

ART THERAPY RESOURCES



ART THERAPY CASE STUDY BACKGROUND: IDENTITY ISSUES

Emily had recently moved to a new town and was having trouble integrating into her new school and establishing a new circle of friends. She had begun to withdraw from participating in activities and hobbies that she usually liked. Emily recently discussed how she had stopped engaging in some of her interests such as drawing, skating, and collecting her favourite doll. She thought all of these hobbies were too young for her now and she had nothing interesting left to do. She felt this made her uninteresting and was the reason why she couldn't make any new friends. This exercise is designed to help clients understand the nature of human development and transformation. This client had expressed an interest in drawing, skating, and collecting dolls but felt these hobbies no longer applied to her because they were too young for her as a teenager. This exercise can help the client understand how parts of us can change as we age and develop more mature perspectives in our life.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Ask your client to reflect on an activity, hobby, or interest that has formed a significant part in their life. Ask them to reflect on the activity itself and the benefits they have derived from the hobby/interest including the impact on the client's identity. For example as an artist, skater, and collector. Ask the client to create an artwork that reflects the benefits the client has gained from that hobby/interest
- Discuss with the client the potential ways the hobby/interest could be transformed or changed into another hobby/interest that would suit them at their current stage in life. How might these changes be made? Ask your client to represent their new view of their hobby/interest in a second artwork.
- Discuss with your client the potential benefits of modifying their hobby/interest and how this might impact their enjoyment of the hobby/interest. This can also open a discussion about changing interests over the lifespan of an individual and how the benefits of these activities affect our identity.

EXAMPLE EXERCISE:

Emily could see from the artwork she created that there were benefits that her hobbies gave her including the formation of her identity as someone who likes to learn and undertake interesting activities.

Emily was able to see that her hobbies and interests are continuously evolving and changing as she matures and discovers new things.

Emily mentioned that finding new hobbies could help her find new friends.



NOTE: more details can be found at www.arttherapyresources.com.au/case-study-identity