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What art therapists consider to be patients´ inner change and how it may appear during art therapy.

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1. Introduction

Since the start of art therapy, the concept of change has permeated the literature (Borowsky Junge, 1994; 2012). The fact that, like other psychotherapeutic treatment, art therapy is intended to contribute to change and development in individuals is generally accepted today (Edwards, 2004). Multiple underlying therapeutic mechanisms to promote change have been proposed (Kelly et al., 2015). However, art therapists do not always share a common language in description of change and they often fail to differentiate whether it is an inner change, or a more temporary change. On a psychological level inner change may be defined as an individual movement from one state, which for some reason is considered inadequate, to a more appropriate state, where increased knowledge and insight may lead to a change of enhanced well-being (Klimovsky et al., 1994). Change is often described as one of the results or effects of art therapy (Springham, 2016). For example, art therapists may talk about enhancing well-being, overcoming difficulties and challenges (Maujean, Pepping, & Kendall, 2014), personal exploration and growth (Malchiodi, 2012), making sense of the unknown or gaining access to an unconscious inner world (Edwards, 2004) or reduced symptoms (Montag et al., 2014; Reynolds, Lim, & Prior, 2008). For studying this mechanism of change, Czamanski-Cohen and Weihs (2016) have developed a body-mind model, and Armstrong et al. (2016) propose definitions of dramatic projection and embodiment in drama therapy.

The broad variation in how change is described in art therapy literature is adequate in relation to different art therapy praxises, but raises the following questions: How can the outcome of art therapy be understood and communicated in clinical settings and in research? Can a more differentiated description of change and common language about change promote
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