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Colour perception: A phenomenological study into people's spontaneous physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual reactions, through experiential use, to colour

Nicolette Smith
Edith Cowan University

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Colour Perception:

A phenomenological study into people's spontaneous physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual reactions, through experiential use, to colour.

By Nicolette Smith.

A thesis to be submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of Master of Art Therapy.

School of Visual Art.
Art Therapy Department
Edith Cowan University
Perth, Western Australia.

Date of submission: May 1999.

1. ABSTRACT

The predominance of colour as a therapy is becoming more apparent in our culture at present. It is a well-known fact, which has been thoroughly documented, that colour affects our senses in many ways and on many levels. Colour is considered to possess a healing element.

A phenomenological study will be conducted to investigate people's spontaneous physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual reactions to colour. This will be explored through the experiential use of colour by the participants. The use of a pre-test questionnaire, post-test questionnaires, observation and de-briefing will be the main research instruments. A pilot study will be used to fine tune the methodology. Its application to Art Therapy will also be explored.

DECLARATION.

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate, without acknowledgement, any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signed:

Date: 17-2-2000

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3. INTRODUCTION

This research project aims to study the phenomena of people's spontaneous reactions to colour. Their physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual reactions will be explored through the experiential use of eight colours. The theoretical basis to this study is drawn from ideas gleaned from colour psychology, colour theory and Art Therapy. A phenomenological methodology will provide the research design. As Bogdan and Taylor state:

The phenomenologist is concerned with understanding human behaviour from the actors' own frame of reference...The phenomenologist examines how the world is experienced. For him or her the important reality is what people imagine it to be. (Bogdan, R and Taylor, S. 1975. p. 2).

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The central objectives of this research project are to:

1. Explore previous studies in relation to colour and people's physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual reactions to it.
2. Explore Art Therapy literature to determine how colour is currently viewed and utilised as a therapeutic tool.
3. Undertake a phenomenological study to determine people's spontaneous physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual response to colour, through their experiential use of the colours of the spectrum (ie. red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) and black and white.
4. To decipher, from the data collected, those areas of congruence and divergence from past theory.
5. Use the data collected and analysed to discuss how colour can be utilised further in Art Therapy and applied to specific client populations.

II.) STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Studies have been conducted and vast amounts of research have been undertaken into the various aspects of colour and its uses. Much has been written within the fields of colour theory, colour therapy, chromotherapy, colour psychology and so on.

Many of the studies about people's perception of colour have utilised research methods which are not of a phenomenological nature. The exceptions here are Katz, Goethe and Purkinje, who were pioneers in the experimental phenomenology of perception. Even in the field of Art Therapy, many of the studies undertaken utilised empirical research methods and psychological tests as indicators. This is also evident in studies into the emotional reactions, cultural associations, and psychological and mood associations to colour.

It is the intention of this study to consider the phenomena through experiential use of colour and use the data collection to analyse the results. The different approach here to previous investigations will be monitored and the nuances and differences charted. As Betensky and Nucho express:

Phenomenology addresses itself to the object as it appears to us and it is experienced in our consciousness. Looking at the object and visually perceiving it becomes an act of dynamic character because the way of looking at an object is also a way of unconsciously experiencing it
(Betensky, M and Nucho, A. 1979. p. 137).

iii.) RATIONALE

Art Therapy is a healing and therapeutic process which can assist clients in a variety of settings. Colour is an essential part of both the art process and the healing process within Art Therapy. To be able to utilise colour as a therapeutic tool, as well as possibly a diagnostic one, would provide the therapist with another dimension to the healing process. As the Art Therapist Bernard Levy explains in "Research into the Psychological Meaning of Colour":

While obviously important in the assessment of personality from a subject's way of dealing with colour... it is less generally recognised that an understanding of the relationship of colour and emotion is essential in the practice of Art Therapy. The art therapist must react to the art in a helpful way, a way that takes account of the art's communication. How the client uses colour is a central feature of this communication (Levy, B. 1984. p. 58).

Colour is present in all artwork and therefore can be applied in any setting with any client group. If it can be shown that the physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual associations and perceptions of colour exist and influence the individual on a conscious and subconscious level, then perhaps colour can be used more readily as a therapeutic tool in Art Therapy.

The significance of this study will be to add to research material concerning colour and our associations, perceptions and reactions to it. Some of the questions the research will address are :

1. What are people's physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual responses to colour?
2. Does our culture and religion influence our perceptions?
3. How does colour affect our clients and what do our clients tell us about themselves through their colour use?
4. What can painting with one colour elicit for the client in therapy?
5. How can colour be utilised for specific client groups?

4. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Colour has interested humankind since the earliest times. There are therefore many theories, ideas and systems of colour which have been established over time, the sheer extent of which cannot be covered in the body of this research paper. Under the heading of "Colour Therapy" the esoteric and scientific traditions associated with colour will be discussed. The Literature Review will then focus on the theories of Goethe, Steiner and Kandinsky and these will be discussed under the heading of "Colour Theory". In the section titled "Colour Psychology", the theories of Kreidler and Kreidler, Whitfield and Wiltshire and Birren, to name a few, will be presented. Colour as it is viewed in art therapy and research undertaken by art therapists will also be explored. This will be discussed under the heading "Art Therapy".

i) COLOUR THERAPY

Many of the old esoteric traditions utilised colour for healing and incorporated it into the folk psychology of the time. Pauline Wills, a colour practitioner, discusses how colour is used by various esoteric traditions in her book "Working With Colour: A Beginners Guide". She shows for example; how the native American Medicine Wheel attributes colour to specific directions and how the eastern aryuvedic tradition assigns colour to the chakra centres within the body. She states that Colour Therapy as it is known today was developed from these esoteric traditions. As Wills suggests:

As far as we know, colour has existed since the beginning of time. It has been utilised by both the plant kingdom and the animal kingdom. It has been used to express fear, danger, joy, death, birth, puberty. It has been used to appease the gods and as a form of protection (Wills, P. 1997. p. 3).

Susanne Fincher is an Art Therapist and in her book "Creating Mandalas for Insight, Healing, and Self-Expression" she also presents the esoteric traditions and their relationship to colour. As she states:

The practical experience of artists and craftsmen is handed down to us in traditional systems of colour such as the colour wheel. Peoples who lived close to nature incorporated the natural colours they saw around them into systems of philosophy, morality, and conduct (Fincher, S.1991. p.74).

Isaac Newton built his modern physics theory upon sunlight and colour, hence commencing much scientific exploration and theories of colour. Johann Goethe also contributed to the theory of colour and his theory will be presented in the next section. Today these scientific modes have established colour in the fields of psychology, architecture, the arts, chromotherapy, interior design , philosophy and so on.

ii.) COLOUR THEORY

When considering the vast amount of information about colour theories I drew upon Goethe, Steiner and Kandinsky. Goethe was a phenomenologist and scientist who believed and purported that one should experience colour morally and spiritually. He developed his theory from the nature and quality of colour as it emerged from the dualities of lightness and darkness, as he suggests that, the presence of all the colours exists between absolute darkness (black) and white light (white). Goethe in the book "Goethe's Theory of Colours" states:

... to observe that light and darkness, brightness and obscurity, or if a more general expression is preferred, light and its absence, are necessary to the production of colour. With these three or six colours, which may be conveniently included in a circle, the elementary doctrine of colours is alone concerned (Goethe, J. 1975. p vi -vii).

His theory of colour also considers how colour occurs in nature, as he states:

... colour is an elementary phenomenon in nature adapted to the sense of vision; a phenomenon which , like all others, exhibits itself by separation and contrast, by co-mixture and union, by augmentation and neutralisation, by communication and dissolution (Goethe, J. 1975. p iv).

Based on Goethe's theory, I will be utilising the seven colours of the spectrum as well as black and white, in the experiential component of this research project. Goethe also recognised the effect that colour has on the individual. He describes this as follows:

Since colour occupies so important a place in the senses of elementary phenomena, filling as it does the limited circle assigned to it with fullest variety, we shall not be surprised to find that its effects are at all times decided and significant, and that they are immediately associated with the emotions of the mind (Goethe, J. 1975. p304).

Rudolf Steiner, a scientist and researcher of spiritual and religious teachings, studied colour for many years and was invited to edit Goethe's scientific work on colour. He utilised Goethe's theory in his work in colour and developed painting exercises where the student used and explored colour by painting with one colour at a time. Immersion in the physical, emotional, and spiritual experience of each colour, by the student, brought about healing and balance. Hilde Boos-Hamburger, in her book "The Creative Power of Colour", quotes Steiner as follows: " We must again make it possible not merely to look at colours and to apply them outwardly, but to live with the colour, to share its inner vitality" (Steiner. 1963. p.9). Steiner felt very strongly about the need to experience colour fully in order to gain an insight into colour and how it effects us. His impulse was to create a new art of colour by means of a primary experience of it. As he states in his book on colour:

Let us try to sink ourselves completely into what we receive through colour from the rich and varied world around us. We must feel what is in colour if we wish to penetrate into its true nature, bringing insight into our feeling (Steiner, R. 1982. p.16).

He also states:

And we must be able to have colour *experience*, or we cannot grasp what the world of colour is at all. The imagination is a fine and beautiful instrument but we must experiment with it if we want to discover this for ourselves (Steiner, R. 1982. p.18).

Steiner also observed the different colour qualities in the mineral, plant, human and animal kingdoms and how they relate to our experience of colour.

The experiential tasks which the respondents will be undertaking as part of this research project have been designed upon Steiner and Goethe's notion that to appreciate colour one must experience it fully. As Goethe, in his theory of colour, explains:

Experience teaches us that the individual colours induce particular moods. In order to experience fully these important individual effects the eye should be entirely surrounded by one colour... We are then identified with the colour; it induces both eye and mind to be in unison with it
(Boos-Hamburger, H. 1963. p. 5).

Wassily Kandinsky, in his book 'Concerning the Spiritual in Art ,' also discusses the effects that colour has on us, particularly the physical and psychological. He proposes that we do not just have a physical reaction to colour. Rather, if the soul is open, a whole chain of psychological reactions will occur to give one a holistic experience of colour. As he so eloquently expresses:

Generally speaking, colour directly influences the soul. Colour is the keyboard, the eyes are the hammers, the soul is the piano with many strings. The artist is the hand that plays, touching one key or another purposively to cause vibrations in the soul (Kandinsky, W. 1947. p. 45).

Kandinsky established that we have both physical and psychological reactions to colour. He also considers the importance of colour and form, and their inter-relatedness. He suggests that form can stand alone, but colour cannot. Colour is reliant on form for its expression. He states:

It is evident that certain colours can be emphasised or dulled in value by certain forms. Generally speaking, sharp colours are well suited to sharp forms (Eg. yellow in the triangle) and soft colours by round forms(Eg blue in the circle). Since the number of colours and forms is infinite, their combinations also are infinite, and simultaneously, their effect. This material is inexhaustible
(Kandinsky,W. 1947. p.47).

The relationship of colour and form will be discussed further in the Art Therapy section of this Literature Review.

All of the above theorists have developed a theory of colour which can be considered universalistically orientated. They each have studied and developed a theory which discusses the specific nature and quality of individual colours. These theorists' descriptions of the colours, their natures', and how they react with each other is clearly presented as a generality which applies to all.

Despite this quality of their theories they all discuss colour in relation to it being a primary experience, an individualistic experience, and I strongly draw from their theoretical framework, in this thesis. In my conclusions about my findings I will discuss any similarities and / or differences discovered between the above mentioned theorists and their notions of the nature of the particular colours and my own findings from the data collected.

iii.) COLOUR PSYCHOLOGY

Since the introduction of scientific research into colour and its effects, there was also much research undertaken into the psychological effects of colour. The psychologists Hans and Shulamith Kreidler, in their book "Psychology of the Arts," consider the meaning of colour and its relationship with the emotions and how this influences the personality. As they state:

Colours exert a strong experiential impact on human beings. Since at least in popular psychology, primitive or primitivised states of mind and emotionality are interrelated, indeed sometimes even identified, colour seems to be regarded as a factor appealing to the deeper nonrational layers of personality (Kreidler, H & Kreidler, S. 1972. p.55).

The Rorschach Test and the Luscher Test are classic examples of the desire to understand people's response to colour and how it influences the personality. As Whitefield and Wiltshire state:

The question of whether systematic differences exist between individuals has been of interest to personality psychologists and has led to the construction of colour tests for diagnostic purposes, such as those by Rorschach (Rorschach, 1942.), Pfister (Schaie & Heiss, 1964) and Luscher (Scott, 1971) (Whitefield, T and Wiltshire, T. 1990. p. 390).

Faber Birren, in his book 'Colour Psychology and Colour Therapy,' presents some of the research undertaken by psychologists and psychiatrists. He states however, that: "Research on the psychological aspects of colour is difficult for the mere reason that human emotions are none too stable and the psychic make-up of human beings varies from person to person" (Birren. 1961. p. 142). It can also be noted that many of these studies involved using coloured lights, coloured rooms, coloured cards and psychological tests to determine people's responses (Saito, M. 1996. pp 115-128; Hemphill, M. 1996. pp. 275-280). It seems essential that research be undertaken whereby the participants' use the colour experientially in order to invoke a range of reactions and responses. This is where an Art Therapy approach to people's experience of colour may differ.

iv). ART THERAPY

In Art Therapy colour plays an important role in the therapeutic process. This is due to the fact that colour is an essential component of any type of artwork. The clients' artwork is the basis upon which therapy is built. The art communicates the clients' feelings and emotions and is the primary ingredient in the Art Therapy process. Colour then is another source of information for the therapist because colour relates to the clients' emotions and view of themselves.

Whatever the style or technique adopted in art, it can be therapeutic. Through the creative media of colour we are able to express on paper our thoughts, feelings and spiritual aspirations. These can be of positive or negative nature (Wills, P. 1997. p. 70).

The Art Therapist, Mala Betensky, in her book "What Do You see? Phenomenology of Therapeutic Art Expression" deals specifically with the symbolic expression of colour in the Art Therapy context and utilises Kandinsky's theories. As Betensky states:

From everyday life we know that colour can arouse, disturb, fascinate, mystify, and soothe; that colour conveys and symbolises emotions and feeling-toned thoughts; that colour has the power to bring back mind experiences long forgotten and to reconstruct vanished scenarios in the way that aromas and sounds sometimes do (Betensky, M. 1995. p.68.)

Betensky also discusses the importance of colour and form in the Art Therapy process. She describes how colour is an important component in the art making process, as it functions to allow the clients' expression of their inner experience. She states:

Some clients feel colour intuitively and deeply. They have a conscious need for specific colours to suit or to soothe specific emotional moods. When they are elated or burdened with complex emotional experiences colour will be their chief vehicle of expression, sometimes with no form at all. Their colour expression eventually does assume form, but the inner experience and its changes determine that. Once colour assumes form, the role of form becomes clear: it then defines colour, contains within boundaries, and bestows upon it an articulate, vital meaning (Betensky, M. 1995. p.p 74-75.)

This research will be drawing upon the participants use of colour, as well as the form, as a means of gathering data. The relationship between the colours and forms will also be considered.

There have been a few studies in Art Therapy into colour and its associations. Crane considered the association between colours and emotional situations in "An Experiment Dealing With Colour and Emotion." (Crane. 1980. p. 358). In "Personal and General Colour Constructs: a Study of Colour Associated with the Stages of Life" (Robbins, D.; Lusebrink, V.; Englehorn, P. 1980. pp. 98-100), the authors considered how people's colour constructs came from personal experience and cultural influences. Levy used a Profile of Moods States Test to measure people's response to eight colours. He found that colour and emotion are related, and that reactions to specific colours is a complex process. In his study there was no correlation between colour preference and the respondents reactions to the colours. The sex of the respondent and the ordering of the colours did not impact on the results. This is outlined in "Research into the Psychological Meaning of Colour." (Levy. 1984. pp. 58-61).

In "Cultural Influence on Emotional Response To Colour: A Research Study Comparing Hispanics and Non-Hispanics" (Gardano, A. 1986. pp. 119-124), Gardano used the same methodology as Levy but compared Hispanics to Non-Hispanics. She found that irrespective of sex and language or culture, the respondents all reacted similarly to the colours. She felt that a persons cultural background affected their association to the colours only minimally. Like Levy, Gardano found that colours elicited strong emotional reactions within the participants and these varied in intensity and depended upon the individuals mood state at the time. In "Colour of Disaster: the Psychology of the Black Sun"(Gregorian,V and McDonald, L. 1996. pp. 1-13), the authors take a different approach by undertaking research into a phenomena, as they perceived it, before and after an event happened. They looked at the artwork of children before and after an earthquake and noticed colour changes in their artwork. They followed the colour changes through the Art Therapy process. A workshop which used the Myer-Briggs Type Indicator to determine the primary and auxiliary modes of functioning and colour representation, as presented by Jolande Jacobi (1943), was conducted by Rhinehart and Engelhorn and is outlined in "Colour Exploration" (Rhinehart,L and Engelhorn,P. 1980. p. 45).

Whilst these studies all demonstrated that colour does elicit emotional, physical, psychological and spiritual associations they pose the need for further research. Again, these studies also mainly used a limited number of colours, colour on cards and psychological tests and indicators. There was no experiential use of the colour or the artwork used to determine what reactions occur, except for Gregorian and McDonald's study. However, as Levy suggests:

Those of us who are accustomed to interpreting a client's use of colour in assessing personality can continue to do so with renewed conviction that colour and emotion are related and that the relationship is probably lawful or at least systematic (Levy, B. 1984. p. 61).

I propose then that if one can determine, through the experiential use of colour, that a physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual response to colour occurs, then colour could be used more readily as a therapeutic tool in Art Therapy. This thesis aims to examine firstly, the phenomena of people's spontaneous psychological, emotional, physical and spiritual reactions to colour from an experiential basis and secondly, how this then can be utilised in Art Therapy.

5. METHODOLOGY

This research is a phenomenological study of people's spontaneous physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual reaction, through experiential use, to colour. The phenomenological approach is described by MacLeod, in the Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences as: "Our first phenomenological task is to observe, describe and analyse the structures, properties, dimensions and interrelations of phenomena as they are naively apprehended" (Vol.12. 1968. p.70). A phenomenological methodology has been utilised to investigate the research questions. Part of this methodology used an experiential approach to discover the participants' perceptions as a means of analysing the phenomena under investigation. Spiegelberg asserts:

On all levels the phenomenological approach is opposed to explanatory hypotheses; it confines itself to the direct evidence of intuitive seeing. A more positive character of the phenomenological approach is that it constitutes a determined attempt to enrich the world of our experience by bringing out hitherto neglected aspects of this experience (Spiegelberg, H. 1982. p.717).

Previous studies and research have relied primarily on psychological tests as a basis to their research. Since the use of colour in Art Therapy is through experiential modes, it seemed imperative that this research was undertaken on a phenomenological basis, with appropriately devised tests, in order to be more precise about people's reaction and perception of colour. This also enabled links to be made to Art Therapy and how colour can be further utilised.

This section of the thesis will consist of the following areas:

i) Sample, ii) Data Collection, iii) Session Outline, iv) Materials, v) Pilot Study, vi) Data Analysis, vii) Conclusions, viii) Reliability and Validity, ix) Ethical Considerations, and x) Limitations Of Study.

i). SAMPLE

The sample used for this study consisted of women in the age bracket of 30-40 years old. The reason for this was to eliminate the sex and age variables from the study. There was no restriction on the cultural or religious backgrounds of the participants as these were variables which had been considered within the study. The study utilised four participants. I advertised on the Fremantle Library/Town Council notice board, other shop windows and community notice boards in the Fremantle area.

ii). DATA COLLECTION

The data was collected in the following way. First a pretest questionnaire (Appendix I) was given to the participants prior to the first session. This questionnaire aimed to monitor the participants' responses and associations to the colours used in the study. The areas of focus were cultural, religious and the arts (poetry, literature, fairy tales, myth, music and artwork). This took into account the cultural and religious variables of the study.

Data was then obtained from the post-test (Appendix II). This questionnaire was given to the participants directly after their experiential use of each colour. Their instant responses to each colour were recorded, specifically their emotional, physical, psychological and spiritual reaction.

Observation of the participant and their artwork was also used to collect data. I observed their physical stance and expression whilst using each colour, as well as how they used the paint and what images were produced.

Finally, there was a de-briefing with the participant after each session. This was important because of the potential for sub-conscious material to arise. The participant was supported and had the opportunity to work through any arising issues prior to leaving. This discussion allowed the participant to discuss their artwork and anything which the post-test questionnaire did not account for, thus eliciting further data.

iii) SESSION OUTLINE

Each participant undertook three, three-hourly sessions. Within each session the participant was shown a colour and then asked to paint their first association to that colour. They then painted solely with each colour and, when complete, answered the post-test questionnaire. The order of the colours was as follows; red, blue, yellow, green, orange, purple, white and black.

RATIONALE: The above colours were chosen because they are represented in the spectrum and colour wheel. As Fincher suggests: "The colour wheel and spectrum give us useful systems for understanding colour..... Black and white have traditionally symbolised the opposites of darkness and light " (Fincher. 1991. p 82).

When ordering the colours used, a cool colour was alternated with a warm colour. Past studies have found that these elicit different responses. Cool colours are sedative and warm are active. There is no practical reason for this order. Levy found that the order had no influence on the study.

The paint and hues of colours used was poster paint in the spectrum colours. The reason for this is best described by Crane :

Since the study was not concerned primarily with the physical properties of colour, but with the phenomenology of colour, it seemed best to use those which are generally accepted as red, yellow, etc, instead of trying to equalise brightness and saturation... the investigators selected poster paints in spectrum colours because they are easily applied and give a clear flat and even surface (Crane, R. 1980. p. 359).

iv) MATERIALS

The materials used for the experiential sessions included the following:

- an appropriate space for painting which was comfortable and private
- an artist's easel for participants
- cartridge paper, brushes and water
- poster paint in the eight colours which were used
- post-test questionnaires for each of the eight colours

v). PILOT STUDY

A pilot study was undertaken prior to the undertaking of the thesis study. It required the use of four participants who were given the pretest questionnaire. They undertook only one session, as a group, exploring only four of the colours. The post-test questionnaire was given after each colour was used, as mentioned above.

The aim of this study was to test the logistics of the session structure and use of art materials. It also was used to ensure that the questionnaires were clear and relevant to the study. Determining the need and impact of giving the pretest questionnaire, exploring whether it set up any biases and its suitability as a warm-up to the sessions, was also considered. Finally it gave some indication as to how to analyse the data collected.

vi). DATA ANALYSIS

For each participant and each session undertaken by the participant, the data was collected and analysed. Journal notes were taken throughout the session and specifically after the de-briefing. These were used as additional data for analysis. Each participant's journey through each session, from one session to the next, was followed. The information from the questionnaires and the de-briefing was then categorised, allowing thematic connections to be made both within and between the sessions.

A detailed description of the data and its emergent themes has been made as a way of interpreting the meaning of the phenomena. This data is available in the Appendix VI of the thesis. In this section of the thesis, a sample of the Data Analysis will be given utilising just one colour, the colour red. This is due to the fact that the Data Analysis section is too vast to be covered in detail in this section. The data for the colours, blue, green, yellow, orange, purple, black and white, can be found in Appendix VI. The conclusions drawn from the Data Analysis will also be discussed within this section.

For the purpose of this section and the ease of the reader, the data analysis will be presented under the following headings: 1. Pretest: 2. Response Elicited; i) Memories, ii) Physical, iii) Psychological, iv) Emotional, and v) Spiritual; and 3. Other. Each participant will be analysed in relation to the above responses to the colour red. As the Pretest information is exhaustive, the responses taken into consideration will be: the general associations; associations to nature; and associations to the seasons. The colours that the participant likes, dislikes, presently wears and has within their home environment will also be considered. The sections pertaining to fairytales, television and other cultural mediums were too broad and the writer was unable to consider this information due to the expansive nature of it. A discussion of the images that the participant painted with the colour over the three sessions, will also be presented. This will highlight the participants' coverage of the page, use of the colour, symbols depicted, and the meaning of the image. There will then be a discussion of the common elements of the images as viewed by the writer, highlighting similar and/or different symbols, images and themes. At the end of the presentation of all of the above, conclusions from the observations of the participants' work will be drawn and any links to the Pretest noted.

Participant A

Participant A came from an English/German background and had no fixed religion. She was an artist by profession and had the following reactions to the colour red.

1. Pretest

Her pretest associations were of fame, blood, power, strength, sex, and passion. Red was one of her favourite colours and was a colour which she had in her decor at home. She associated red with toadstools (danger) and lightening when considering the colour in regards to nature and associated it with the season of autumn.

2. Response Elicited**i) Memories**

Red elicited memories of fire and spaceships.

ii) Physical

She described her body as feeling alive, moving, and energetic. She also experienced her heart beating faster, a tight chest, shaky legs, and more acuteness in her hearing.

iii) Psychological

The psychological associations that she had during the three painting sessions were power, sense of own power, red-blooded, heart, blood, emotion, body fluid, flowing, loose, bold, positive, freedom, danger, worry, warning, bright, and the duality of fixed and loose.

iv) Emotional

The emotional response elicited was one of being nervous, anxious, speedy, and excited.

v) Spiritual

Red did not elicit a spiritual response.

3. Other.

There were no other responses or associations.

Images

For all of the following images there was a strong use of the colour and the image covered the whole page.

Session One

The symbols painted were a square, ladders, poles, grids, a mat, and fences. The image portrayed structure, balance, organisation, and containment.

Session Two

The symbols painted were a square, flag, lines, fences, and a ladder. The image was contained on the right side and more open on the left side.

Session Three

The symbols painted were squares, an L-shape, ladders, fences, roads, and stitches. The image was contained on the right side and more open on the left side. It portrayed movement and journey.

Common Elements

There was a similar feel to all three images and common symbols throughout. There was a sense of containing herself, a journey, and looking for an out, hence the ladders. Two of the images were contained on the right and more open on the left. The images portrayed a sense of moving out of containment into a more freer expression of the self.

Conclusions

In both the Pretest and the Post-test, Participant A's responses were of a similar and positive nature. This may be indicative of the fact that she had a positive response to red in her life at present, rating it as being one of her favourite colours. Red seemed to physically and emotionally energise her.

Participant B

Participant B was an Australian and had a Catholic religious background but did not aspire to any religion now. She was a Reflexologist by profession and her associations to the colour red were as follows.

1) Pretest

In the pretest she associated red with power, energy, and fire. Red was not considered a favourite colour but was part of the home decor. Her associations of red in nature were flowers such as the Stuart Desert Pea, poppies and roses, and sunset at "The Bluff". Red was associated with the season autumn.

2) Response

Red invoked memories of a painting workshop she had previously undertaken, past experiences in life and relationships, blood spilt, periods, red moon, and rune symbols which represented her name.

ii) Physical

In the first session, in her body, she had a sensation of her face being controlled and her jaws closed tight but her heart felt open and alive. In subsequent sessions she physically experienced an increase in her heart rate, quickness in her breath and a strong stance in her legs and feet.

iii) Psychological

Psychologically, in the first session she associated her personal power as being kept tamed and controlled; and then stronger, definite, and less vulnerable to other people's energies and outside influences. In subsequent sessions, her psychological associations were of a red moon, fire in the belly, menstruation, femininity, intuition, strong feminine energy, being connected to the earth, being grounded, earthy and stable.

iv) Emotional

In the first session she emotionally felt assertive, power, control, strong, stable, closed, anger, frightened, abandoned, and the fear behind the anger. In the subsequent sessions she emotionally felt free, wild, energetic, expressive, uninhibited, energised, grounded, passion, anger, alive, strong, justified, invigorated, and powerful.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she had a sense of coming into her personal power, feeling grounded, and described feeling like she was rooted to the earth.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses.

Images

The following images all contained a strong use of the colour and the image covered the whole of the page.

Session One

This was an image of a woman with a red dot on her third eye. The image was contained and there was a sense of anger, wildness and strength about her.

Session Two

This image was the same woman represented in the first image only this time she was more of a tree/woman. There was also a baby form of this woman at her feet. This image also portrayed the essence of strength, wildness and power, but was more open and moving than the first image.

Session Three

This image was different to the first two. The symbols used were a circle, dots, directions, branches, fire, and a hill or a slope.

Common Elements

The women in Images One and Two were very similar and there was a strong nature element to Images Two and Three. All three images were strong and had a sense of power.

Conclusions

The associations that Participant B had in her Pretest were very much reflected in the Post-test and were, in essence, the theme to the images and the process. There was a definite sense of exploring issues of power, especially her own sense of power as a woman.

Participant C

Participant C was Dutch and had a Roman Catholic religious upbringing but did not aspire to any religion now. Due to a physical illness and time restraints, this participant only completed two out of the three sessions. She was a textile artist by profession and these were her responses to the colour red.

1) Pretest

Her pretest association with red was of debit or a bank balance in the red. Red was not considered a favourite colour and was not part of the home decor. She associated red in nature with the wildflowers and the season of spring.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

Red reminded her of how red is used in carpets in central Asia, with the border patterns expressing life and continuity.

ii) Physical

In her body she felt a stirring in her stomach and solar plexus.

iii) Psychological

Her associations after the painting were of: life, strength, life force, positive energy, continuity of life and the strength of it, menstruation, birth, life, continuity, raw, colour of exposure, moving on, shedding, bleeding, travelling, movement in life, change, movement, making in roads, the power of love, passion, healing, love always there, and beginning a new journey.

iv) Emotional

She described feeling strength, movement, moving on, direction, strong, happy, forceful, emotional in the sense of feeling more; feeling like something had shifted; movement, feeling alive, and a feeling of accomplishment.

v) Spiritual

Red did not elicit any spiritual associations for her.

3) Other

There were no other responses or associations.

Images

The images varied in terms of the coverage of the page and the use of the paint. The image in session one dominated the top right hand corner of the page and there was a strong use of the colour. The image in session two covered the whole page and there was also a strong use of the colour.

Session One

The symbols portrayed were: a circle, tears, wavy lines, and a pattern which was similar to the top of a castle wall.

Session Two

The symbols depicted in this image were: a wavy line, a heart, and a road.

Common Elements

In both images there was not a lot depicted and the only common symbol is the wavy lines. The second image is more balanced in its placement on the page.

Conclusions

In session one her memory of the borders on rugs seemed to be reflected in her image with the pattern. She also associated continuity with red and this could be symbolised by the circle in the image. In the second session there was a sense of a bleeding uterus in the image. In the Post-test she associated red with bleeding and menstruation. She also associated red with travelling and this was also depicted in the image by the representation of a road.

Participant D

Participant D came from a Polish / English ethnic background and a Church of England religious background. She aspired to no religion now. Participant D had a Bipolar disorder for which she was on medication and seeking professional help. She was an artist by profession and these were her associations.

1) Pretest

Participant D did not have any Pretest associations in the general area. Red was classed as a favourite colour and featured in her home decor. In nature she associated red with the earth, the setting sun, and roses. The season she associated it with was summer. She also described needing to have around her, at times, her mother's knitted rug, which is mostly red.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

Red induced memories of: her family, chaos, journeys through her work, self-help through reading, and a red shirt recently acquired.

ii) Physical

Physically she experienced heat at the back of her neck, slight light headedness, and a heat energy in her chest and head.

iii) Psychological

Psychologically her associations were of: sexual energy brought out by sexual abuse; penis; sexual organs; intense energy; throwing oneself into oneself; visiting a time previous but now in a stronger position; energy; earthiness; individuation and self-actualisation; ready for next step; and "it is alright to take a leap into the sea of unconsciousness".

iv) Emotional

Emotionally she felt: like she was gaining control of that which had been previously out of control; bringing forward things which had been explored but not fully accepted; like she had flooded her awareness of being; excitement; anticipation; and energy under control .

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she associated red with: being connected, an inner journey, the beginning of awareness, the Fool in the Tarot, and that her spiritual self has had to endure many tests with more to come.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses.

Images

The following images all covered the page and had a good use of the colour. Her brush strokes were fine rather than solid.

Session One

The symbols depicted were: a circle; a mountain with swirling energy around it, like a cone of energy; a person leaping from the mountain; a horizon line; the ocean; and a figure with a child in arms. The participant described the image as representing the sexual energy brought about by past sexual abuse. The leaping figure she saw as being like the Fool in the Tarot. "It is OK to leap into the sea of the unconscious." The figure holding the child was about safety and the circle is the setting sun. There was a strong phallic element to this image and a floaty feel like taking a leap into the unknown.

Session Two

The symbols portrayed were: a spiral or maze, erratic lines in arcs, the ocean, a woman with no arms or legs, her hair covering her face and breasts exposed, and an eye. Participant D described the eye as being, "All that is watching us. Something bigger than ourselves." The woman with her back to the sea, was a connection to last weeks image. She described feeling like jumping off the mountain into the ocean again. The maze depicted she described as representing the tests her spiritual self has had to come through. The image overall seemed to be portraying a woman who is being swept about by this erratic energy.

Session Three

The symbols used in this image were: a rabbit, a bird swooping, a tree, five rocks all on top of one another like a totem pole, and a telephone hand piece shape. The participant stated that the rabbit was a connection to earth and a communicator. The telephone hand piece shape was a conductor of the earth: something to connect to the energy of the earth. The whole image she described as being: a symbol of earthiness; "the earthiness you need before you can take off like a bird"; individuation; and self-actualisation. The image certainly did have a solid and earthy feel to it.

Common Elements

The first two images were both related to the ocean and taking leaps in to the unknown whereas the last image was more earthed. The third image also had a stronger and more solid use of the colour compared to the others. There were not any common symbols other than circles.

Conclusions

Participant D depicted some of her Pretest associations, such as the earth and the sun. The nurturing figure may have related to her mother and the five rocks on top of each other could have related to her family. The first image was an indication of her sense of coming to participate in the study. She had expressed concerns about the process and how she would handle it, considering her disorder. It literally was a leap into the unknown for her. The second image with the woman with no arms or legs represented a sense of her disconnection from her body. This might be a result of the medication and the effects of the disorder.

vii). CONCLUSION

Finally, I intend to discuss the overall themes and commonalities which emerged from all of the participants' work. I refer you again, to Appendix VI, which contains further analysis of my experiential research from which I deduce the themes and commonalities. I will present these themes which emerged and I will be drawing upon Michael Hemphill's study, "A Note on Adults' Colour-Emotion Associations", as there are some similarities yet also some differences in both of our findings. Kandinsky, Goethe, Steiner, Betensky, Fincher and Kreidler and Kreidler will also be drawn upon, as they make some interesting conclusions about some of the colours and their meanings.

THE COLOURS

Red

Red had the theme of power, energy, strength and menstruation. All the participants had a sense of their own power when using red. They all associated it with bleeding and menstruation. All of the participants had a positive experience when using red, even Participant D, who had also associated red with sexual abuse. The participants in Hemphill's (1996) study described the colour red as a strong positive colour. In their studies, Kretler and Kretler found the following:

Red turns up in all studies as a most meaning-laden colour. Subjects are most unanimous in regarding it as most exciting and stimulating, a powerful, strong, vigorous, masterful, energetic, and impulsive colour (Kretler and Kretler. 1972. p67-68).

Kandinsky also associates the quality of strength to the colour red. He states;

The unbounded warmth of red, rings inwardly with a determined and powerful intensity. Light warm red gives a feeling of strength, vigour, determination, triumph (Kandinsky, W. 1947. p. 61) .

Blue

Blue triggered associations with fluidity, water, calmness, air. Spirals and wavy lines and the ocean were common. Blue was a spiritual and emotional colour for the participants. This is perhaps due to the strong connection to the water and the air or sky. As Hemphill's study also indicates;

The reason blue elicited the highest number of positive responses and was most often seen as the favourite colour seems to be because many participants associated blue with the ocean or the sky. Both were seen to be limitless, calm, or serene (Hemphill, M. 1996. p. 279).

Kretler and Kretler describe blue as;

... a tender, soothing, cool and passive, secure and comfortable colour which inspires calm, confidence and harmony, a sense of control and responsibility, but may also be slow and mildly depressing. Blue was always regarded all over the world as the colour of the spirit, of the upper world, of sublimity and mysticism, and of most heavenly gods (Kretler and Kretler. 1972. p.68).

Kandinsky also describes this mystical quality by stating; " Blue is the typical heavenly colour, the ultimate feeling it creates is one of rest" (Kandinsky. 1947. p.58).

Betensky also describes the spiritual quality associated with blue. She states; "Blue is considered spiritual, profound, and heavenly, but also resistant, vague and hiding depending on the blue" (Betensky. 1995. p. 70.)

Yellow.

Yellow was related to unhealthiness, pus and body fluids. Generally the participants' experience of the colour was of a less than positive nature. Hemphill however found that his participants responded to yellow positively and states that they associated it with the sun. The participants for this thesis also had associations with the sun and sunflowers but overall the feeling and body sensations were different.

Both Kreitler and Kreitler and Goethe describe the other aspect to yellow which relates to a more negative association. This association to the colour is what was true to the participants' experience, than the bright sunny qualities of yellow. Kreitler and Kreitler describe two aspects of yellow. They state: "Yellow is conceived as a cheerful, jovial and joyful colour. It may be dazzling and outgoing, but it is sometimes felt to be shallow, treacherous, dominating and even destructive" (Kreitler and Kreitler. 1972. p.69). Goethe describes yellow as;

This colour in its pure and bright state is agreeable and gladdening, and in its utmost power is serene and noble, it is, on the other hand, extremely liable to contamination, and produces a very disagreeable effect if sullied, or in some degree tends to the minus side (Goethe. 1975. p.308).

Green

Green had strong nature themes and was generally about growth and self-growth. Green elicited some strong responses and this may be due to it tapping into the participants' emotions and connections to nature and the environment. Some of the participants were dealing with issues around their own growth and this may also have contributed to the strong response. Hemphill also found that green was associated with the environment, forests, trees and nature.

Steiner specifically talks about our association of green with nature. He states; "There is no other sphere in which we experience a colour so intimately bound up with the inner nature of an object as green is with the plant. Green represents the lifeless images of the living" (Steiner. 1970. p. 19-20). Kreidler and Kreidler describe green as: "...expressing youthfulness, hope, nature, but also poison and danger" (Kreidler and Kreidler. 1972. p.69). Betensky describes green as: "Green is refreshing, restful, lively, though somewhat tiresome" (Betensky. 1995. p.71.)

Orange

Orange brought about associations of exploring boundaries and rebelling, of women in relationship with each other, and issues around femininity and sexuality. The common thread for all the participants was to do with womanhood and their sense of self. It would be interesting to see what orange elicits for men. Hemphill did not specifically deal with orange but Fincher describes people's use of orange in mandalas as follows:

Orange in your mandalas may suggest energetic striving, a strong sense of identity, and a healthy assertiveness. On the other hand, orange may also symbolise a wilful use of power, a hostile attitude to authority, or no self-discipline (Fincher, S. 1991. p. 60).

Kandinsky describes orange as: "Orange is like a man convinced of his own powers" (Kandinsky. 1947. p.63). This description so eloquently sums up the participants' experience of orange.

Purple

Purple was related to religion, royalty, relationships, family and abuse, particularly sexual. In Hemphill's study purple elicited a large percentage of non-emotional responses. Purple in this study elicited some quite strong emotional responses. Using the colour experientially provoked a strong emotional response and the issues that the women portrayed were of a potent nature.

Kreitler and Kreitler describe purple as: "Sedate and dignified, but carries an aura of deceit, misery and adversity" (Kreitler and Kreitler.1972. p.69). These qualities were certainly portrayed by the participants. The other writers did not deal with purple, focusing more on lilac and indigo in their studies.

Black

Black was initially associated with negativity and the darkness. Nearly all the participants expressed that they had an expectation that they should not enjoy using the colour, yet after using it, they expressed that they did enjoy the colour. Participant D associated black with her depression so did not experience this. Black was also a powerful colour for Participant B as it allowed her to consider shadow aspects of her self. In other studies black generally elicits a negative response and is associated with death, darkness, depression, and anxiety, as all of the following writers express. Kreitler and Kreitler describe black as; "implies death, night, anxiety, defeat and depression" (Kreitler and Kreitler. 1972. p.69). Betensky states: "Black the ultimate silence. Black is symbolic of grief and mourning, night, depressive moods, and a sense of the profound". (Betensky. 1995. p.70.)

Kandinsky states;

Black is silence with no possibilities. Black is something burnt out, like the ashes of a funeral pyre, something motionless like a corpse, the silence of black is the silence of death (Kandinsky,W. 1947. p.60).

White

White had a strong association to marriage and patriarchy, to purity, peace, and joy. White, as the last colour, elicited a response of calmness and lightness to end the session. In Hemphill's study, white elicited a high number of non-emotional responses whereas, in this study, there were strong emotional reactions, especially Participant D who had a strong reaction to white due to past personal experiences.

This shows that one cannot presume that every person is going to react the same way to a particular colour.

All the following writers associate white to purity and joy. Kreidler and Kreidler describe white as; "Innocence, purity and freedom" (Kreidler and Kreidler. 1972. p.69). Betensky states; "White, the silence before beginnings. White symbolises purity, holiness, religious joy and in some cultures mourning" (Betensky. 1995. p.70). Kandinsky describes it as follows:

White is a symbol of a world from which all colours, as material attributes, have disappeared. White acts upon our psyche as a great absolute silence. White has the appeal of the nothingness that is before birth of the world in the ice age. White is taken to symbolise joy and spotless purity
(Kandinsky, W. 1947. p.60).

All the colour associations were either culturally based, nature based or memory based. The colours evoked strong memories, both recent and past, showing that colour is linked to our experiences throughout life, like music, and smells. As Gardano (1986) quotes in her study:

Shaie(1966) contends that responses to colour are largely learned and that environmental factors are invariably involved in the attribution of emotional significance (Gardano, A . 1986. p 119).

All the participants described their mood as changing whilst using the colour. Their reaction to the colour also changed over the three sessions. The colours that they stated they disliked in their Pretest questionnaires changed to more of a tolerance of the colour after the three sessions. Colours which were rated as favourite elicited good experiences, always positive. However, the colours rated as non-favourites elicited strong experiences which were both positive and negative. This would perhaps indicate previous negative experiences associated with the colour, thus provoking a dislike.

As Kreitler and Kreitler suggest;

Associations are obvious and common reactions to colours. They may involve images and memories of people, objects, situations, occurrences, even wishes and daydreams, in which the perceived colour has been involved. Such emotional reactions can doubtless often be traced back to events in the spectator's past life with which the colour is associated (Kreitler and Kreitler. 1972. p.56).

Therefore it can be said that using the colours experientially elicits a range of emotions and mood changes and impacts on our bodily senses. These changes will not be the same for each individual person and not the same from one week to the next. As Gardano explains:

The intensity of reaction probably is determined by a combination of universal factors (physiological and cultural) and individual considerations (personality, emotional state, cognitive and interactional influences) (Gardano, A. 1986. p. 122).

All of the participants rated blue as a favourite colour which they wore and had present in their decor. Hemphill (1996) also found that the majority of his participants rated blue as a favourite colour and a colour they wore. He stated the reason for this as:

This finding may be an indication of the reduction of the so-called gender gap and is probably largely attributable to the prevalence of blue denim jeans. (Hemphill, M. 1996. p. 279).

However, Fincher states:

Research has shown that the brain electrical response to blue is one of relaxation (Birren 1988). Could this be the reason most people like blue? (Fincher, S. 1991 p. 49).

The participants also expressed that there were times when they needed a particular colour to wear or have around them. They stated that this was a way of energising and/or calming themselves. Particular colours protect, relax, comfort and imbue a certain mood, as well as lifting the spirits.

viii). RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

The reliability and validity of the study is dependent on the participants' willingness to undertake what is required and their willingness to communicate their experience and perceptions to the researcher. DePoy and Gitlin state:

We placed phenomenologic research low on the naturalistic continuum because of the researcher's dependence on those investigated and their willingness and ability to express and reveal their experiences into the structure of the inquiry and the interpretation of the data (DePoy,E and Gitlin,N. 1994. p.139).

The participants were all willing to undertake what was required and were able to clearly communicate their experience. One of the participants however was unable to undertake the third session.

A problem with this type of study is ensuring that the researcher's analysis and interpretation represent the participants' reality appropriately. The use of the pilot study maintained data collection methods which allowed for this. The debriefing which occurred at the end of each session gave the participants the opportunity to express what they had experienced and this then clarified the experience for them and for the researcher.

Due to the fact that a phenomenological study is essentially a study of peoples' private experience and is dealing with their perceptions as they are in the present, it may be difficult to transfer this, literally, outside of the research study. However, the pilot study ensured that the data collection methods enabled the researcher to produce findings which are context-relevant both within and outside the study.

Through accurate and faithful recording throughout all phases of the study, I was able to provide the basis for both further research and possible replication of the study. This was achieved through the use of the pre and post test questionnaires, the debriefing after each session and following the same session format each and every time. This involved presenting the colours in the same order for every session.

The environment did not change throughout the process, except for the temperature of the room and the light conditions. These factors were uncontrollable and may impact on the study as it may have influenced the participants' perception of the colour and therefore their reactions to the colour.

The researcher's ability to remain objective when dealing with the data collected and making analysis from this was crucial. With this type of study, personal interpretations and reactions could easily interfere with the clarity of the participants' experience. In order therefore, to distance my own personal beliefs and values, a journal was used as a means of monitoring subjective reactions. This assisted in maintaining objectivity throughout the research process. The debriefing process allowed the participants the opportunity to express their experience and ruled out any biases or subjective impressions that I may have developed throughout the sessions.

ix). ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Potential participants were given written information with details of the nature and purpose of the study before consent was obtained (Appendix III). A written consent form (Appendix IV) was signed by those women who subsequently agreed to participate in the study. Participation was voluntary, and informants had the right to withdraw from the research process at any time. Participants were assured that the researcher would employ every possible effort to ensure confidentiality. No names have been used in the writing of the report. A copy of the completed research report will be made available to the participants. All of the above criteria were met and approved by the relevant Ethical committee.

x). LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

The sample size and type of participants used were limitations of this study. Using women only and women in a particular age group restricted the study to that area of the population and restricted the way in which any conclusions could be drawn in relation to the general population. The study also attracted mainly artists, despite the researcher advertising to the general public. This is another limitation of the study. The researcher did not screen the participants for psychiatric illness and this could be seen as another limitation due to there being another variable in such a small sample.

6. CONCLUSION

Finally, I present an overall summation of the thesis and its findings. The conclusions as to what peoples' physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual reactions to the colours have been presented, in detail, in the Data Analysis section. I will consider four points in this section. First, the colours more generally, in relation to the theoretical perspectives presented. Second, how the structure of the sessions influenced the participants' process and the information gleaned from their body language. Third, what painting with one colour at a time elicited for the participants. Finally, the implications for Art Therapy and specific client groups will also be considered.

The Colours

The theorists Steiner, Betensky and Kandinsky all discuss the qualities of colour in relation to form and how the colour behaves to create a form. This is essentially how the participants worked and experienced the colour. They all started with a blank page and a colour, and the form came from the colour. As Steiner expresses;

Paint out of the experience of colour as the musician out of the experience of sound. The colour provokes the form... We take colour as our starting point and we do not stray from it
(Boos-Hamburger, H.1963. p.29).

Each of the colours will be discussed in relation to these theorists and this notion of colour and form.

Red

Steiner describes the quality of red in relation to form as follows;

Red affects me through its stillness. It does not want to radiate nor to become piled up and encrusted, but to remain a still redness. It does not want to evaporate: it asserts itself
(Steiner, R.1970. p.33-34).

Steiner also states: "Should limits be set to red it is not at all possible to round it off into a circular surface" (Boos-Hamburger. 1963. p.7). Betensky states that "... the intensely warm red is powerful, though the power is contained within itself. Red does not spread" (Betensky. 1995. p.70).

The participants' images were certainly powerful and strong. Participant A's use of red fits into Steiner's description, but the other participants' work had circular forms. The participants' images also had a contained quality as Betensky described.

Blue

Steiner describes the quality of blue as "shines inwards." As he states;

It demands to be at its fullest at the edges and to be at its least intense towards the inside. Blue dams itself up at the edges, flowing together into a wave which dams up around the lighter blue
(Steiner, R. 1970. p.32).

He also describes blue as ... "the lustre of the soul, it lends itself to forms and creates forms" (Boos-Hamburger. 1963. p.6). The participants' images all possessed this quality of being darker at the edges and lighter in the middle.

Yellow

Steiner describes yellow as "shines outwards". "Yellow will not allow itself to be laid on with boundaries, but wants to radiate from a concentrated centre" (Boos-Hamburger. 1963. p.5). Betensky describes it similarly, noting that it ... "tends to burst out of itself, to spread, and to reach out" (Betensky. 1995. p.70.). Kandinsky also portrays a similar picture, describing yellow as;

Yellow is the typical earthly colour. It never acquires much depth. If we were to compare it with human states of mind, it might be said to represent not the depressive but the manic aspect of madness. The madman attacks people and disperses his force in all directions until it is completely gone
(Kandinsky, W. 1947. p.58).

The participants' images using yellow had a sense of radiating outwards and bursting out of themselves.

Green

Steiner, Kandinsky and Goethe all describe green as a passive colour. Steiner states; "We feel it to be one of the colours to which it is most difficult to give form. A stationary colour" (Boos-Hamburger. 1963. p.7). Goethe describes green as: "The eye experiences a distinctly grateful impression from this colour. The beholder has neither the wish nor the power to imagine a state beyond it" (Goethe. 1975. p.316).

Kandinsky asserts the following;

Absolute green is the most restful colour, lacking any undertone of joy, grief, or passion. It represents the passive principle. In the hierarchy of colours green represents the social middle class, self-satisfied, immovable, narrow (Kandinsky, W. 1947. p.59).

However, the participants in this study did not find the colour green to be passive and did not find it difficult to give form to it.

Orange

Goethe describes red-yellow (orange) as follows: "Red-yellow gives an impression of warmth and gladness, since it represents the hue of the intenser glow of fire and of the milder radiance of the setting sun" (Goethe. 1975.p.309). Betensky asserts that: "Orange can be warm and outgoing, almost approaching the viewer " (Betensky. 1995. p.71). Some of the participants' work appeared outgoing, but some of the images were also contained.

Purple

Purple was not a colour which has been discussed by these theorists. It is not an element of their theories or colour systems. Lilac and indigo were the closest colours considered.

Black

Steiner describes black as follows: " A boundary colour. It appears to be coming from the outside. Darkness must not be felt as mere absence of light but in Goethe sense as a force, which was born at the same time as light as its polarity" (Boos-Hamburger. 1963. p.30). Despite the many references to black being associated to death, depression and so on, black also has a positive side. Steiner states: " If you were to use black on a white surface you introduce spirit into it; the effect of a black stroke, of an area of black, is to spiritualise the white. You can bring spirit into the white" (Steiner. 1970. p.25). This could explain the positive response that the participants had when using the black. They painted with black on white paper and all expressed a positive response to the colour. They were, in essence, getting in touch with the spirit of the black.

White

White is often associated with light and this is how Steiner sees it . He states;

In light, which we have said is represented by white, we find what really fills us with spirit, connects us with our own spirit. There is a definite connection between the "I", our spiritual being and this experience of light 'shining through us' (Steiner, R. 1970. p.24).

This was evident with the participants in this study. The white, as the last colour, was described as calming and peaceful. No matter what arose in the session, the participants were calmed by the white (with exception to Participant D). Perhaps this experience of connecting to our spirit through white is what occurred.

This leads me on to Steiner's discussion of our soul connection to colour, where he asserts that "Colour can only be studied properly by taking into account the realm of the soul" (Steiner. 1970. p.57). He debunks many of the theoretical notions of how colour affects us. He goes on to say: "The whole notion of there being an objective element in colour which has an effect upon the subjective element is thus nonsense; for the 'I' and the astral body are within the colour anyway and enter with the colour" (Steiner. 1970. p.57).

Steiner is stating that one must have a relationship with the colour and that to know it, one must experience it and explore it. This study by taking an experiential approach, also aimed to do this; each participant's expression of the colour and experience of the colour was different, personal and relevant only to themselves, supporting Steiner's notion of a soul connection.

The Sessions

All the participants progressed over the three sessions, with sessions two and three being deeper in content than session one. There were big shifts in sessions two and three. The debriefing allowed the participants the opportunity to make sense of the images and gain some insight into their own process. This was a very important aspect of the session. For some of the participants there were themes or issues which were present in every session and which grew and developed from one session to the next. Having the three sessions allowed the participants to process these issues. The pretest associations were generally different to the post-test associations which indicates that using the colour experientially elicits varied reactions which changed from week to week.

The participants' body language expressed much about their comfort level. This was most evident in their position of the left arm. It seemed that when the colours evoked a strong reaction the left arm would bend or go behind the participants' back or be placed in a pocket. When there was no strong reaction the left arm was by their side. Participant C would hold the paint pot in her left hand, but she would play with the paint or swirl the brush when uncomfortable with the colour. For art therapists, body language can give many clues about their clients and what is occurring on an emotional level. All the participants had a strong sense of symbols in their artwork. The participants who were artists used mainly symbols whereas the reflexologist was more pictorial. This may be because artists work, or are more familiar, with a symbolic form of expressing themselves.

Implications for Art Therapy

As art therapists, one would need to be aware of what a particular colour can elicit for our clients, and what memories can be triggered. Favourite colours can provide something protective and nurturing while non-favourite colours can perhaps push our clients into self-growth and awareness or create something which is non beneficial and damaging.

Overall we need to be aware that every person's response to the colours is individual and that it is dangerous to prescribe general meanings to the colours and expect that to be true for everyone. At the same time, we need to recognise that common responses do occur.

We can use colour to our benefit particularly when we want to stimulate and elicit memories, especially in client groups where memory loss is indicated, for example Alzheimer's disease and head injuries. Colour-response analysis could also help people who are disassociated from their bodies and feelings: people who have been abused, who have a psychiatric disorder, who are autistic or children who need educational support. Usually colour will stimulate their senses and the process of engaging with colour gives them the tools to start being more in tune with what is going on within. This was particularly relevant for participant D.

The painting process allowed serious issues to emerge, one of these being sexual abuse. Three out of the four participants had been sexually abused. This was a surprisingly high number considering that the participants' were all from a general sample but could indicate a high ratio of incest and sexual abuse in our society. However, at present, incest is openly discussed and not such a taboo, compared to past generations, so it may not be more prevalent. As Art Therapists we need to be aware of the fact that many people in our society have experienced incest and sexual abuse and that the art therapy process may trigger memories of this.

In this study it was the colours which triggered memories of the abuse.

There was no processing of this information specifically, during the study, but one of the participants was referred on for therapy in regard to the abuse issues which arose. For this participant the colour purple provoked memories of the abuse. The Art Therapist, Joan Kellogg, in her work with colour in Mandalas discusses sexual abuse in relation to the colour purple. She states:

Purple also calls to mind the incest occurring in many royal families. More than once in history we recall the Queen Mother and her son ruling together. Sometimes it has been brother and sister, but in this case too there is usually an incestuous element (Kellogg, J. 1977. p.123).

The process of spontaneously painting with the colours allowed the participants to access unconscious material and bring it forth into consciousness. This allowed for self growth, transformation and healing to take place. As Howard and Dorothy Sun state about Jung:

Jung believed in the symbolic power of colour and encouraged his patients to use colour spontaneously in paintings, to help them express the deepest unconscious part of their psyche and integrate it with the conscious to achieve wholeness (Sun, D and H. 1992. p. 48).

By painting with the one colour at a time, all the senses were stimulated, the participants' mood changed, they accessed memories and past experiences, they processed issues which were affecting them in the present and gained insight into their lives in general. Issues to do with their relationships with partners, friends and relatives were also processed.

The range of positive and negative responses documented in this research, and analysed in this conclusion, confirm that the use of colour is a powerful tool in Art Therapy. This study is also an example of how colour can be used in a focused way for therapeutic healing. This study displayed how we perceive and respond to colour in an individualistic manner, despite there being more general reactions to some of the colours.

Also demonstrated, was how colour can elicit memories and past experiences, which would benefit specific client populations. Colour when used experientially is also a valuable tool in self-transformation and growth for the individual. It is clearly evident that there are abundant possibilities of utilising colour within the Art Therapy context. Within the intentions of this thesis, the parameters for colour use have been reached. Those who wish to explore other techniques, which utilise colour, might begin with the following references; "Windows To Our Children" by Violet Oaklander and "What Do You See? Phenomenology of Therapeutic Art Expression" by Mala Betensky. It is therefore evident that, by providing a greater understanding of how people react to colour, physically, psychologically, emotionally and spiritually, this study, further advances colour utilisation within the Art Therapy context.

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8. APPENDICES**Appendix I****PERCEPTIONS OF COLOUR: PRETEST****NAME:****ETHNIC BACKGROUND:****RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND:****RELIGION NOW:**

1. What are your favourite colours?
2. What are your least favourite colours?
3. What colours do you wear the most at present?
4. What colours do you have in your house currently?
5. Are there times when you feel the need to have a particular colour to wear or have around you?

What does this do for you?

6. Do you associate the colour red with any of the following (if yes, please specify):

- Culture/ Countries:
- Cultural practice:
- Festivals:
- Religion:
- Religious practice:
- Spiritual practice:

7. What do you associate the colour red with in nature?

8. What season do you associate the colour red with?

9. What associations does the colour red have for you in the following areas?

Please state them:

- Fairy tales:
- Fables:
- Myths / Legends:
- Music:
- Poetry:
- Literature:
- Art works:

- Television programs:

10. What other associations does the colour red have for you?

11. Do you associate the colour orange with any of the following (if yes, please specify):

- Culture/ Countries:
- Cultural practice:
- Festivals:
- Religion:
- Religious practice:
- Spiritual practice:

12. What do you associate the colour orange with in nature?

13. What season do you associate the colour orange with?

14. What associations does the colour orange have for you in the following areas?

Please state them:

- Fairy tales:
- Fables:
- Myths / Legends:
- Music:
- Poetry:

- Literature:
- Art works:
- Television programs:

15. What other associations does the colour orange have for you?

16. Do you associate the colour yellow with any of the following (if yes, please specify):

- Culture/ Countries:
- Cultural practice:
- Festivals:
- Religion:
- Religious practice:
- Spiritual practice:

17. What do you associate the colour yellow with in nature?

18. What season do you associate the colour yellow with?

19. What associations does the colour yellow have for you in the following areas?

Please state them:

- Fairy tales:
- Fables:
- Myths / Legends:

- Music:
- Poetry:
- Literature:
- Art works:
- Television programs:

20. What other associations does the colour yellow have for you?

21. Do you associate the colour green with any of the following (if yes, please specify):

- Culture/ Countries:
- Cultural practice:
- Festivals:
- Religion:
- Religious practice:
- Spiritual practice:

22. What do you associate the colour green with in nature?

23. What season do you associate the colour green with?

24. What associations does the colour green have for you in the following areas?

Please state them:

- Fairy tales:

- Fables:
- Myths / Legends:
- Music:
- Poetry:
- Literature:
- Art works:
- Television programs:

25. What other associations does the colour green have for you?

26 Do you associate the colour blue with any of the following (if yes,please specify):

- Culture/ Countries:
- Cultural practice:
- Festivals:
- Religion:
- Religious practice:
- Spiritual practice:

27. What do you associate the colour blue with in nature?

28. What season do you associate the colour blue with?

29. What associations does the colour blue have for you in the following areas?

Please state them:

- Fairy tales:
- Fables:
- Myths / Legends:
- Music:
- Poetry:
- Literature:
- Art works:
- Television programs:

30. What other associations does the colour blue have for you?

31. Do you associate the colour purple with any of the following (if yes, please specify):

- Culture/ Countries:
- Cultural practice:
- Festivals:
- Religion:
- Religious practice:
- Spiritual practice:

32. What do you associate the colour purple with in nature?

33. What season do you associate the colour purple with?

34. What associations does the colour purple have for you in the following areas?

Please state them:

- Fairy tales:
- Fables:
- Myths / Legends:
- Music:
- Poetry:
- Literature:
- Art works:
- Television programs:

35. What other associations does the colour purple have for you?

36. Do you associate the colour black with any of the following (if yes, please specify):

- Culture/ Countries:
- Cultural practice:
- Festivals:
- Religion:

- Religious practice:

- Spiritual practice:

37. What do you associate the colour black with in nature?

38. What season do you associate the colour black with?

39. What associations does the colour black have for you in the following areas?

Please state them:

- Fairy tales:

- Fables:

- Myths / Legends:

- Music:

- Poetry:

- Literature:

- Art works:

- Television programs:

40. What other associations does the colour black have for you?

41. Do you associate the colour white with any of the following (if yes, please specify):

- Culture/ Countries:

- Cultural practice:

- Festivals:
- Religion:
- Religious practice:
- Spiritual practice:

42. What do you associate the colour white with in nature?

43. What season do you associate the colour white with?

44. What associations does the colour white have for you in the following areas?

Please state them:

- Fairy tales:
- Fables:
- Myths / Legends:
- Music:
- Poetry:
- Literature:
- Art works:
- Television programs:

45. What other associations does the colour white have for you?

Appendix II**PERCEPTIONS OF COLOUR: POST TEST**

1. What was your immediate response to this colour when you used it today?
2. Were there any emotions aroused whilst using this colour? If yes, please state them.
3. How did this make you feel?
4. Did you experience any physical sensations when using the colour?
Describe these sensations.
5. Where in your body did this response occur?
6. Did your mood change whilst using this colour?
Describe very accurately your response.
7. Did this colour provoke any memories for you? If so, what were they?
8. What were you thinking about whilst using this colour?
9. What other associations did you have?
10. Did this colour elicit a spiritual connection or experience? If so, please explain
11. Are you wearing this colour today?

Appendix III

Form of Disclosure and Informed Consent

Art Therapy Research Project : Colour Perception

This research project is a thesis to be conducted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Art Therapy at Edith Cowan University.

Purpose: This project will involve a study of people's spontaneous physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual response , through experiential use, to colour.

Procedures: The procedures to be followed in the conduct of the project will involve individual participation for three, three hourly sessions. A Pretest questionnaire will be given prior to the first session and there will be Post-test questionnaires given during the course of each session. Participants will be de-briefed at the end of each session.

Rights of participants: Participation in the research is voluntary and participants may choose to withdraw from the study at any time.

Confidentiality: Every effort will be made to ensure participants' confidentiality by not using names throughout the final report. All documentation and artwork will be returned to participants once the study is complete.

Time commitment: Participation in the project will involve a total of approximately nine hours over a period of approximately one month.

Benefits to informants: Participants can expect to be able to explore all aspects of their perceptions and reactions to the colours presented, in a supportive environment. They will undergo an experiential Art Therapy approach which will be of some therapeutic value. A copy of the completed research will be made available to the participants.

Any questions concerning the project can be directed to Nicolette Smith on 9430 5137.

Appendix IV**CONSENT FORM**

I.....have read the information above and any questions I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realising I may withdraw at any time.

I agree that the research data gathered for this study may be published provided I am not identifiable.

.....
Participant

.....
Date.

.....
Researcher

.....
Date.

Appendix V**BUDGET**

- | | | |
|----|--------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. | Paint, art paper, brushes, palettes. | \$ 250. |
|----|--------------------------------------|---------|

TOTAL: \$250 approximately.

Appendix vi**DATA ANALYSIS**

For the purpose of this section and the ease of the reader, I will present the data analysis under the following headings: 1. Pretest; 2. Response Elicited; i) Memories, ii) Physical, iii) Psychological, iv) Emotional, and v) Spiritual; and 3. Other. Each participant will be analysed in relation to the above responses to each colour. As the Pretest information is exhaustive, the responses taken into consideration will be: the general associations; associations to nature; and associations to the seasons. The colours that the participant likes, dislikes, presently wears and has within their home environment will also be considered. A discussion of the images that the participant painted for each colour over the three sessions will also be presented. This will highlight the participants' coverage of the page, use of the colour, symbols depicted, and the meaning of the image. There will then be a discussion of the common elements of the images as viewed by the writer, highlighting similar and/or different symbols, images and themes. At the end of the presentation of all of the above, conclusions from my own observations of the participants' work will be drawn and any links to the Pretest noted. For each participant there will be some overall conclusions drawn at the end. Discussed in this section will be any themes, similarities and/or differences, common symbols, and other patterns which may emerge.

PARTICIPANT A

Participant A comes from an English/German background and has no fixed religion. She is an artist by profession and had the following reactions to the colours.

RED**1. Pretest**

Her pretest associations were of fame, blood, power, strength, sex, and passion. Red was one of her favourite colours and was a colour which she has in her decor at home. She associated red with toadstools (danger) and lightening when considering the colour in regards to nature and associated it with the season of autumn.

2. Response Elicited

i) Memories

Red elicited memories of fire and spaceships.

ii) Physical

She described her body as feeling alive, moving, and energetic. She also experienced her heart beating faster, a tight chest, shaky legs, and more acuteness in her hearing.

iii) Psychological

The psychological associations that she had during the three painting sessions were power, sense of own power, red-blooded, heart, blood, emotion, body fluid, flowing, loose, bold, positive, freedom, danger, worry, warning, bright, and the duality of fixed and loose.

iv) Emotional

The emotional response elicited was one of being nervous, anxious, speedy, and excited.

v) Spiritual

Red did not elicit a spiritual response.

3. Other

There were no other responses or associations.

IMAGES

For all of the following images there was a strong use of the colour and the image covered the whole page.

SESSION ONE

The symbols painted were a square, ladders, poles, grids, a mat, and fences. The image portrays structure, balance, organisation, and containment.

SESSION TWO

The symbols painted were a square, flag, lines, fences, and a ladder. The image is contained on the right side and more open on the left side.

SESSION THREE

The symbols painted were squares, an L-shape, ladders, fences, roads, and stitches. The image is contained on the right side and more open on the left side. It portrays movement and journey.

COMMON ELEMENTS

There was a similar feel to all three images and common symbols throughout. There was a sense of containing herself, a journey, and looking for an out, hence the ladders. Two of the images were contained on the right and more open on the left. The images portrayed a sense of moving out of containment into a more freer expression of the self.

CONCLUSIONS

In both the Pretest and the Post-test, Participant A's responses were of a similar and positive nature. This may be indicative of the fact that she had a positive response to red in her life at present, rating it as being one of her favourite colours. Red seemed to physically and emotionally energise her.

BLUE

1. Pretest

In the pretest her associations were of feeling blue, happy, thoughtful, and universal. Turquoise blue is one of her favourite colours and blue is present in her home decor. She also stated that she wore blue a lot at present. In nature she associated blue with the sky, sea, lakes, glaciers, and snow. The season which blue represented was summer in England and spring in Australia.

2. Response Elicited

i) Memories

Blue elicited memories of flowers from her childhood, the seaside, looking at the sky, floating, and the sky at home in England.

ii) Physical

She described a feeling of calmness in her body. Her body felt relaxed, light and floaty, cool, loose and free, airy, feathery and floaty.

iii) Psychological

After painting with the colour blue, she made the following associations: coming out of a whirlpool into clarity, feathers, vortexes, circles, spirals, tunnels, the circle of life, waves, the ocean, the sky, bubbles, effervescence, and safe places in a tumult of emotions.

iv) Emotional

Her emotional response was of feeling peaceful, calm, happy, relaxed, light, airy, feathery, thoughtful, gentle, happy, free, spontaneous, fluid, watery, and excited.

v) Spiritual

She had a strong spiritual response to this colour. She described this as representing: universal energy, the sky, the cosmos, a connection to all things, the universality of things, being out of herself, the whirlpool of life, a spiral, and a coil.

3. Other

There were no other associations.

IMAGES

For the following three images there was a strong use of the colour and the image covers the whole page.

SESSION ONE

The symbols used were spirals, circles, whirlpools, the ocean, and waves. There was a portrayed sense of movement, floating, cycles, and waves rolling in.

SESSION TWO

The symbols used were circles, spirals, a whirlpool, and a tunnel. There was a sense of containment, stuckness, and holes in a solid structure.

SESSION THREE

The symbols used were a large spiral and a whirlpool. There was a feeling of movement, vibration and energy.

COMMON ELEMENTS

All of these images had a similar theme and symbols. The last image however, only has one large spiral, whereas the others had many. There was a feeling, when viewing all three images together, of going from being out of control and then beyond control, to being contained and then moving into a sense of freeness and power. There was a strong watery feel to all of these images.

CONCLUSIONS

In both the Pretest and the Post-test there was a positive response to the colour blue. Again this is indicative of the positive response she had to the colour in her life at present, rating it as a favourite colour to wear and have in her decor at home. Blue elicited a very calming and soothing response from Participant A and a strong spiritual response.

YELLOW

1. Pretest

Her associations in the pretest were of wealth, happiness, and "yuk". Yellow is one of her favourite colours and is also part of her home decor. Her associations with yellow in nature were of the sun and slime, and the season she associated with was summer.

2. Response Elicited

i) Memories

Yellow elicited memories of flowers when three years old, snakes, suns, the nervous and restless energy of travelling, her mother and their relationship patterns.

ii) Physical

Physically her response varied. At first she described feeling her blood flowing faster, her body moving faster, energised, and nervous energy. In the last session she described feeling pusy, blobby, horrible, like an unhealthy pusy river, like an internal organ which is unhealthy.

iii) Psychological

Her psychological associations were as follows brightness and lightness, sun rays, the sun, unbounded energy, breasts, containment, protection, the Horn of Plenty, rich, fruitful, abundant, and happiness being blocked.

iv) Emotional

She had a varied emotional response to this colour. In the first session she felt speedy, happy, rushed, impetuous, and spontaneous. In the second session she felt energetic, confused, restless, and jittery. In the third session she felt: disappointed, despondent, tired, negative, tedious, listless, bored, and vulnerable.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she had an association of going down a golden tunnel and into the underworld.

3. Other

There were no other associations.

IMAGES

For all of the following images there is strong use of the colour and the image covers the whole of the page.

SESSION ONE

The symbols used were spirals, circles, and a sun. There was a sense of contained movement and confusion.

SESSION TWO

The symbols painted were a sun, spiral, and circle. There was a sense of power and energy.

SESSION THREE

The symbols portrayed were circles, a target, a window, intestines, and a contained sun. There was a sense of both containment and looseness with a wobbly feel to it.

COMMON ELEMENTS

There was a similar theme to the first two images with the third being a bit different. The common symbols used were the sun, circles, and spirals. There was a feeling of containment, confusion and energy in them all.

CONCLUSIONS

Participant A had similar associations to yellow in the Pretest and Post-test. It is a colour that she enjoys in her present life. She had a varied emotional and physical response to this colour which was also indicated in her Pretest response. Yellow seemed to elicit an expression of two extremes, such as happiness and "yuk".

GREEN1. Pretest

Her associations in the pretest included jealousy, possession, envy, aliens, and growth. Green was not considered to be a favourite colour, was not part of her home decor and not a colour which she wore. She associated green in nature with trees, leaves, moss, glaciers, rain forests, and forests. The season she associated it with was spring.

2. Response Elicited

i) Memories

Green elicited memories of nature, growth, reproduction, plants, jungles, the cutting down of rain forests, damaging nature, maize, and her English upbringing, especially times when she started to 'flow' and was pulled up.

ii) Physical

Physically her responses varied from being relaxed to feeling a sense of emptiness and "doom and gloom" in her solar plexus.

iii) Psychological

She had strong associations with nature which included the following: visions of things growing, fertility, vines, the woods, the hills, beans in pots, jungles, leaves, the earth, grass growing, natural disaster, destruction, environmental issues, disaster and chaos.

iv) Emotional

Green elicited a strong emotional response and the following feelings occurred: an awareness of self, nurturance, careful, homely, relaxed, disaster, waste, empty, desolate, despondence, confusion, guilt, bad tempered, scared of chaos and destruction, depressed, unhealthy, uncomfortable, and a block around her own sense of freedom.

v) Spiritual

Her spiritual associations included nature worship, tribal, jungles, nature, and grass.

3) Other

Other associations included: a sense of feeling critical, not doing the right thing, questioning of the self, fear of criticism, and not being good enough.

IMAGES

The following images all had a good use of the colour and the image covered the whole page.

SESSION ONE

The symbols depicted were lines, ladders, squares, triangles, waves, and patches. There was some soft movement on the left hand side of the image.

SESSION TWO

The symbols used were circles, dots, a sun, a Catherine wheel, an amoeba, and an eye. This image had an organic feel to it.

SESSION THREE

The symbols used were squares, ladders, a river, circles, and grids. There is a sense of containment in the middle with movement on the left and right.

COMMON ELEMENTS

The common symbols were lines, ladders, squares, and circles. There was a sense of movement present in each image. The images have a similar feel, with elements of Images One and Two, combined in Image Three.

CONCLUSIONS

Participant A did not rate green as a favourite colour and stated that she did not use it much in her own work. She had a strong association to nature in both the Pretest and the Post-test. She had a negative emotional response to this colour. Green brought up a lot of issues around her sense of self and her sense of freedom. These issues appeared to stem from her English upbringing. Her responses oscillated between growth and destruction which may also stem from these childhood issues.

ORANGE**1) Pretest**

Her associations in the pretest were of cakes, food, flowers, fish, fireworks, and feelings of dullness and tediousness. Orange was not a favourite colour; she doesn't wear it at present and it is not a part of her home decor. Her associations in nature were of leaves, the desert, flowers, the sky, and the setting sun. She associated it with the season of autumn in England.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

Orange elicited memories of being a bored teenager, teenage dysfunction, and a sense of independence after leaving high school. Many of her other responses to this colour were attributed to these memories.

ii) Physical

Her body had a tightness in the solar plexus in the first session and was loose all over her body in the following sessions.

iii) Psychological

She had strong psychological associations which came from her memories. She described a sense of stress, angst, despair, obsession, and climbing out of old rebellious patterns. She also described the following: a part of the self needs protection; can protect aspects of self and carry on; teenage angst and rebellion; climbing out of something that she didn't want to be in; subconsciously blocked; enclosing; encumbering; something trying to stop you; caring but smothering; and trying to get out of a holding thing.

iv) Emotional

Emotionally she felt frustrated, bored, tedious, rebellious, calculating, reckless yet directed, angry, spontaneous, relieved, free, happy, relaxed, free to express self, and a realisation of freedom.

v) Spiritual

Her spiritual associations were as follows: Buddhists, Sanyasins, climbing a ladder to somewhere, a universal egg, moving up into a different spiritual plane, from earthly angst to the next level.

3. Other

There were no other associations.

IMAGES

The following three images possessed a good use of the colour and the image covered the whole page.

SESSION ONE

The symbols portrayed were lines, a circle, dots, and fingers. There was a sense of containment and holding.

SESSION TWO

The symbols used were ladders, lines, triangles, a rug or mat, and fences. There was a sense of being rigid and contained.

SESSION THREE

The symbols used were a sun, dots, circles, lines and rays. This image was big, strong and bright.

COMMON ELEMENTS

There was a strong similarity between Images One and Three with the same symbols being used. The second image was more contained and rigid. Image Three had a strong sense of power and bursting forth. There was a sense that with this image she had freed herself from the constraints expressed in the first two images. It is like she had resolved or got out of the feelings which she described as "holding her down".

CONCLUSIONS

Orange was not considered to be a favourite colour by Participant A. Orange elicited memories which then created some strong responses and associations. There were similar associations in the Pretest and Post-test to feelings of dullness and tediousness. There were also associations to Buddhists and Sanyasins in both tests.

PURPLE

1) Pretest

Her associations in the pretest were of passion, power, sex, deceit, ripeness, solidity, poisonous things, and royalty. Purple was not considered a favourite colour for wearing or use in her home. Her associations to purple in nature were of poisonous things, the night sky, and deadly nightshade. The season which she associated it with was winter.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

Purple elicited memories of her family, war, religion, poison, corruption, dogma and politics.

ii) Physical

She described her body as being relaxed around the back and stomach and a lightness in her head.

iii) Psychological

The psychological associations which she made were as follows: richness, royalty, searching, a quest, colour of the Inquisition, horror, royalty, trepidation, religion, spirituality, poison, things which look plush and ripe but which are poisonous, and things which are beautiful but are really rotten inside.

iv) Emotional

Her emotional reactions were described as observant, looking for something, inquisitive, thoughtful, positive, from hate to acceptance, nervous, trying to fix things, and resigned and empty.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually her responses were linked to religion, exploring the universe, astrology, and pagan symbols.

3. Other

She had strong associations with her family of origin in the last two sessions and briefly described it as jealousy, everything is O.K on the surface but underneath is a seethingness which is unexpressed, and deceit. In the last session she had a sense of resolution to this issue but felt that there was still something there which she was not willing to look into.

IMAGES

The following images all had a strong use of the colour and the images covered the whole of the page.

SESSION ONE

The symbols used were jaws, a crescent moon, a square, lines, a flag on a pole, and a curvaceous bit. There is a strong patch of colour on the right.

SESSION TWO

The symbols portrayed were three pillars which were all different and all standing on their own.

SESSION THREE

The symbols were very similar to session two in that there were three pillars and again they were all different. One had a cross on it, the next was like a ladder and the last was a spiky spiral and was more curvy than the others. This time these pillars were connected to each other at the bottom of the image.

COMMON ELEMENTS

There was a strong theme between all of these images with the use of the pillars, crosses and curvaceous elements. This was very indicative of the process the participant underwent emotionally as she worked through her family issues. Each of the pillars represented her members of the family and her relationship to them. She was able to resolve and heal aspects of these relationships from one session to the other and the images portray this.

CONCLUSIONS

There were some common associations expressed in the Pretest and Post-tests.

Essentially though, purple brought up some strong issues with her family of origin and she was able to process these through the painting. Associations she had in the Pretest were reflected throughout this process.

BLACK

1) Pretest

She stated in the pretest that black protects, disguises, negates, neutralises and comforts. Black was a favourite colour and a colour which she likes to wear. Her associations to nature were of the night, forests, and rock. She associated black with the season of summer.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

Black elicited memories of nails and relationships.

ii) Physical

Her body was loose and then a bit protective. She described a sensation of joy, lightness, happiness, and aliveness in her whole body.

iii) Psychological

Her psychological associations were protective, strong, positive, stands out, makes a statement, strength, wary, observant, looks around, thoughtful, worried, juggling, weight of world on shoulders, and a looming storm.

iv) Emotional

Emotionally her reactions were spontaneous, impetuous, free to express herself, light, free, frivolous, strong, loose, expressive, excited, and alternating between lighthearted and gloomy.

y) Spiritual

Spiritually she had a connection to a sense of self.

3. Other

She expressed how she loved black but was worried because it represents so many dark things. She was aware of how the culturally imposed prejudices to black came through. She could express herself freely with black, could be spontaneous and show how she was feeling.

IMAGES

The three proceeding images all covered the page and had a strong use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

The symbols most evident were a spiky heart, stars, crosses, and the writing "I love black."

SESSION TWO

The image consisted of two birds, rain, a cloud, eyes, feathers, beaks, and a storm. The birds looked like an owl and a crow. The participant states that the crow represents a prophetic sense. "They hang around when doom and gloom are imminent. When something dark is going to happen." The owl represented wisdom, solidity, security as opposed to spontaneity, freedom, and the unexpected.

SESSION THREE

The image portrayed a face looking up with child-like qualities, and a telephone cord or a coil. There was a sense of containment and something looming.

COMMON ELEMENTS

All the images possessed different symbols but in the last two there was a strong sense of something looming.

CONCLUSIONS

Black is a favourite colour of Participant A and she certainly enjoyed using it. There were no real similarities in response between the Pretest and Post-test. The participant's use of this colour seemed to indicate that on a subconscious level there was a lot happening or about to happen. There was a strong sense of this in her images.

WHITE

1) Pretest

Her pretest associations were of purity, strength, clean, perfect, pristine, shroud, net curtains, paper, bread, and towels. White was not considered to be a favourite colour and not a feature of her home decor. Her associations with nature were snowflakes, albino animals, and feathers. She associated it with the season of winter in England and spring in Australia.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

White elicited memories of empty feelings, a painter who just painted bottles, and nurturing.

ii) Physical

Her body in the first session had a draining feeling all over. In the subsequent sessions she felt a calmness, lightness, and a feeling of being carefree and flowing all over her body.

iii) Psychological

Psychologically in the first session her associations were of being wishy washy, negative, despairing, an empty blankness, listless, undirectional, having no conviction in the marks, and being aimless. In the last two sessions she felt a freedom to put marks on the page without being bound to something. There was a purity of form and no distractions.

iv) Emotional

White elicited a varied response between the sessions. In the first session she emotionally felt worried, thoughtful, despair, emptiness, blank, and panic. In the other two sessions she felt a calmness, an appreciation of form and beauty, purity, goodness, whole and relaxed, peaceful, content, and that all was well.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually white related to a oneness with the universe, a wholeness of life and connected her to the Holy Trinity.

3. Other

There were no other associations or responses.

IMAGES

There is a strong use of the colour and coverage of the whole page for the following three images.

SESSION ONE

There were no symbols evident in this image, just a wispy washy feathery effect. There was a strong sense of movement, but the image had a border to contain it.

SESSION TWO

This image was of four bottles, all of different shapes, with one square one and the rest more circular and elongated. Again there was a sense of containment.

SESSION THREE

This image consisted of lots of circles which were all open.

COMMON ELEMENTS.

The circles were the only common element. Essentially images one and two possessed a sense of containment whereas image three was more open. There was more movement in images one and three.

CONCLUSIONS

White seemed to allow Participant A to free herself up once again. The bottles in the second image expressed her desire to be more rounded rather than square and contained. The last image showed an openness to things to come.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

There was a similar theme for each colour each week. The participant seem to work through the issues each week and there was a definite sense of resolution in the third session. There was a freeness evident in the first and third sessions. Session two seemed to be more contained. There was a strong theme and oscillation between movement and containment. Participant A expressed, in the last session, that she felt that a shift had occurred and that she sensed a movement out of feeling contained to being freer. The common symbols used throughout all of the images were squares, ladders, circles, and spirals. Her cultural background and upbringing certainly had an effect on her associations to the colours. This was most evident in her associations to the seasons and in the colours which elicited strong childhood memories. She surrounded herself with the colours she liked within her home environment.

PARTICIPANT B

Participant B is an Australian and had a Catholic religious background but does not aspire to any religion now. She is a Reflexologist by profession and her associations to the colours are following.

RED1) Pretest

In the pretest she associated red with power, energy, and fire. Red was not considered a favourite colour but was part of the home decor. Her associations of red in nature were flowers such as the Stuart Desert Pea, poppies and roses, and sunset at "The Bluff". Red was associated with the season autumn.

2) Response Elicitedi) Memories

Red invoked memories of a painting workshop she had previously undertaken, past experiences in life and relationships, blood spilt, periods, red moon, and rune symbols which represented her name.

ii) Physical

In the first session, in her body, she had a sensation of her face being controlled and her jaws closed tight but her heart felt open and alive. In subsequent sessions she physically experienced an increase in her heart rate, quickness in her breath and a strong stance in her legs and feet.

iii) Psychological

Psychologically, in the first session she associated her personal power as being kept tamed and controlled; and then stronger, definite, and less vulnerable to other people's energies and outside influences.

In subsequent sessions, her psychological associations were of a red moon, fire in the belly, menstruation, femininity, intuition, strong feminine energy, being connected to the earth, being grounded, earthy and stable.

iv) Emotional

In the first session she emotionally felt assertive, power, control, strong, stable, closed, anger, frightened, abandoned, and the fear behind the anger. In the subsequent sessions she emotionally felt free, wild, energetic, expressive, uninhibited, energised, grounded, passion, anger, alive, strong, justified, invigorated, and powerful.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she had a sense of coming into her personal power, feeling grounded, and described feeling like she was rooted to the earth.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses.

IMAGES

The following images all contained a strong use of the colour and the image covered the whole of the page.

SESSION ONE

This was an image of a woman with a red dot on her third eye. The image was contained and there was a sense of anger, wildness and strength about her.

SESSION TWO

This image was the same woman represented in the first image only this time she was more of a tree/woman. There was also a baby form of this woman at her feet. This image also portrayed the essence of strength, wildness and power, but was more open and moving than the first image.

SESSION THREE

This image was different to the first two. The symbols used were a circle, dots, directions, branches, fire, and a hill or a slope.

COMMON ELEMENTS

The women in Images One and Two were very similar and there was a strong nature element to Images Two and Three. All three images were strong and had a sense of power.

CONCLUSION

The associations that Participant B had in her Pretest were very much reflected in the Post-test and were, in essence, the theme to the images and the process. There was a definite sense of exploring issues of power, especially her own sense of power as a woman.

BLUE

1) Pretest

Her pretest associations were of dolphins, the throat chakra, communication, speaking freely and honestly, the cold, and peacefulness. Blue and turquoise were considered favourite colours and colours she liked to wear. Blue was also part of her home decor. Participant B associated blue in nature to the sky, ocean, rivers, water, and lakes. The seasons she associated it with were spring and summer.

2) Response Elicited

1) Memories

Blue elicited memories of the ocean, feeling blue as a child, aloneness, a conversation she had the day before about ultra sensitivity, and Indonesia.

ii) Physical

Physically she felt lightheaded and spacey, relaxed, introverted, and a coldness in her feet and hands.

iii) Psychological

She psychologically associated blue with frustration over her level of art skills and not being good enough, communication, being lost in a huge space, teardrops, healing hands, energy, the ocean, moving waves, playfulness, freedom, dolphins, mystic cross, healers, facade of religion/spirituality, two sidedness, falsity, and corruption.

iv) Emotional

Blue invoked a range of emotions such as: peacefulness, vagueness, spaciness, calmness, slowing down, tranquil, unsure, insecure, void, detached, sad, lost, relaxed, sleepiness, gentle, light, going deep within, contempt, distaste, anger, distant, controlled, and detached.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she was reminded of spiritual and religious traditions.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses.

IMAGES

The following three images all had good coverage of the page by the image and a strong use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

The symbols portrayed were a shell, spiral, waves, and an undercurrent. There is a watery feel to this image and much energy represented.

SESSION TWO

The symbols in this image were of a dolphin, the ocean, waves, breasts, a hand, ancient markings, and a tribal feel. Again there was a strong sense of water and energy. The hand was emerging out of the depths and the dolphin was jumping out of the water.

SESSION THREE

This image consisted of an eye, a leaf, a spiky fish, a fish out of water on a fence, a knife or Celtic blade, and a rune symbol. The participant described the fish out of water as representing her struggle to try and communicate spiritually. She described the fish as up high, safe, out of reach and no one can touch it. She described the search for her own spirituality and her connections with the past and looking for her roots.

COMMON ELEMENTS

There was a strong watery theme to all of the images, especially Images One and Two. There was also a sense of energy in all three. The images seemed to be an exploration of the participant's sense of spirituality.

CONCLUSIONS

The Pretest associations were again reflected in the images and Post-test responses. Blue was a colour which the participant utilises at present in her life and which she was drawn to. This colour had a strong spiritual connection and seemed to invoke a variety of emotions for her.

YELLOW

1) Pretest

Her pretest associations were of the intellect, mental stimulation, and being "distant from the heart". Her associations of yellow in nature were of the sun, the full moon, calendulas, flowers, lemons, bananas, saffron rice, farms, wheat/barley paddocks, and dandelions. She associated it with the season of summer. Yellow was one of Participant B's least favourite colours, but was present in her home decor.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

Yellow induced many memories for her. She remembered long journeys in the car through the wheat belt and farmlands and how the landscape all looked the same and merged into everything around it. Also, yellow bellied tiger snakes on the farm, a custard yellow-coloured suit she wore as a child and hated, and a recent dream about being pregnant twice and having two babies.

ii) Physical

Her body sensation was the same across the three sessions with her focus being on her left arm which felt lifeless, useless and almost crippled. She described having a clearer mind in the third session.

iii) Psychological

She associated yellow with regularity, structure, order, restrictions, intellectualism, authority issues, boredom, tediousness, rebelliousness and detachment. She described it as follows; " I hate to feel confined by rules, regulations, structure and having to do things when my heart is not in it."

iv) Emotional

The first session elicited strong reactions to the colour. Emotionally she felt restricted, bored, repulsed, sickly, angry and resentful. This then moved into a sense of being playful, silly, free, a feeling of defiance against authority figures and structure and a sense of rebelliousness. In the second session she felt nauseous, frustrated, detached from what she was doing and observing of herself. She felt that there was too much going on in her head and that she was analysing things too much. In the third session she felt peacefulness, contentment, protected, insulated, untouched and uninfluenced by the outside world. She described being more clear and having a greater sense of clarity and confidence in herself.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she associated yellow with the spirit world and a feeling of detachment and peace that comes with it. She also associated it to the Wadjina Aboriginal spirit.

3) Other

There were no other responses or associations.

IMAGES

For these three images there was a good use of the colour and the images filled the whole of the page.

SESSION ONE

This image was of a crop of wheat and corn in the countryside, with the sun and the heat. There is a sense of harvest and fertility to this image.

SESSION TWO

This image consisted of: a moon, stars, nighttime, a snake, sand dunes, an arrow, a pregnant woman with two bellies and a child in the womb. The participant described the pregnant woman as watching her back and keeping an eye on the snake. The snake represented power, change and transformation. The arrow represented all of woman's energy. The new moon represented a new start and changes. The woman was looking into the future but heading into the past.

SESSION THREE

This image was of a celestial being or an angel. There were spirals, stars and a sense of openness and energy.

COMMON ELEMENTS

These images were thematically different with no common symbols. There was a common sense of fertility and arrows in images one and two. Images two and three had stars and moons depicted.

CONCLUSIONS

Participant B's responses and images again possessed elements of her associations in the Pretest. Each session and the images represented explored different themes and issues. Each session elicited a different memory which then became the theme for that session. The painting appeared to provide the subconscious with a means of processing her dreams and memories.

GREEN1) Pretest

Her associations in the pretest were of renewal, growth, newness, freshness, safety, security, the heart chakra, nature and nature spirits. Green was rated as a favourite colour and incorporated into her home decor. In nature she associated green with plants, trees, parrots, snakes and grass. The season that she associated green to was winter.

2) Response Elicitedi) Memories

Green provoked strong memories for her. She was reminded of a green seed just starting to shoot, which her mother had planted in a pot for her, being a child in nature, the bush, rock pools, moss on rocks and a willow tree which she spent time alone in. She also remembered Boranup Forest and dancing in that forest at night, gardens with roots growing underground, seedlings pushing their way up from the earth into the open light and growth.

ii) Physical

In the first session, her body felt light and heady, there was an intensity in the third eye region and she had trancy feelings, like being away with the fairies. In the other sessions she felt relaxed in her body and stated that her heart came alive.

iii) Psychological

There was a strong association in the first session to a tree in her garden which was chopped down the previous day. Other associations were of a hide-away and the magical world of nature/spirits/nature's energy.

iv) Emotional

Her emotional reaction to green in the first session was of sadness, anger, love, beauty, mystical tenderness, gentleness and being connected to the nature spirits. In the following session she felt detached, observing of her thoughts and feelings from a distance, more open, freer, spontaneous, alive, celebratory, uninhibited, content, loving, expressive, present, less spacy and more dynamic and alert.

v) Spiritual

Her spiritual association was of spiritual beings in a green forest of light.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses.

IMAGES

All of the following images covered the whole page and had a good use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

This image was of an elfin figure in the forest next to a tree and a toadstool. This creature had a strong presence and looked like it was standing its ground. There was a feeling of sadness associated with this image.

SESSION TWO

This image was of ancient figures, with animal-like features, dancing and celebrating. These figures were contained in a circle and there was a tribal, primitive feel to this image.

SESSION THREE

In this image there was green snake-like image which was emerging out of nature and there were tulip flowers. The snake-like figure looked like it has a sense of wisdom to it. The participant described how she put a face on the snake and realised that it was nothing to be scared of; that it is growth that happens. She described the tulips as being orderly, structured flowers which are simple but beautiful.

The lavender represented being free and abundant. The cosmos daisy she described as being about communicating through intuition. She felt that she needed to communicate more of what is going on within.

COMMON ELEMENTS

All of the images had a strong nature theme and elements of otherworldliness. Strong elements of the spirit world were evident.

CONCLUSIONS

In the Pretest Participant B had strong associations to nature which were also evident in the Post-test and the images. All three images had strong nature themes to them. In the first session the painting enabled her to process an event which had occurred the day before; an event which had impacted on her greatly. It became evident from her images that nature and spirit were important to her.

ORANGE

1) Pretest

Her pretest associations were the sun, earthiness, upliftedness, energised, power, groundedness, attraction, openness and communication. Orange was not a favourite colour but was present in her home decor. She associated orange with things in nature like mangoes, oranges and mandarines, flowers such as marigolds, Californian poppies and dahlias and the leaves and trees in autumn. The season she associated orange with is autumn.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

Orange conjured up memories of the desert up North, a place called The Bluff and the incredibly powerful nature, animals, rocks and Aboriginal spirits present there. She was also reminded of times with children playing a game where everyone lined up behind each other and would follow each other, as well as a memory of a recent discussion with a friend about issues to do with whether to get married or not.

ii) Physical

She felt grounded and strong in her body in the first two sessions. In the last session her body felt warm all over.

iii) Psychological

In the first two sessions her associations were of sun, warmth, personal power, sunsets, fireballs and exploring boundaries. In the last session she had strong associations with women's use of their femininity and sexuality: using this for power and attention.

iv) Emotional

In the first two sessions she felt light, happy, energised, grounded, empowered, protective, caring, strong, ancient, clear, concentrated and connected. In the last session she experienced feelings towards herself about not feeling feminine enough. She described feeling frustrated, disturbed, confused, angry and lacking confidence and co-ordination, but towards the end she felt much more sure, confident and assertive.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she felt very connected to the land.

IMAGES

All of the following images had a strong use of colour and the image covered the whole page.

SESSION ONE

The symbols represented in this image were a sun, a spiral, a flower and radiance. There was a sense of fertilising, openness and energy.

SESSION TWO

The symbols depicted were: a bird, a sun, a moon, figures, tracks and a hot deserty landscape.

SESSION THREE

This image depicted a snake which was shaped like a question mark and looked coiled ready to strike. It also looked like it was trying to charm the woman. The woman was on her tip toes and looked mesmerised or tranced. There was also a strong overpowering man who was much bigger than the woman. He looked like he was holding her as a doll.

COMMON ELEMENTS

Images one and two were similar with the sun, landscape and earthy feel. Otherwise all three images were very different. The third image was the most potent in terms of the response it elicited.

CONCLUSION

Participant B's associations in her Pretest were also evident in the Post-test and images. In sessions one and two her associations of being grounded, energised and empowered were evident. In the last session her issues around her sense of her own femininity and sexuality were aroused and resolved, to a point, within the image.

PURPLE

1) Pretest

Her associations in the pretest were of the mystical, imagination, other worldliness, spirituality, high aspirations and the third eye. She rated purple and violet as being favourite colours and they were part of the home decor. Her associations in nature were of grapes, beetroot, eggplant, tropical fish and flowers such as pansies and violets. The season she associated purple with was winter.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

Purple elicited memories of the ocean when it is dark, stormy and raining calm, dark, stormy seas and sky. In the second and third sessions she remembered personal aspects of two friends.

ii) Physical

In the first session her body felt fluid and free to move easily. Physically, in the second and third sessions, she felt cold, spacey, light, lost in the moment, insulated and introverted.

iii) Psychological

She associated the feeling of suppression to her Christian upbringing and saw that everything was not as it seemed; that out of woundedness comes bravery.

iv) Emotional

In the first session she felt connected to some feeling deep within, which felt like a powerful undercurrent. She described these feelings as passion, power, energy, freedom, uninhibitedness and passion stored underground. In the second and third sessions she felt fear, lost, suppression, weakness, placidity, control, locked inside, sadness, loneliness, pain and grief.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she associated purple with being a mystical, spiritual, religious and visionary colour. She felt connected to a deeper part of herself and purple created a sense of God's light shining on her.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses to the colour purple.

IMAGES

The following images all covered the page and had a strong use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

There were no symbols depicted in this image, only brushed on paint. The image was dark at the bottom and light on top. There was a sense of sky and sea or conscious and unconscious.

SESSION TWO

This image was of a caged woman who possesses a strong warrior or tribal element. Her throat was bound and she had big shoulders and a strong presence.

SESSION THREE

This image was also of a woman who is bounded and wounded. Her mouth was gagged, she had one breast and was helpless and pleading. There was also an arrow pointing at her and a sparkle in the top corner of the page.

COMMON ELEMENTS

Images two and three were both depicting women who are caged or bound. One appeared strong the other weak. There were no common symbols but rather common themes.

CONCLUSIONS

Purple was a favourite colour of Participant B and certainly induced a strong reaction. Each session provoked a different memory which was the theme for the image. In the last two sessions she worked through some of the emotions related to two of her friends and their circumstances. Perhaps there were aspects of herself being reflected by their situations which she needed to attend to. In the Pretest her associations were to do with spirituality and this was also a theme explored through the painting.

BLACK

1) Pretest

Her associations in the pretest were of death; a void, no feeling; the underground; deep; dark; withdrawn and introspective. Black was not a favourite colour but was present in her home decor. Her associations in nature were of thunderstorms, the night sky, burnt forests, fire, coals and a void or a space. She associated black with the season of winter.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

Black invoked various memories such as the aftermath of a bush fire and seeing the blackened charcoal landscapes, dead burnt Black Boys, and the quietness and eeriness afterwards. Also memories such as Aboriginal dream time symbolic animals, totems such as snake and eagles, whirly-whirls, characters from childhood like The Big Bad Wolf, a dream of getting bitten by a snake, travelling in Asia where everyone seemed to know what is going on but were pretending that they were not watching or seeing, people's eyes and eye images reflected in nature.

ii) Physical

Her physical response was a coldness in the knees, legs and feet.

iii) Psychological

In the first session she associated her image with remains, aftermath of something traumatic, stillness and connection to another deeper world. The second session she associated with darkness, being watched by her own self, keeping guard, self-criticism, observing, dark night of the soul and the shadow. In the third session she associated the image to dark nights and spirits.

iv) Emotional

In the first session she felt introspective, introverted, quiet and safe. She forgot where she was. In the second session she felt dislike, repulsion, anger and fear about not doing what she wanted, but could see humour in the darkness. In the third session she felt fear, disturbed, a bit spooked, frightened and felt like venturing into the dark depths of herself. She also stated feeling a bit spooked by working with the dark a bit heavy and blackness of life and self.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she associated black with a connection to the Australian landscape; the harshness and strength of the bush and nature and with the Aboriginal people's perspective.

3) Other

She stated that she enjoyed the black but something inside of her was saying that she shouldn't be. She felt naughty and like she was indulging in the dark.

IMAGES

All of the proceeding images covered the whole page and had a strong use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

The essence of this image was of a burnt out landscape. Represented are a strong, tribal, warrior-like woman, a whirling energy, spiralling energy, a dark pool or tree trunk, a snake, a bird swooping, a funnel and a pillar. The participant described the snake as representing one's ability to change, power, letting go of old things and the spirit world.

SESSION TWO

This image depicted a dark, sinister-looking creature which was spiky and looked hungry. It was out of proportion, low to the ground and long. There was a sneakiness about it. There was also a bird watching in a tree and a road or a fence.

The participant talked about this creature as a cat. She described it as the trickster of confidence, dishonest, sneaky and underhanded. She could see a connection to aspects of herself which she did not like. The bird in the tree was a crow and represented to the participant the ability to see all. The bird felt disgust and repulsion towards the cat.

SESSION THREE

This image was of eyes in the darkness, watching and haunting.

COMMON ELEMENTS

All of the images have dark themes to them with a sense of darkness and hauntingness. There were no common symbols.

CONCLUSIONS

Participant B's associations in the Pretest were also evident in the Post-test and images. Strong memories elicited by the colour black became the theme for the images in sessions one and three. In session two she was responding to and dealing with her own shadow aspects. Black was not a favourite colour but certainly elicited a powerful response.

WHITE

1) Pretest

Her associations in the pretest were of clean, light, contains all colours, reflective, pure, "squeaky clean", white light and healing. White was not classed as a favourite colour and was not part of the home decor. Her associations with white in nature were of the clouds, the waves, sand dunes, waterfalls, the stars and the moon. The season she associated white with was spring.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

White invoked memories of Leunig cartoons, things which she disliked as a child like big white undies, hankies, singlets and the fifties image of the perfect home and domestic life. She also remembered a yoga group which was rigid and really structured. The participants had to follow rules at the expense of feelings and acceptance. Another memory was of Bali; the lotus flowers floating in the water and the beauty and simplicity of the culture.

ii) Physical

In the first session she felt cold in her feet and hands. In the second session her eyes began to feel tired and her head was achy. In the third session her body felt light and floaty.

iii) Psychological

In the first session she described white as having no substance or form. She also described it as fanciful, light, body beautiful, pure body, surreal, unreal, magic mushrooms, ghosts, spirits, imagination and anything otherworldly or made up. In the second session her associations were of images of conforming and suppression, uniformity and structure. The third session she associated the colour with a lotus flower which she described as being beautiful and pure but had its roots deep in mud. The lotus flower was also about growth from so-called bad experiences.

iv) Emotional

In the first session she felt silly, free, trippy, dreamlike, fresh, pure and amused. The second session invoked feelings of anger, disgust, wanting to rebel, anger at boxed-in-ness of society and normal domestic life and defiance. In the third session she felt loving, detached, tired, light, ungrounded and felt that things were less complicated and more simple than what she had originally thought.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she associated white with meditating, the subtle world, white light, spiritual philosophy and Bali where there is a sense of magic, beauty, love and colour. It opened up one's creativity and spirituality, and the psychic senses come alive again.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses.

IMAGES

The following images all had a strong use of the colour and the image covered the whole page.

SESSION ONE

This image depicted women dancing, praying, meeting and celebrating. The women were all shapes and sizes and there were flowers, mushrooms and trees.

SESSION TWO

The symbols used in this image included fences, clothes, a clothes line, cakes, a door and a wedding dress. There was a sense of domesticity to it.

SESSION THREE

This image was of a lotus flower and a floating spirit-being. It had a sense of water, floating, opening and connection.

COMMON ELEMENTS

All three images were different. There was, though, a sense of freeness in the first image, then constraint and structure in the second and then a further sense of freeness in the third.

CONCLUSIONS

Some of Participant B's associations in the Pretest were evident in the Post-test and her images. Session one's responses certainly reflected her associations of lightness. In sessions two and three her responses were influenced by the memories that white had elicited. Session two focused on her memories and struggles of domestic life and how that had impacted on her as a child. In session three she explored a memory of Bali and the spiritual connection she felt towards that culture.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

This participant had varied themes for each colour for each week. There were similarities between some but also many differences. She had a strong use of nature, tribal, spiritual and otherworldly themes with an abundance of landscapes, snakes and images of women. Throughout the images there was a balanced sense of dealing with the dark element and the light. Many of her images were in response to memories invoked by the colour. She had a wide range of colours surrounding her in her home decor, even colours that she rated as not being her favourites

PARTICIPANT C

Participant C was Dutch and had a Roman Catholic religious upbringing but does not aspire to any religion now. Due to a physical illness and time restraints this participant only completed two out of the three sessions. She was a textile artist by profession and these were her responses to the colours.

RED1) Pretest

Her pretest association with red was of debit or a bank balance in the red. Red was not considered a favourite colour and was not part of the home decor. She associated red in nature with the wildflowers and the season of spring.

2) Response Elicitedi) Memories

Red reminded her of how red is used in carpets in central Asia, with the border patterns expressing life and continuity.

ii) Physical

In her body she felt a stirring in her stomach and solar plexus.

iii) Psychological

Her associations after the painting were of life, strength, life force, positive energy, continuity of life and the strength of it, menstruation, birth, life, continuity, raw, colour of exposure, moving on, shedding, bleeding, travelling, movement in life, change, movement, making in roads, the power of love, passion, healing, love always there and beginning a new journey.

iv) Emotional

She described feeling strength, movement, moving on, direction, strong, happy, forceful, emotional in the sense of feeling more, feeling like something had shifted, movement, feeling alive and a feeling of accomplishment.

v) Spiritual

Red did not elicit any spiritual associations for her.

3) Other

There were no other responses or associations.

IMAGES

The images varied in terms of the coverage of the page and the use of the paint. The image in session one dominated the top right hand corner of the page and there was a strong use of the colour. The image in session two covered the whole page and there was also a strong use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

The symbols portrayed were a circle, tears, wavy lines and a pattern which was similar to the top of a castle

The symbols depicted in this image were a wavy line, a heart and a road.

COMMON ELEMENTS

In both images there was not a lot depicted and the only common symbol was the wavy lines. The second image was more balanced in its placement on the page.

CONCLUSIONS

In session one her memory of the borders on rugs seemed to be reflected in her image with the pattern. She also associated continuity with red and this could be symbolised by the circle in the image. In the second session there is a sense of a bleeding uterus in the image. In the Post-test she associated red with bleeding and menstruation. She also associated red with travelling and this was also depicted in the image by the representation of a road.

BLUE

1) Pretest

Her pretest associations were of peace, tranquillity, freedom, freshness, and calm. Blue was classed as a favourite colour and one which she presently wore. It was also present in her home decor. In nature she associated it with water and to all of the seasons, but mostly to spring.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

Blue reminded her of wearing a lot of blue when she was young, not feeling safe as a child, swimming and her new living environment of children, work and time management.

ii) Physical

In her body she experienced a calming of her muscles, especially around her chest and shoulders, and a weightlessness and wanting to float.

iii) Psychological

Psychologically she first felt free but then more and more associations arose, which surprised her, but then she welcomed them. These changed from being soothing, calm and floaty to realising that it was more about what she wanted rather than what she always felt. This surprised her. She also associated blue with balancing things in life; lots of changes in life; going with the flow and standing up for what she wants.

iv) Emotional

Emotionally she felt a sense of ease and comfort, feeling free, coming to rest, comfortableness, calmness, opening up, letting go, sadness, and letting out imbalances that can creep into her life if she doesn't watch out. She also described feeling that it would be safe to let go, a safe colour to let out emotions.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she associated blue with freedom, air and water.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses.

IMAGES

Both of the images covered the whole page and there was a strong use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

The symbols depicted in this image were solid circles, spirals, fish, stars, the ocean, a hand, birds, a nest and people in a boat. There was a stronger use of the colour on the left hand side of the page. Participant C described the water as representing movement and wanting to be on the move in life. The spirals she described as being representative of cycles, the beginning and ending of life. There was a strong feel of movement and energy in this image.

SESSION TWO

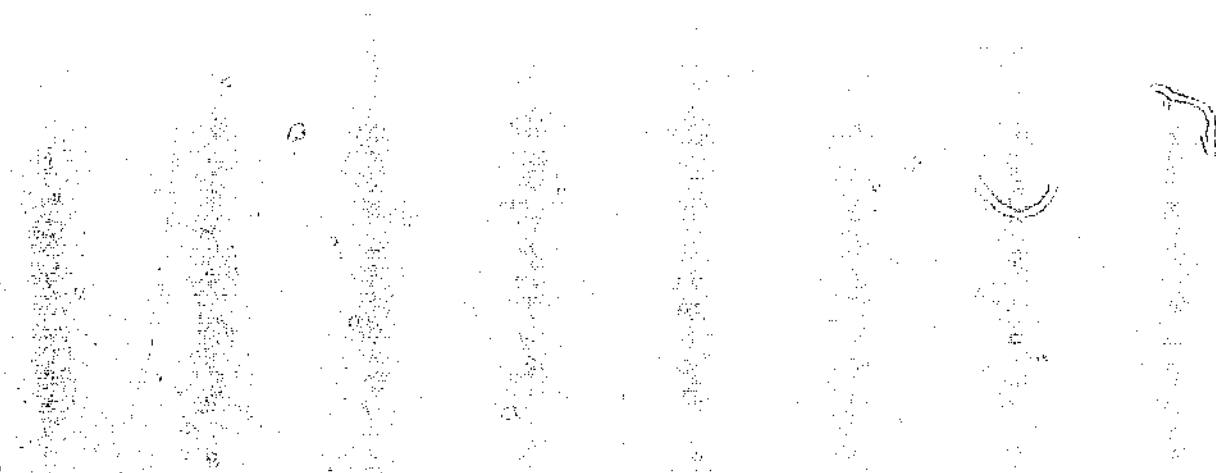
The symbols portrayed in this image were a coil, a clock, a flying rug, scales, wavy lines, a person lying down and two four-legged creatures. There was a feeling of floating, movement and time. The image depicted a person in the middle of two things, the people and the flying rug. The participant described the image as being to do with issues of time management, with the two large hands depicted representing a sense of feeling torn. She stated that the wavy lines and coil were about "going with the flow and floating along."

COMMON ELEMENTS

Both of the images had a sense of time movement, wavy lines and a strong horizon line. There was a definite sense of conscious and subconscious present in both images and this was depicted by the horizon lines. The common symbols were the wavy lines, spirals, circles, and two people.

CONCLUSIONS

Participant C's Pretest associations were not elicited by the painting. She responded to the colour more by the memories induced and current issues. In session one her memories and associations to water as a child were represented. In session two she worked through a current issue around time management and family life. Her associations with blue were of a positive nature and this may be reflective of her classing it as a favourite colour.



YELLOW1) Pretest

In the pretest she associated yellow with the sun, contrast and her favourite coffee mug. Yellow was not considered to be a favourite colour but was present in her home decor. In nature she associated it with sunflowers and autumn leaves. The season she associated it with was summer.

2) Response Elicitedi) Memories

Yellow invoked memories of the yellow star which Jewish people had to wear. She had heard stories about this in her childhood and this created a dislike for German people. It also reminded her of the medical tests she had undergone the previous week.

ii) Physical

In her body she experienced a sensation that the mind and body were separate. Two different messages were being received. One being her arms wanting to and not wanting to paint and the other one being a gut wrenching close to the heart, near the solar plexus and stomach.

iii) Psychological

Her psychological associations were thoughts of contrasts, limitless giving and warmth, boundaries, happy/love to envy/hate, the sun, sunflowers, positives and negatives in life, money, greed, heat, bananas, wilting, scorching, and the land of milk and honey.

iv) Emotional

In session one the feelings elicited were of contrasts - good/bad, cool/warm, giving/greed, like/dislike, which left her feeling like she didn't know which way to go. In session two she felt radiance, a need for security, needing support, wanting to be safe, nurtured, needing strength, protection, and strong arms around her.

v) Spiritual

There were no spiritual associations made.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses elicited.

IMAGES

Both of the images covered the whole page and there was a strong use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

The symbols portrayed were a flower, a square, circles (both solid and open), wavy lines radiating from the centre, pathways, crosses, honeycomb, a star and trees.

Participant C described the feel of this image as " the land of milk and honey". The solid circles were representative of money and the honeycomb of bees. The square was tension with rays of light radiating from it. The crosses represented pluses and minuses; good and bad. This image had a sense of radiance, blossoming and focus to it.

SESSION TWO

The symbols depicted in this image were a sun, muscly arms, arrows, lightening, circles, a person or child and a banana. The participant described this image as relating to her health issues. She was undergoing assessment and treatment of symptoms of a gynaecological nature. She stated that the image reflected her current need for some strong arms around her to protect her and care for her. There was however a strong sense of "power-over" in the image. This may reflect how she was feeling about her health issues, as they had a strong focus in her life at present.

COMMON ELEMENTS

Both of these images were different in their use of symbols and themes. The only common symbol was the circles. However, they both had a certain level of containment to them and a strong focal point with energy radiating from them.

CONCLUSIONS

One of Participant C's Pretest associations, the sun, was depicted in her images. Session one reflected this association and associations with her memories of the Jewish star. Session two however was strongly influenced by her current health situation, with the painting providing her with a space to deal with some of the emotions this had aroused.

GREEN

1. Pretest

Her pretest associations were of organic things and the outdoors. Green was classed as one of her least favourite colours and did not feature in the home decor. In nature she associated it with grass, frogs and growth. The seasons she associated it with was winter and spring.

2. Response Elicited

i) Memories

Green elicited memories of Holland, with its flat country and her need to get away from there. Also of Ireland and cycling around and the green land.

ii) Physical

She physically felt the emotions from the painting experience in her solar plexus. She also felt teary and heavy-headed.

iii) Psychological

Her associations from the painting experience were of nature, grass, Ireland, travelling, trying to get away from home, "the grass is always greener on the other side of the hill" coming to rest, "stop chasing dreams", living in the present, finding her way in a new world, being appreciated for what she does, new growth process, that the answers are always within, our roots- "we come from the past so can't discard that" and a starting point for self-discovery.

iv) Emotional

Emotionally she felt that she was taken back further and further into emotions which connected her to events, and this surprised her. There were also feelings of being quite small in the world, trying to find direction, being insignificant, finding her way, overwhelm, wanting to hide, and not make decisions.

v) Spiritual

She did not have any spiritual associations with the colour green.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses.

IMAGES

Both of the images covered the whole page and there was a strong use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

The symbols portrayed were a moving bicycle, a person on a chair, hills, roads, a suitcase, a heart shape, two horizon lines, springs, roots, a shamrock, grass and a house. Participant C described this image as being about the notion that "the grass will always be greener on the other side of the hill." She ascribed the following meanings to the various symbols portrayed. The house was her original home which she ran away from and why she has travelled so much. The shamrock and suitcase represented her travelling experiences.

The person on the chair was her staying in one place and the notion that "it is OK to be where she is". The roots were about the notion that you cannot discard your past and that it is part of the process of personal growth. The heart was her love for travelling as travelling was the starting point for her process of self discovery. There were some interesting features of this image: three horizon lines, the heart was balancing, the springs could also be viewed as volcanoes and the person and the chair are larger in proportion to the landscape.

SESSION TWO

The symbols depicted in this image were grass, people hiding, eyes watching, arrows, dotted lines and concentric circles forming a solid circle. Participant C described the circle as a rippling pond. She referred to the eyes in the grass as, "a realisation that it is me hidden in there and lots of me is sad. I am feeling tentative at having to find direction". The image certainly had a strong sense of watching, waiting and looking into something to find direction.

COMMON ELEMENTS

In session one, the symbols used were positioned more to the top and right hand sides of the page. Both of the images had a sense of self evaluation and growth. There was an element of trying to work out where she was and where she wanted to go. She had a feeling of travelling, journeys and directions in life. Both of the images had a strong nature element to them.

CONCLUSIONS

Participant C's Pretest associations featured strongly in her images. Green elicited a lot of memories and associations with Ireland and her home country Holland. Both of the sessions were to do with travelling, self-discovery and finding direction in one's life. Green elicited strong emotions linked to events in her life both past and present. Green was not considered to be a favourite colour, but certainly had a strong impact in both session.

ORANGE

1) Pretest

The pretest associations included love, desire and harmony. Orange was classed as a favourite colour and one that she wears at present. It was not part of her home decor. In nature she associated it with sunsets, coral/reef fish and the soil of the outback. The season which she associated orange with was autumn.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

Orange reminded her of being called 'orange woman' when she was younger because she would always peel the oranges when she went camping.

ii) Physical

Her body felt lighter around the solar plexus and lungs, with a sense of flying.

iii) Psychological

Her associations were of thoughts of her partner; love, passion; autumn, sharing, talking; travelling a new road with someone; growth through understanding; being protected by a soft rain; keep your eyes open for what you want out of life; keep enough love for yourself; shedding; starting anew and keeping in mind what is real.

iv) Emotional

Emotionally she felt happiness, growth, loss, moving on, unlocking the past, good, strong, positive about change, honesty and needing to share emotions with her partner, mutual understanding, vulnerable, deep sensations of love and commitment and moving out of her comfort zone and into the new.

v) Spiritual

Her spiritual associations were of growth and rites of passage.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses to this colour.

IMAGES

Both of the images covered the page and there was a strong use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

The symbols depicted were a heart with two holes in it, leaves, oranges, a shirt or top, a key, a dotted outline of a tree, balloons with strings and bows, a fire and a strong horizon line. Participant C described the fire as representing an old relationship burning and the heart rising as the new relationship emerging. The leaves depicted autumn and a sense of shedding and starting fresh. The hearts and the key were about unlocking and allowing the new relationship. The oranges were representing her love of oranges and the sensation of peeling them.

SESSION TWO

Portrayed in this image were two people holding hands; a roadway which has three islands; a dotted line between the two people; rain and a cloud with letters in it.

Participant C described this image as relating to the journey or the road her current relationship has been on. They had just started to live together and this had created new issues which needed to be dealt with, including the involvement of two children. She stated that the cloud with the letters represented the need to "learn to talk without being judgmental". She described the rain as gentle, soothing, a blanket of goodness and cleansing.

COMMON ELEMENTS

The first image had more symbols used and was less pictorial. Both of the images had a strong horizon line and the leaf shape was present in both. The first image had quite a floaty feel with many of the symbols being above the horizon line. Both of the images were dealing with relationship issues.

CONCLUSIONS

Participant C's Pretest associations featured in both of the images. Love, desire and harmony was the theme for both images as she expressed her current relationship issues. Image one had the outback and autumn depicted. Orange was a favourite colour and her experience was a positive one as orange allowed her to review and reflect on her emotions around her old and new relationships.

PURPLE

1) Pretest

Her pretest associations were of home, feeling safe and being comforted. Purple was considered to be a favourite colour and is present in the home decor. In nature she associated it with sunsets and skies and the season of autumn.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

Purple aroused memories of the Catholic religion, church ceremonies, travelling in Mongolia, coming home, feeling centred and of her family and child sexual abuse.

ii) Physical

In the first session she experienced a strength in her body in the muscles, arms and legs. In the second session she described feeling sick in the stomach due to the memories elicited and wanted to get away.

iii) Psychological

In the first session she had associations of strength: warmth, women's strength and movement, being a woman, a woman's power, being in control of your own life, being centred and life force cycles. In the second session she had strong associations with dreams she had had which were provoked by a television show on child abuse.

She described how she felt dreamy at first but then realised the mood was connected to memories of dreams where family members interfere with her life now and she doesn't want them to. She wanted to get away but couldn't. She also described it as a child within that still came out in her dreaming time.

iv) Emotional

In the first session she stated that she felt strong, like she had a sense of purpose, centred and at home with herself. In the second session the associations arose feelings of anger, confrontation and sadness. The memories made her feel sad and like a child again, which was not nice. She felt drawn in by the colour and emotions.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she associated the colour with a feeling of centredness, being at ease and that forces were coming together. The second session did not elicit a spiritual association.

3) Other

There were no other responses or associations.

IMAGES

Both of the images covered the whole page and there was a strong use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

The symbols depicted in this image were a religious figure, spirals, a wavy pattern, the women's symbol, a heart-shaped necklace, a muscly arm, a hut, a person lying down, a fire, stars, the moon and a spiral which becomes a solid circle. Participant C stated that the women's symbol represented women's power, the religious figure represented the Catholic church and the heart necklace was about people's love. The person lying down looking at the stars, by a fire and the hut was her remembrance of Mongolia. She had special memories of this place and it had a sense of coming home for her.

There was a sense of things which represent power in this image, like the church and love and perhaps a finding of her own power, as represented by the women's symbols and her experiences in Mongolia.

SESSION TWO

The symbols portrayed in this image were a pair of closed eyes; seven people grouped together, ranging in height and one crossed out; tears; spirals; two phallic symbols; two trails of footprints; a cloud; a person with a mesmerised look on their face and a smaller person within the larger one. The Participant described how this image was representative of her sexual abuse and the sexual abuse within the family. The person crossed out in the image was her brother who was the abuser. The two people with the footprints leading away from them were her sister and herself, both victims of abuse by the brother. The footprints of her sister stopped at a spiral but the participants led to the person with the mesmerised look on their face. The two phallic symbols were pointing at another spiral. The spirals were started from different positions. She described the spirals as representing being centred and the tears as representing sadness. She stated that the family knew about the abuse but nothing was done and it was never discussed. In the image, the cloud was around the family and abuse representations which may be indicative of the code of silence the family has around the issue.

COMMON ELEMENTS

The common symbols in both were spirals and representations of herself. Both images depicted an essence of dealing with issues to do with power and power abuse. Image one was more symbolic and less pictorial compared to the second image.

CONCLUSIONS

Participant C's Pretest associations were not reflected in the images. Both images portrayed memories elicited by the colour. The second session was especially strong in its content and allowed her the opportunity to explore this issue. Follow-up counselling was recommended by the writer as no previous therapy had been undertaken by the participant in regard to this issue.

BLACK.1) Pretest

Her pretest associations were of definite, stark and void. Black was not considered a favourite colour but certainly a colour she wore at present. It did not feature as part of her home decor. She had no associations with black in nature but associated it to the season of summer due to the death of growth and the heat.

2) Response Elicitedi) Memories

Black reminded her of: her need for space after bad times, arguments and bad news. It also reminded her of how she goes to the beach with her dog and stares out to sea as a means of attaining that space. She was also reminded of the Rottneest lighthouse, nighttime, night stars and dancing in black clothes.

ii) Physical

She experienced a tension in her muscles all over her body and then relaxation.

iii) Psychological

Psychologically she associated black with being a solid colour, definite, tension, fields of power, judgment, non-committment, like 'black is cool', finding direction in life, floating, comfort, reflective, taking time out and solitude.

iv) Emotional

The emotions experienced were of tension and then relaxation and she felt this contrast. Other emotions experienced were solitude, growth, reflective contemplation needing space and time to ponder, emotions expressed when one needs to be definite about things, denial and being impulsive in her reactions to things.

v) Spiritual

She didn't have any spiritual associations to this colour.

3) Other

She also described how blackness has a coolness and comfort to it. It doesn't matter, you can let go, you don't have to have an opinion, it's safe, and you can wear it when you don't want to make a statement.

IMAGES.

Both of the images covered the whole page and have a strong use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

The symbols depicted were a heart shape, triangles, three circles grouped together, a solid cross, a person next to musical notes, a series of lines with a heart shape at the bottom and a cross at the top, a person lying down with wavy lines around them, a pair of closed eyes with two lines leading towards a question mark, a cross with arrowheads and wavy lines at each end and another heart shape with wavy lines at the bottom and strong lines across the middle. She described the circles as being about having clean edges and being defined; the triangles represented tension; the closed eyes represented her denial when making decisions about directions in her life; the crosses were about direction and fields of tension and the heart with the lines on it was representative of her black and white reaction to things.

SESSION TWO

The symbols portrayed were the ocean, a wall, a person, a dog, a strong horizon line, three islands, a lighthouse, two stars, a large spiral and the moon in three different phases. The participant described this image as being the place she went to get space and where she could be quiet and reflective. The way she portrayed and described this place was that it has a feel of constancy: nothing changed except the phase of the moon.

COMMON ELEMENTS

The only common symbols were the circles and wavy lines. The first image was more symbolic than the second which was more pictorial.

CONCLUSIONS.

Only one of the participant's Pretest associations was displayed in the artwork and that was the notion of being "definite". In the first image there was a sense that she was seeking clarity and direction and she portrayed some tension. The second image portrayed a place where she could think things through, especially after some tension, and gain the clarity and insight she needed. Wearing black was also very important to the participant and she was conscious of its effect.

WHITE

1) Pretest

Her pretest associations were of medical purity, coolness and power (untouchable). White was not classed as a favourite colour and was not present in the home decor. She associated white with snow in nature and to the season of winter and Christmas.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

White invoked memories of the snow in winter in Europe, ceremonies where white is used as a rite of passage symbol and recent medical tests which were good.

ii) Physical

Physically she felt smiling, a sense of standing taller and having a spring in her step. She experienced this in her feet, legs and face.

iii) Psychological

She associated white with: a realisation of an empty mind; vast openness; emptiness; empty of associations; serene but with power and force; "can't touch me"; virginity; cleanliness; purity; lightheartedness; happiness; being relaxed; being nurtured; being spoilt by others and sleep without haunting dreams.

iv) Emotional

Emotionally she felt powerful, pure, empty, wanting to make her mark, wanting to be in the centre of things, wanting to be visible, joyous, happiness, peaceful, festive, lighthearted and like being spoilt.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she associated it with feeling serene and centred.

3) Other

There were no other responses or associations.

IMAGES

Both of the images covered the whole page and there was a strong use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

The symbols depicted were a snow person in the snow, a large cross, a solid circle with another circle around it, a rug with a spiral on it and a smiling muscly person.

Participant C described the symbols as representing the following: the cross was to do with making a mark; the person with muscles was about being serene but having power and force; the rug with the spiral was representative of rituals and ceremonies, as white is used in some cultures only for special occasions; the circles represented a sense of being in the centre, virginity, cleanliness and purity; and the snow person was her associations to the snow. The way the image was depicted gave a sense of four quadrants, each with a symbol in them.

SESSION TWO

The symbols portrayed in this image were: a smiling face, a cup, two balloons, two rising heart shapes and a shoe with a coil coming from it. She described the hearts as representing feeling lighthearted and joyous. The cup was a symbol for being nurtured and cared for and the shoe with the spring represented having a "spring in her step".

This image was related to her health and the positive test results she had received. The feeling of the image was one of celebration, contentment and release.

COMMON ELEMENTS

Both of the images were symbolic in nature but there are no common symbols depicted. The first image was very structured whereas the second one was more open and loose in its use of the symbols.

CONCLUSIONS

Participant Cs' Pretest associations were depicted in the images and both images portrayed memories elicited by the colours. Her associations with snow were portrayed in the first image.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

Participant C had varied themes for each colour each week as she worked through both past and present issues. Some of the main themes explored were her health issues; relationship issues; issues to do with finding direction and clarity in her life and family and abuse issues. Many of these themes resulted from the memories and strong associations elicited by the colour. Very few of her Pretest associations were portrayed in the images. There were many common symbols depicted in the images which included circles, spirals, wavy lines, horizon lines, heart shapes, stars, crosses, women's symbols and people. The colours that she did not rank as favourites elicited strong responses. In the first session the images were more symbolic than in the second session where the images were more pictorial. In the second session she touched on more deeper issues and it is a shame that she did not have the opportunity to do a third session. Perhaps some of her issues would have been resolved further.

PARTICIPANT D

Participant D comes from a Polish/English ethnic background and a Church of England religious background. She aspired to no religion. Participant D has a Bipolar disorder for which she is on medication and seeking professional help. She was an artist by profession and these were her associations.

RED1) Pretest

Participant D did not have any Pretest associations in the general area. Red was classed as a favourite colour and featured in her home decor. In nature she associated red with the earth, the setting sun and roses. The season she associated it with was summer. She also described needing to have around her, at times, her mother's knitted rug, which is mostly red.

2) Response Elicitedi) Memories

Red induced memories of her family, chaos, journeys through her work, self-help through reading and a red shirt recently acquired.

ii) Physical

Physically she experienced heat at the back of her neck, slight light-headedness, and a heat energy in her chest and head.

iii) Psychological

Psychologically her associations were of: sexual energy brought out by sexual abuse; penis; sexual organs; intense energy; throwing oneself into oneself; visiting a time previous but now in a stronger position; energy; earthiness; individuation and self-actualisation; ready for next step and "it is alright to take a leap into the sea of unconsciousness".

iv) Emotional

Emotionally she felt like she was gaining control of that which had been previously out of control, bringing forward things which had been explored but not fully accepted, like she had flooded her awareness of being, excitement, anticipation and energy under control .

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she associated red with being connected, an inner journey, the beginning of awareness, the Fool in the Tarot and that her spiritual self has had to endure many tests with more to come.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses.

IMAGES

The following images all covered the page and had a good use of the colour. Her brush strokes were fine rather than solid.

SESSION ONE

The symbols depicted were a circle; a mountain with swirling energy around it, like a cone of energy; a person leaping from the mountain; a horizon line; the ocean; and a figure with a child in arms. The participant described the image as representing the sexual energy brought about by past sexual abuse. The leaping figure she saw as being like the Fool in the Tarot. The figure holding the child was about safety and the circle was the setting sun. There was a strong phallic element to this image and a floaty feel, like taking a leap into the unknown.

SESSION TWO

The symbols portrayed were a spiral or maze, erratic lines in arcs, the ocean, a woman with no arms or legs, her hair covering her face and breasts exposed and an eye.

Participant D described the eye as being, "All that is watching us. Something bigger than ourselves". The woman with her back to the sea was a connection to last weeks image. She described feeling like jumping off the mountain into the ocean again.

The maze depicted she described as representing the tests her spiritual self has had to come through. The image overall seemed to be portraying a woman who is being swept about by this erratic energy.

SESSION THREE

The symbols used in this image were a rabbit, a bird swooping, a tree, five rocks all on top of one another like a totem pole and a telephone hand piece shape. The participant stated that the rabbit was a connection to earth and a communicator. The telephone hand piece shape was a conductor of the earth, something to connect to the energy of the earth. The whole image she described as being: a symbol of earthiness " the earthiness you need before you can take off like a bird" , individuation and self-actualisation. The image certainly did have a solid an earthy feel to it.

COMMON ELEMENTS

The first two images were both related to the ocean and taking leaps in to the unknown whereas the last image was more earthed. The third image also had a stronger and more solid use of the colour compared to the others. There were not any common symbols other than circles.

CONCLUSIONS

Participant D depicted some of her Pretest associations, such as the earth and the sun. The nurturing figure may be related to her mother and the five rocks on top of each other could be related to her family. The first image was an indication of her sense of coming to participate in the study. She had expressed concerns about the process and how she would handle it, considering her disorder. It literally was a leap into the unknown for her. The second image with the woman with no arms or legs represented a sense of her disconnection from her body. This may have been a result of the medication and the effects of the disorder.

BLUE1) Pretest

The participant did not have any Pretest associations in the general area. She associated blue with coolness, shadows, and misty landscapes in nature. The season she associated it with was spring. She classed blue as a favourite colour and one which she wore presently.

2) Response Elicitedi) Memories

Blue reminded her strongly of a spiritual dreamlike experience she had when in hospital, during a manic phase of her disorder, where she met a blue man in a cave with a bright white light behind him. She was also reminded of her family who have shut her out and relationships which have become ghosts.

ii) Physical

In the first session she stated that she had a hot face and felt teary. In the second she had goose bumps on her skin. The third she felt a cool energy.

iii) Psychological

Her psychological associations were fragile yet strong, spirituality, an enhancement of the present moment, coldness and a blank sense of loss.

iv) Emotional

In the first session she felt humble, gratefulness, awe, teary and like "the memory of a spiritual sanctuary had renewed itself". In the second session she felt cold emotion, like being shut out, rejected, like swimming in icy water and like starting to shut down emotionally. In the third session she felt: a sense of being lost, like searching for answers and like there was an emptiness with expectation of something coming.

y) Spiritual

In the first session she associated strongly with what she described as a spiritual experience. She did not have any spiritual associations in the second session and in the third she associated with "an inner spiritual search for connection".

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses.

IMAGES

In the first two sessions there was a reasonable coverage of the page and use of the colour. In the third session there was a good coverage of the page but not a strong use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

This image portrayed the dreamlike experience she had. There was a spiral, the ocean, an arc or cave, a dotted outline of a figure and a figure curled up. She described feeling honoured and humbled by the blue man's presence.

SESSION TWO

Depicted in this image were a mountain, the ocean, blue energy, five or six figures standing and a face in the ocean. The participant described this image as being about her relationship with her family. She describes the blue energy as being a cold wind blowing between herself and her family. There was a strong sense of shame and a lack of support from her family due to her disorder. She was depicted in the ocean which may be indicative of the strong emotions this elicited for her.

SESSION THREE

This image had the following symbols present: a head with its' mouth open; some phallic type strokes; a person sitting huddled looking scared; a receptacle with a flash of energy and a star or tree. The participant described this image as being about her self-confidence and wanting to yell so she can hear herself.

She described the different aspects of the image as follows: the receptacle was an ancient container of energy; the flash of energy was to show it is there a strong feel of a person being yelled at.

COMMON ELEMENTS

The images all had a similar theme, being her disorder, and its implications for her. The common symbols were oceans arcs or strokes of energy and figures.

CONCLUSIONS

Her Pretest associations of coolness and misty landscapes were depicted in the images, but essentially the images were elicited by memories. This was a favourite colour and one which allowed her to explore aspects of her disorder and how it affects her life.

YELLOW

1) Pretest

Her association in the Pretest was light. In nature it was sunflowers and the season was spring. Yellow was not a favourite colour, one she wears or has in her home decor.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

She remembered a dream where she was standing on a cliff with a hand glider. She jumped off and landed on a beach in front of a man which she recognised as Jesus or the archetypal male. She also had memories of meditating and how this brought on her first manic episode and was the trigger for her disorder.

ii) Physical

She had a sensation in her eyes like eye strain an out of body sensation and a feeling of lightheadedness.

iii) Psychological

Her psychological associations were: frustrated because the yellow is too raw; bewilderment; a dislodged sense of self; cold yellow; conception; light; human potential; beginning of her journey and trying to purport exact energy.

iv) Emotional

Emotionally she felt annoyed, trying to grasp a sense of being, wonderment that she is here, distanced, feeling of "I was meant to be born", unsolid, lightness, lighter in mood, and like dealing with a bigger energy, "God energy".

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she felt connected to God, to the light and her spiritual self. She went from feeling disassociated to feeling Christ like. She described a sense of being brought back to her fundamental beliefs and things she had discovered like making the most of oneself and connecting with people. She also described feeling awed by her own creation.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses.

IMAGES

In the first session there was not a good coverage or use of the colour. The second and third sessions did have good use and coverage.

SESSION ONE

This image depicted her dream of standing on a cliff with a hand glider on and a figure standing on the beach. There was also a horizon line. She described the man as Jesus, the supreme archetype.

SESSION TWO

In this image there were the following portrayed: an egg, sperm and a figure with its arms in the nurturing position. It had a strong fertility feel to it and she described it as representing creation, with the figure being God.

SESSION THREE

The symbols portrayed in this image were an eye, arcs, a circle and tears. She described this image as representing God energy. The tears were cleansing so that she could see her potential more clearly. The image certainly had a strong sense of crying.

COMMON ELEMENTS

All of the images had references to God or Jesus and dealt with the notion of creation and potential. There were not many common symbols other than circles.

CONCLUSIONS

Participant Ds" Pretest associations were not depicted. One of the images was elicited by the memory of a dream and there was a similar theme present in all of them. Her references to God seemed to be elicited by this colour and this connection to God is common in the manic phase of Bipolar disorder. Perhaps yellow stimulated this aspect of her disorder.

GREEN

1) Pretest

Her associations in the Pretest were new growth, optimism and expectation. In nature she associated it with the trees, the grass, and pastures. The season she associated it with was the European summer. Green was not classed as a favourite colour but is a colour she wears at present. It is not a part of her home decor.

2) Response Elicited**i) Memories**

She described having intangible memories of herself in recovery.

ii) Physical

Physically she described feeling some of the emotions in her head and mind. She also felt a hollowness all over.

iii) Psychological

She associated this colour with: being at the bottom of an abyss; apprehension; what next?; smooth manicured lawns; being surrounded by nature; sitting inside the unconscious mind; verdant growth; actualising of being; wide open; new growth; pain of growing; life being born; inner self rejuvenated; growth and fertility.

iv) Emotional

She connected with the following emotions: apprehension, optimism, lost, feeling caught and watched; unknowingness, sterile and hollow.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she described a feeling of tapping into a consciousness, into an energy not fully acknowledged, feeling connected spiritually and in limbo.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses.

IMAGES

The images all varied in their use of the colour and coverage of the page. Session one and three were reasonable but session two was weak.

SESSION ONE

The image depicted two mountains or hills covered in small lines. There was a winged figure in between these mountains, floating off the ground. She described this image as: "Sitting down inside the unconscious mind, waiting and flexing my wings".

The short lines on the mountains were new shoots or verdant growth. There was a sense of self actualisation which had already taken place as the figure is off the ground.

SESSION TWO

Depicted in this image were just three things: a face with its mouth open, a spirally cone, and a circle with a line coming from it. She described the spiral and circle as plants and the face as expressing happiness at the new growth. She described an awareness of her own growth.

SESSION THREE

This image portrayed an expressionless face, a grid, and a full figured person holding the grid. The participant described the grid as a matrix which is the collective unconscious. The face was her feminine aspect which was singing and she stated that her potential is housed there. The figure was her masculine aspect which was trying to communicate with the feminine aspect, through the matrix. She described the masculine as being about physical drive, assertiveness, logic, and standing on the earth. She described how she wanted to explore these energies further as they were currently communicating differently to each other.

COMMON ELEMENTS

All of the images had a theme to do with personal growth and exploring her 'self' more. There was a nature theme to the first two images but there were no common symbols depicted.

CONCLUSIONS

Her Pretest association with new growth was evident in all of the images. None of the images were elicited by memories or present events. Essentially they dealt with her own process of growth and future areas for her to work on.

ORANGE

1) Pretest

Her Pretest associations were warm, comforting and light. In nature she associated it with oranges and other food and the season of autumn. Orange was not rated as a favourite colour, one which she wears or has present in her home decor.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

She had memories of times when she felt small and insignificant and of meditating.

ii) Physical

Participant Ds" only physical response was a feeling of lightheadedness.

iii) Psychological

Psychologically she had the following associations: womanhood, a feminine presence, journey of unknown, seed or genetic energy, going back to basics, balance, harmony, solidarity, individuality, transitions and an awakened interest to the colour.

iv) Emotional

The emotions elicited by this colour were curiosity, increasing friendliness, playfulness, and an orange glow.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she described a feeling of a spiritual presence. "Women from long ago were giving their approval and regarding me as a kindred spirit". She also experienced a sense of being watched and of being at one with the universe.

3) Other

There were no other associations or responses elicited.

IMAGES

The coverage of the page and the use of the colour were good in the first two session but weaker in the last session.

SESSION ONE

This image depicted four circular shaped totems across the page with three dots, one in between each pair. The participant described these totems as "orange, golden ladies". They was a symbol of womanhood and the dots were the links between them. This image was very balanced and certainly had a strong feminine feel to it.

SESSION TWO

She described this image as being a bird which turned into a hat . Also depicted is a dot, three lines and an eye. She explains that the hat represents artists and their sense of individuality. The three lines were figures who were guardians and the eye represented other people who were watching out for her.

SESSION THREE

Represented in this image were two oval shapes with some colour in the middle, a square and a figure in the square. She described the oval shapes as being representative of two pods, one male and one female. The square was a window with the figure looking in. She stated that the overall theme was about genetics and says: "Something in my genes is coming to be. The time is right. Spiritually we are gaining a sense of who we are".

COMMON ELEMENTS

Each one of the images was different and had a different theme. There were no common symbols or elements. The only link or commonality was that they have a connection to the spiritual. In the first image it was the presence of the women from a long time ago, the second image had guardians and the third has elements of creation.

CONCLUSIONS.

There were no Pretest associations depicted and the images were not elicited by memories. There were no common symbols or themes, each one dealt with something different. There was the strong spiritual element present in all three images which was a recurring theme.

PURPLE

1) Pretest

Her Pretest association was incubation and in nature, it was distant hills and the season of autumn. Purple did not rate as a favourite colour, one she wears or has in her decor.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

She remembered funerals and friendships lost.

ii) Physical

She described different sensations around her head and movement in her body.

iii) Psychological

Her associations were a tunnel emerging, immediate interest in the colour, an affinity to the colour, spirituality, opportunity to journey into the mind, aromatic earthiness, forest of unconscious mind, womanhood/mothering relationship issues with her mother and nurturing herself through art.

iv) Emotional

Emotionally she felt excitement, intrigue, freedom, being idealness, chaotic, involvement, sadness, loneliness, melancholic and wanting to feel comforted.

v) Spiritual

In the first session she did not have any spiritual responses. In the second session she described feeling spiritually sad. She stated that she felt connected to a deeper part of herself that had been sleeping and now is retreating and summing up the situation. In the third week she described feeling spiritually alive.

3) Other

There were no other responses or associations.

IMAGES

All of the images had a good coverage of the page and a good use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

This image consisted of a lot of energetic brush strokes over the page. The participant stated that she just wanted to surround herself in the colour; "breath it in". She described this colour as being a spiritual colour and as "magic", "quiet" and "appreciating". She also describe a tunnel in the image which she was not ready for yet and there being a lot of chaos.

SESSION TWO

This image depicted an eye within two circles and rain coming down in front of it. She described it as charged energy and like a purple down pour. The eye she stated is her inner eye or intuition. She also talked about the image as an eye looking out from behind a veil. She expressed that she would like to paint her family in purple.

SESSION THREE

In this image was portrayed a figure holding a baby, two tall thin bare trees, a branch stemming from one of the trees with a singing bird on it and a square with a semi-circle in it. She described the image as depicting the forest of the unconscious mind. The semi-circle was a doorway which led to an area within herself where her art and life flow.

The bird was representative of her potential as an artist. The woman with the baby was to do with motherhood and womanhood. She described how her art became her baby and she nurtured herself through her art. She also talked of issues with her art due to how she was mothered as a baby.

COMMON ELEMENTS

There were no common symbols in the images but as the participant progressed from one session to another there were more symbols depicted. Purple seemed to elicit issues to do with her family especially her relationship with her mother.

CONCLUSIONS

Participant D's Pretest association of incubation was interesting because it seemed as though there was something there incubating which only seemed to emerge in session three when she touched on her issues to do with her mother. She also discussed wanting to paint her family in purple, which was encouraged.

BLACK

1) Pretest

Her Pretest association was of a "rich darkness in which to examine your own thoughts". She had no associations to nature or a season. Black was not considered a favourite colour, one which she wears or that is present in her decor.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

Black elicited memories of cave paintings and the dark nature of her previous art exhibition.

ii) Physical

Physically she had a sensation of being present and experienced this in her head.

iii) Psychological

Psychologically she felt black elicited a sense that her depression needed acknowledgement and that it was like a black cloud. She also had a bizarre sense of satisfaction of producing a sombre image. Her other associations were death, rich darkness, forests, slumbering, ancient civilisations, a sense of the past, the Fool in the Tarot, forest of unconscious, sea of collective unconscious, composting and a process of change.

iv) Emotional

She describes feeling: excited; a black mood; dread yet comfort; heavy pounding; heavy darkness; probing deep within; mentally regressing; and profoundness.

v) Spiritual

Spiritually she described black as having touched an important energy which she had been ignoring. she also described spiritual earthiness and a symbolic death and how life is composting.

3) Other

There were no other responses or associations elicited.

IMAGES

All of the images had a good coverage of the page and good use of the colour.

SESSION ONE

This image depicted a face with big eyes, a bird on a branch and a snake-like thing coming from the face. The participant described the image as being connected to the Fool in the Tarot and symbolic deaths. It was a skull which represented death and she stated that the earth was trying to communicate with her.

She also described a bleak landscape which was heavy to walk through. Overall, she stated that it represented her depression.

SESSION TWO

This image portrayed a face with eyes looking up, a nose, but no mouth. There were wavy lines and a group of crosses on top of the head. She described the images on top of the head as a forest of the unconscious and a sea of the conscious being represented by the wavy lines. The eyes she described as being heavy and watching. This image she stated represented her depression and how she slept a lot when in this state.

SESSION THREE

Depicted in this image were a cave with paintings, a horizon line, a tall thin figure, and a smaller figure sitting down. She described this image as representing ancient figures, a man and a woman, who are occupying a desolate landscape. They were both walking around oblivious to each other. She stated, "Something happened a long time ago which broke man and woman".

COMMON ELEMENTS

The first two images, which both depict faces, strongly reflected the participants' dealings with her own depression. The third image was different but still has a stark and depressive feel to it.

CONCLUSIONS

Participant Ds' Pretest association could be a description of what the depression elicited for her. Perhaps the depression allowed a space to examine her own thoughts. The last image was elicited by a memory of cave paintings. All of the images have a heavy and stark feel to them.

WHITE

1) Pretest

The participant had no associations with white. She did not class it as a favourite colour, as one she wears or has as a part of her home decor.

2) Response Elicited

i) Memories

White elicited memories of wedding veils, marriage, patriarchy and a dreamlike state.

ii) Physical

She experienced nausea, a fizziness in her head and in the last session a cool, calming light all over.

iii) Psychological

She associated strongly to weddings, wedding veils and patriarchy. She described these as representing "the big sell". She also associated it with white light which brought about instant revulsion and she described having many losses in childhood which were associated with the colour white. She had no control over these situations and there was no validation of her grief.

iv) Emotional

There were strong emotions elicited by white, such as: revulsion, resistance, fizziness, feeling dubious and feeling out of control.

3) Other

The participant also described how she had a white light which obliterated everything and triggered her first manic episode. This occurred when she was meditating.

IMAGES

The participant refused to use white in the first session. In the second there was minimal use of the colour and minimal coverage of the page. In the third session the usage and coverage was slightly better.

SESSION TWO

The image consisted of a circle on a stick. She described it as a wedding veil which she then changed into a tree. This was a healing tree.

SESSION THREE

This image depicted a person lying huddled, a square with a circle in it and a cross on top and a series of dots. She described the person as herself and stated that she was receiving energy from the dots. The dots were the energy and the cross was the connection between the two. The person looked very humbled and scared.

COMMON ELEMENTS

There were no common elements or themes depicted by the images.

CONCLUSIONS

The only conclusion that one can draw is that white elicited strong memories and reactions which is why she did not fill in the Pretest questions and why she struggled when faced with having to paint with the colour. Her association with her past and the manic episode seemed to elicit the third image. The person in this image appears to be fearful of the dots which she said represent energy. Due to the strong reaction in the first session it was surprising that she used the paint in the following sessions.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

The colour usage and page coverage varied from week to week and colour to colour. Compared to the other participants there was a slight difference in these aspects perhaps due to her Bipolar disorder. One would need to consider whether the medication was affecting this aspect of her work. Also evident with Participant D was her lack of emotional and physical response to the colour. Again, one would wonder if the medication was affecting her ability to be in touch with these aspects of herself or if this was indicative of the effects of the Bipolar disorder. There were many associations to God, Jesus, spirituality and otherworldliness. This participant also referred to the unconscious, conscious and archetypes throughout the process. This may be indicative of the fact that this participant was in ongoing therapy and was therefore very familiar with the usage of these terms. The common symbols portrayed throughout were oceans, figures, faces, eyes, mountains and birds. Some of the images were elicited by the pretest, some by memories and some just purely by the colour. There was a strong element of the participant dealing with her disorder and how it affected her life. She also had family issues present and there was a sense of self-discovery and growth throughout the process. The two aspects of her disorder were also portrayed. Both aspects of the manic phase and aspects of her depression were evident in the images and her responses.