



## INTEGRATE TREATMENT FOR PTSD

Given the evolving landscape of PTSD treatment, there are practical steps art therapists can take to integrate the treatment for PTSD into their practice. Below are five actionable steps to help implement this knowledge effectively:

### 1. Collaborate with Multidisciplinary Teams

Art therapists should actively collaborate with other healthcare providers, including GPs, psychologists, social workers, and psychiatrists, to create a comprehensive treatment plan for clients with PTSD. This collaboration might involve participating in team meetings or consulting with specialists to ensure that the art therapy sessions are aligned with the client's overall treatment goals. By working in partnership with other professionals, art therapists can provide a more holistic approach to care.

### 2. Educate Clients and Families About PTSD

One of the most valuable contributions art therapists can make is helping both clients and their families understand PTSD. Initiating psychoeducation through art therapy allows clients and families to express their feelings about trauma and recovery in ways that are less intimidating than traditional verbal education. This might involve creating visual metaphors of trauma or recovery, such as a drawing of a 'broken' object that the client works to repair through art. This process can help normalize feelings and reduce the stigma surrounding PTSD.

### 3. Adopt Trauma-Informed Practices

As an art therapist, it is vital to adopt a trauma-informed approach in every session. This includes creating a safe and secure environment for clients, being mindful of potential triggers, and pacing the work according to the client's readiness. Trauma-informed art therapy involves offering choices in the therapeutic process, respecting the client's boundaries, and being sensitive to the emotional weight that art-making may invoke. Building a trusting relationship is key to this approach.

### 4. Incorporate Self-Care Into Your Own Practice

Self-care is not only important for clients but also for art therapists who work with trauma survivors. Regular supervision, peer support groups, and personal therapy are essential practices for managing the emotional toll of working with clients with PTSD. Art therapists should also maintain healthy professional boundaries and avoid overloading their caseloads to prevent burnout. Engaging in creative practices outside of work, such as art-making or mindfulness activities, can also help maintain emotional balance.

### 5. Offer Remote Support in Rural or Isolated Areas

For art therapists working in rural or remote areas, telehealth can provide a critical means of extending care to clients with PTSD. Remote art therapy sessions can still be highly effective, with clients sending digital images of their work and discussing the emotional process through secure video calls. Providing online workshops or offering telemedicine consultations in collaboration with primary care providers can ensure that clients receive consistent and specialized support despite geographical limitations.

**BLOG POST LINK:** <https://arttherapyresources.com.au/art-therapy-ptsd>