pre-verbal memories. Many of our early memories are stored in the right hemisphere of our brain, the non-linear artistic side. When we immerse ourselves in right brain activities like art, those early sensory memories are activated. By stimulating those memories, we are better able to bring them to consciousness and express them. Art has the power to penetrate the subconscious layers of our mind and enables us to “make conscious that which was unconscious.”

Art is also a way to actively meditate; to be present and experience the here and now. Through collaborative art experiences, we connect with others and experience the healing potential of creativity and community.

For More Information on CreativePlayLA Workshops, contact Anna Reyner
C: (310) 497-2303 E: art@annareyner.com www.CreativePlayLA.com

