

ART THERAPY RESOURCES



ART THERAPY CASE STUDY BACKGROUND: CHRONIC UNEMPLOYMENT

Sebastian had been invited to attend a free art therapy group program that was run at a local community centre for those experiencing chronic unemployment. Sebastian had been out of work for 8 months. Sebastian had been feeling especially low the past few weeks and have lost motivation to find new work. His friend who had also been retrenched at the same time as he encouraged him to attend the art therapy group.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Create a tower of self-esteem. Keeping exploring positive statements about yourself to build a tower of self-esteem with each statement placed on top of the other. Topics you may want to explore are qualities, talents, skills, strengths, achievements.
- Ask your client to reflect on the qualities, talents, skills, strengths, achievements they have developed over their lifetime.
- Ask your client to use art materials to create a tower of self-esteem. You may want to use the term self-esteem or self, skills, qualities, or strengths in your discussion. Words can play a significant part in this art exercise. You may want to provide a collage of words or materials for writing.
- After your client has created their artwork, you can begin a discussion that expands upon the skills, qualities, and strengths the client may have expressed in their artwork. Discuss how these qualities existed before and after unemployment. Have these qualities felt diminished to your client during their period of unemployment? Additionally, you may want to discuss with your client how these qualities have helped them navigate them through this difficult period, and how they can help your client in the future to find employment.

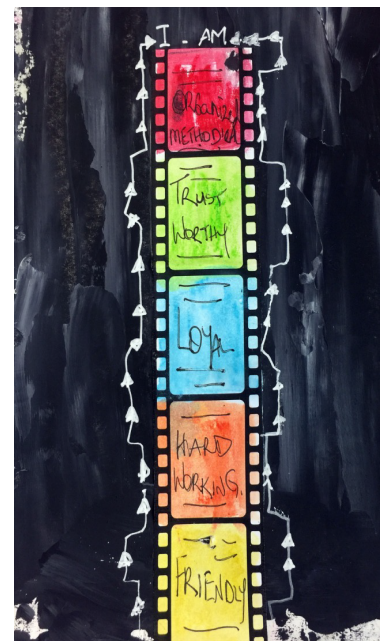
This art therapy exercise is taken from the Developing the Self Guidebook available in the store on the link below:
<https://arttherapyresources.com.au/shop/art-therapy-guidebook-self/>

EXAMPLE EXERCISE:

Sebastian noted he originally felt uncomfortable starting this exercise as he didn't feel he had any positive strengths or qualities to mention. Sebastian felt beaten by his circumstances and unemployable due to his personal traits.

Sebastian initially held back in creating art, however, seeing others in the group participate in the art activity started to provide some motivation for him to engage in the activity. Sebastian was able to name a few of these qualities that he felt were helpful when originally creating his career path. Sebastian was reminded of the challenges he originally felt in developing his career and this art exercise reminded him that those qualities could help him re-establish himself again.

Sebastian felt the dark background of his artwork represented this difficult time of his life. Sebastian had written his positive strengths in coloured blocks to remind him that he could stand out from the darkness of this experience.



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