

# ART THERAPY RESOURCES



## ART THERAPY CASE STUDY BACKGROUND: BODY IMAGE

Sophia had attended a number of art therapy sessions to date which covered how she viewed her body and how she believed her body was perceived by society - not accepting. Sophia and her therapist had discussed how all of Sophia's thoughts about her body and other people's bodies related to their looks only and had started to wonder are our bodies only designed for looking. The therapist took this as a cue to further explore the utility of our body to try and move Sophia's perception of a body as only for aesthetic purposes.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- This art therapy exercises focus on what our bodies are designed for. Individuals with body image issues usually focus on the aesthetic factors of bodies whereas our bodies are actually designed for our survival, participation, and enjoyment in life. This art therapy exercise will help your client start to explore another perspective outside of beauty.
- Discuss with your client the type of art supplies they may like to work with in this session. A large sheet of paper and drawing/painting supplies will be useful for this exercise. Clients could also create a functioning 3D perspective of the body to illustrate it's vital functions. For a 2D artwork, ask the client to draw a regular body image and label various parts of the body to indicate an important physical function of that part of the body. Your client may also wish to draw the body in various poses to indicate the physical nature of the body.
- After the artwork is complete use the drawing as a starting point to discuss the usefulness of the clients body in completing basic survival tasks as well as participating and enjoying life. This can help the client gain a broader perspective of the utility of their body in all aspects of their life. This may help the client understand that focusing on the aesthetic aspect of their body is a smaller part of their entire body function.

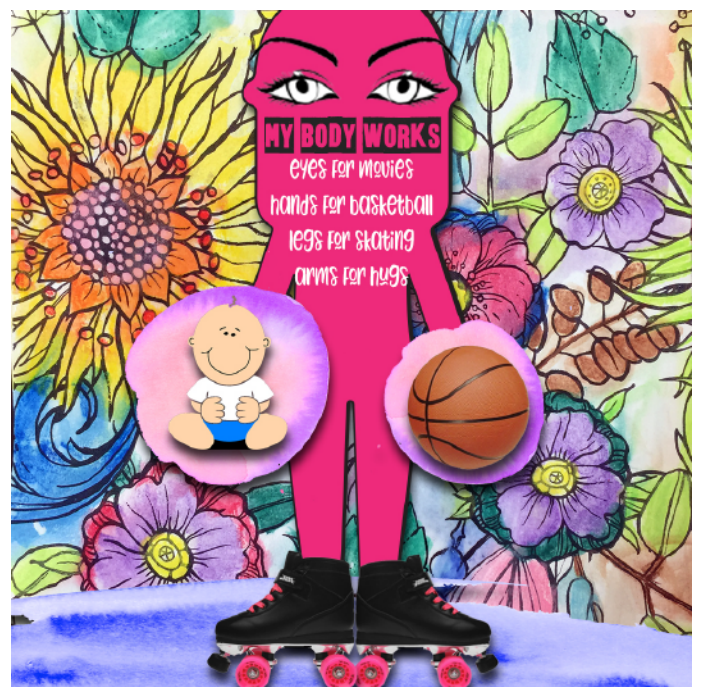
### EXAMPLE EXERCISE:

As Sophia created her artwork and labeled the various physical functions of the body, she could see the body is useful for lifting, walking, jumping, sleeping, holding, hugging, laughing, thinking and more. Sophia had always viewed her body as useless as it did not meet the beauty expectations she had held in her mind.

Through her artwork she could see that her body was actually useful and allowed her to do many of her favourite things:

- watch movies with her eyes
- play basketball with her hands
- skate with her legs
- hug her baby cousin with her arms

Sophia noted that a beautiful body was not required to enjoy any of these things in her life.



NOTE: more details can be found at [www.arttherapyresources.com.au/case-study-bodyimage](http://www.arttherapyresources.com.au/case-study-bodyimage)