



## ★ *Art Therapy & Adolescents*

Below is an art therapy exercise that can help your adolescent client explore the many views of themselves as they develop in adolescents. Adolescents are making the transition between childhood where they are heavily dependent on adults to a new era of independence where they are interacting with adults on a peer basis.

As adolescents make this transition, they may find there are parts of themselves that seems in conflict with each other. Eg independence vs dependence, knowledgeable vs unknowledgeable, mature vs immature. This art therapy exercise can help the adolescent explore the transition process from childhood to adolescent to adulthood. In this respect the exercise can also be explained in terms of past, present, future.

Ask your adolescent client to create an artwork or 3D art piece (eg, mask, clay etc) to reflect the view they hold of themselves from the following points of time:

- Childhood (past)
- Adolescent (current)
- Adulthood (future)

Discussion after the exercise can focus on many aspects of the adolescents development process.

- Do they notice that life is a path of development?
- Do they feel their beliefs, values, and understanding of themselves changing as they grow?
- Where does the adolescent want to go in terms of development into adulthood? Do they want to improve confidence or another part of themselves?
- Does the client believe they life has a direction? Does the client believe in goals?
- How does the client perceive change?

These are some questions to explore, however, the process of self-discovery with adolescents can be varied and unpredictable as you explore what your adolescent client believes is important to themselves.

