



Fact Sheet on the Creative Arts Therapies

The National Coalition of Creative Arts Therapies Associations was founded in 1979. It is an alliance of professional associations dedicated to the advancement of the arts as therapeutic modalities. NCCATA represents six membership organizations with over 15,000 members nationwide.

The creative arts therapies include [art therapy](#), [dance/movement therapy](#), [drama therapy](#), [music therapy](#), [poetry therapy](#), and [psychodrama](#). These therapies use arts modalities and creative processes during intentional intervention in therapeutic, rehabilitative, medical, community, and educational settings. Examples of treatment goals include fostering health, improving communication and self-expression; promoting the integration of physical, emotional, cognitive, and social functioning; enhancing self-awareness; and facilitating change.

Each member association has established professional training standards including an approval and monitoring process, a code of ethics and standards of clinical practice. Each Creative Arts Therapy discipline has its own set of requisite qualifications. Creative Arts Therapists are highly skilled, credentialed professionals having completed extensive coursework and clinical training.

Annual conferences, journals, and newsletters for each association provide opportunities for professional development, as well as educate the public and allied professionals about each discipline. Although unique and distinct from one another, the creative arts therapies share related processes and goals. Participation in the creative arts therapies provides people with ways to express themselves that may not be possible through more traditional therapies.

Work Settings for Creative Arts Therapists

Adult Day Treatment Centers
 Community Mental Health Centers
 Skilled Nursing Homes
 Correctional and Forensic Facilities
 Community Group Homes
 Substance Abuse Programs
 Veterans Administration Facilities
 Early Intervention Programs
 Disaster Relief Centers

Rehabilitation Facilities
 Private and Public Schools
 General Hospitals
 Outpatient Clinics
 Psychiatric Units/Hospitals
 Neonatal Intensive Care Units
 Home Health Agencies
 Wellness Centers
 Hospice Programs

The Creative Arts Therapies Make a Difference for People With...

Autism

Creative Arts Therapists encourage self-expression, communication, socialization, and enhance learning through the arts.

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Creative Arts Therapists provide non-verbal arts interventions by stimulating access to areas of the brain that bypass the limitations of language and expedite healing.

Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia

Creative Arts Therapists select arts experiences to elicit short and long term memory, decrease agitation, and enhance reality orientation.

Chronic Illness

Creative Arts Therapists plan arts experiences to facilitate coping with medical conditions and improve treatment responses to optimize mental and physical health.

Substance Abuse

Creative Arts Therapists use arts-based techniques to break down barriers and provide tools that aid in the process of recovery.

Physical Disabilities

Creative Arts Therapists incorporate aspects of the arts into treatment to foster motivation and support rehabilitation goals.

Art Therapy

The American Art Therapy Association is a non-profit association established in 1969 to develop and support educational, professional, and ethical standards for the profession. Art therapy is an established mental health discipline that uses the creative process of art making to improve and enhance physical, mental and emotional well-being. It is based on the belief that the creative process involved in artistic self-expression helps people to resolve conflicts and problems, develop interpersonal skills, manage behavior, reduce stress, increase self-awareness, and achieve insight. Art therapy is an effective method of communication, assessment, and treatment with people of all ages in a wide variety of settings. Art therapists hold Masters Degrees and complete supervised clinical experiences during their program of study and after graduation. In 2007 Art Therapy was named as one of the top 10 emerging professions in the United States by careerbuilder.com.

Dance/Movement Therapy

The American Dance Therapy Association: Maintaining high standards of professional education and competence in the field of dance/movement therapy since 1966. Dance/movement therapy is the psychotherapeutic use of movement to address emotional, cognitive, physical, and social integration of the individual. Practiced with individuals of all ages, dance/movement therapy is found in mental health, rehabilitation, medical, educational, and forensic settings, and in nursing homes, disease prevention, and health promotion programs. The dance/movement therapist uses movement behavior as it emerges in the therapeutic relationship; all movement - expressive, communicative, and adaptive - conveys individuals' experience of self that is used in group and individual treatment. Body movement as the core component of dance provides the means of assessment and the mode of intervention. Professional training of dance/movement therapists occurs on the graduate level. Most professional dance/movement therapists hold state licenses, and National Certified Counselor (NCC) status; many hold doctoral degrees. ADTA advocates nationally and internationally for the development of dance/movement therapy education and services, and

ADTA is affiliated with organizations including The National Board for Certified Counselors, Inc. (NBCC); National Association of Pupil Services Organizations (NAPSO); and Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD).

Drama Therapy

The National Association for Drama Therapy: NADT was incorporated in 1979 to establish and uphold high standards of professional competence and ethics among drama therapists; to develop criteria for training and registration; to sponsor publications and conferences; and to promote the profession of drama therapy through information and advocacy. Drama therapy is the systematic and intentional use of drama/theatre processes and products to achieve the therapeutic goals of symptom relief, emotional and physical integration, and personal growth. Drama therapy is an active, experiential approach that facilitates the client's ability to tell his/her story, solve problems, set goals, express feelings appropriately, achieve catharsis, extend the depth and breadth of inner experience, improve interpersonal skills and relationships, and strengthen the ability to perform personal life roles while increasing flexibility between roles. Drama therapists are trained in theatre arts, psychology, psychotherapy and drama therapy. Areas of study include improvisation, puppetry, role-playing, mask work, pantomime, theatrical production, psychodrama, developmental psychology, theories of personality, and group process. All students of drama therapy must complete supervised clinical internships with a broad range of populations.

Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama

The American Society for Group Psychotherapy and Psychodrama was founded in April, 1942 by Dr. J. L. Moreno. In 1947 Dr. Moreno started the journal, Group Psychotherapy, which later became The Journal of Group Psychotherapy, Psychodrama and Sociometry, the first journal devoted to group psychotherapy in all its forms. ASGPP was the pioneer membership organization in group psychotherapy and continues to be a source of inspiration for ongoing developments in group psychotherapy, psychodrama and sociometry. Psychodrama is the use of guided dramatic action to address various situations in human development. Widely recognized as a powerful theory and methodology within psychology, Psychodrama gained notoriety as used in group psychotherapy. It is equally as effective used in individual psychotherapy and marriage/ family therapy. Sociometry is the study of inter-relations in groups, families, systems. Psychodrama and Sociometry are not limited to dealing with pathologies but have earned distinction within educational, organizational and business circles. Certification as a Certified Practitioner, CP, or as a Trainer, Educator, Practitioner, T.E.P., are granted under the auspices of the American Board of Examiners in Psychodrama, Sociometry and Group Psychotherapy.

Music Therapy

The American Music Therapy Association, founded in 1950, defines music therapy as the clinical and evidence-based use of music interventions to accomplish individualized goals within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program. Music therapists structure the use of both instrumental and vocal music strategies to facilitate changes that are non-musical in nature. Music therapists assess emotional well-being, physical health, social functioning, communication abilities, and cognitive skills through musical responses. They design music sessions for individuals and groups based on client needs using a variety of techniques and approaches. Music therapists may improvise or compose music with clients, accompany and conduct group music experiences, provide instrument instruction, direct music and movement activities, or structure music listening opportunities. They participate in interdisciplinary treatment planning, ongoing evaluation, and follow up. Music therapy facilitates numerous clinical outcomes in areas such as: rehabilitation; habilitation; social, emotional and cognitive functioning; and learning. Research regarding the effectiveness of music therapy is extensive and includes evidence-based systematic reviews on numerous important topics.

Poetry Therapy

The National Association for Poetry Therapy: NAPT was founded in 1971 and is an international community comprised of writers, teachers and therapists dedicated to “promoting growth and healing through language, symbol, and story.” The term “poetry therapy” is used inclusively to refer not only to the use of published and original writing but also to the interactive use of literature (bibliotherapy) and therapeutic writing (journal therapy). Guided by a trained facilitator, participants in biblio/poetry therapy sessions respond emotionally to the literature’s evocation. The process of writing or responding to the selected or created literature creates a significant catalyst for healing and self-integration. Professional training and certification of B/PT facilitators is governed by the National Federation of Biblio/Poetry Therapy which bestows three designations of practice. Biblio/Poetry Therapy has been utilized developmentally in schools, colleges, and universities, as well as clinically with various groups. Among its participants have been survivors of the Columbine shootings, those affected by 9/11 and Hurricane Katrina, persons in recovery, those facing health issues, veterans, and many other individuals and groups who benefit from the intentional, guided use of language and literature to promote growth and healing.

Member Associations

American Art Therapy Association (AATA)
5999 Stevenson Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22304
T: 1-888-290-0878
info@arttherapy.org
www.arttherapy.org

American Dance Therapy Association (ADTA)
10632 Little Patuxent Parkway, Suite 108
Columbia, MD 21044
T: 410-997-4040
F: 410-997-4048
info@adta.org
www.adta.org

American Music Therapy Association (AMTA)
8455 Colesville Road, Suite 1000
Silver Spring, MD 20910
T: 301-589-3300
F: 301-589-5175
info@musictherapy.org
www.musictherapy.org

American Society of Group Psychotherapy & Psychodrama (ASGPP)
301 N. Harrison Street, Suite 508
Princeton, NJ 08540
T: 609-452-1339
F: 609-936-1659
asgpp@ASGPP.org
www.asgpp.org

National Association for Drama Therapy (NADT)
15 Post Side Lane
Pittsford, NY 14534
T: 585-381-5618
F: 585-383-1474
www.nadt.org

National Association for Poetry Therapy (NAPT)
777 E. Atlantic Ave., #243
Delray Beach, FL 33483
Toll-free 866-844-NAPT
T: 561-498-8334
F: 561-495-1877
www.poetrytherapy.org