

ART THERAPY RESOURCES



ART THERAPY CASE STUDY BACKGROUND: BIPOLAR DISORDER

Karen came to the art therapy sessions diagnosed with Bipolar II. In previous sessions she had explored the types of behaviours that were symptomatic of her moods. She had discussed how she could establish a support network when she needed help to manage her stress levels. Karen was currently experiencing a severe bout of depression. Karen felt that she lacked the ability to recognise her symptoms as they were building. She often argued with family members about her moods and she felt they were wrong in their assessment of her behaviour. This exercise is created to help the client identify the patterns of their behaviour that may indicate they are experiencing a depressive or manic state. The client can learn to observe their behaviour and reflect on how they perceive this behaviour compared to how family members perceive this behaviour. This exercise can help your client gain insight into their interpersonal relationships and how they can be improved through identifying and understanding differences of perceiving the client's behaviour.

INSTRUCTIONS:

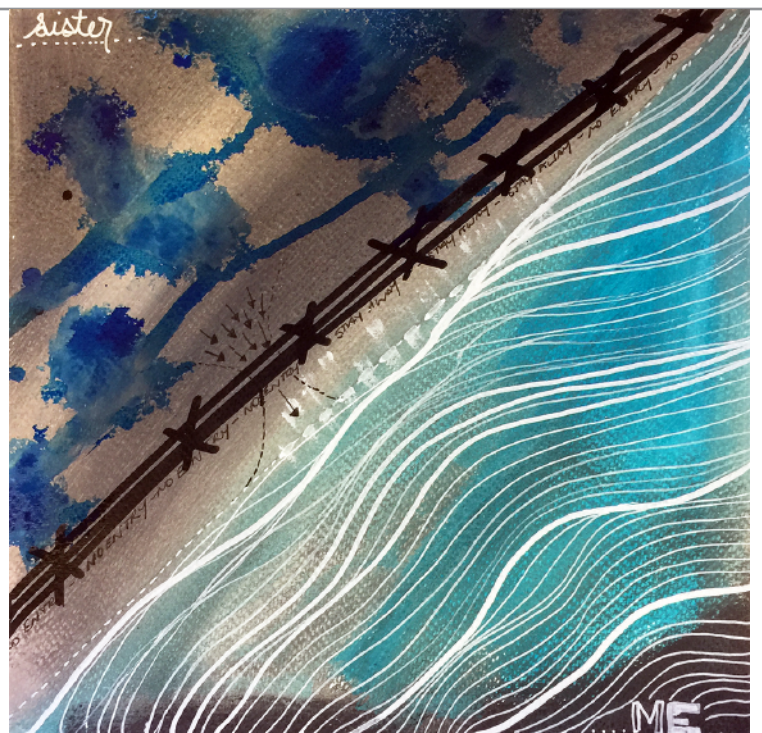
- Discuss with your client the type of art supplies they may like to work with in this session.
- Ask your client to recall a recent interaction with a family member that focused on aspects of their behaviour.
- Ask your client to portray in their artwork the difference in their view and their family members view of their behaviour. Your client may like to use a piece of paper and divide it in half to reflect the two opposing views.
- Ask your client to reflect on the differences and similarities between the two sides. Is there a significant difference or marginal difference? Does your client have insight into the perceived differences?

EXAMPLE EXERCISE:

Karen recalled a recent experience with her sister where they argued about Karen's depression and how she was becoming socially withdrawn.

Through the art exercise Karen gained insight into the perception of her behaviour by her sister and how it might worry her that Karen is becoming non-responsive to her contact. Karen felt guilt at her moods affecting her family.

Karen was able to reflect from the artwork how people perceive each other. Karen decided to use this as a way of discussing her depression with her sister and what level of interaction she felt comfortable with when dealing with her sister.



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