

HEALING PAINTING AND ART SURGERY - 2 hours

HEALING PAINTING - 20 minutes

Set up:

Flip chart of at least 8 sheets of plain paper on stand.

Demonstrator's set of oil pastels (paper wrappings removed)

Sets of basic oil pastels (wrappings removed) incl. 7 spectrum colours and black and white.

Roll of paper towel.

One A4 lap board for each participant

Pack of plain A4 80gm. paper - allow eight sheets per participant.

Chairs set out as a horseshoe with the presenter's chair and flip chart completing the circle.

Two or three rectangular tables outside of the horseshoe.

Tea, coffee, water, biscuits. Hot water thermos flasks. Polystyrene cups.

Clock

Arrival:

Playing a suitable CD as people arrive helps to ease the atmosphere (folk music has wide appeal) and, if practical, personally welcoming each participants is recommended.

Participation fees should be paid before the start of the workshop and receipted.

Preliminaries:

1. Introduce self (3 minutes max)
2. Session schedule, expected refreshment break and finishing time, logistics including fire exits and assembly points.
3. Course aims and achievement expectations.
4. Invite each participant to quickly introduce themselves to the group
i.e. name/where from/what do/any art connection?

Introduction to Healing Painting:

Our bodies are naturally programmed to heal themselves. An insect flies into your eye, your tear ducts immediately flood the whole area to flush it out again. You cut yourself and, responding to its programming, blood mingles with air and a clot forms allowing the new skin tissue to begin to grow. Your stomach juices become congealed through bad eating, mucus forms to solidify and expel the whole messy chaos either upwards or downwards; and so on.

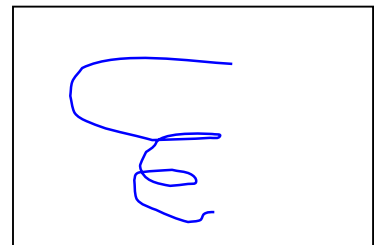
Easy isn't it? If this is right then we have nothing to worry about in the area of our health and wellbeing. However, if the long hospital waiting lists are anything to go by, then something must be interfering in the natural healing mechanism of the body. Could it be that our mind has something to do with it? That, by worrying about what's wrong, we are causing stress to gather and interfere with our natural healing processes?

Our thoughts are more than simply a process of thinking about love, work, food and money. They are a creative energy and are extremely powerful. In an instant we can think harmony into chaos and visa versa. We have the power to distort or even prevent the action of our body's natural healing responses from reaching the root of the condition. It is like erecting a barricade of stress and worry, which remains firmly in place until the mind is sufficiently convinced that it is safe to release this thought-form barricade. And that is when the natural healing forces begin to flow in. It is so very simple to do it, and that is what these exercise are all about, convincing the mind that it is safe to let go and heal.

Process:

Presenter asks participants to sit quietly with the board, paper, a set of oil pastels and two or three sheets of paper towel ready to hand. When ready the Presenter directs as follows:

- Relax and ask yourself how you are feeling now. Let your awareness run through your body, from head to toes, check the feelings in all parts of yourself (don't be shy, its all yours).
- Ask yourself if there are any physical, mental or emotional condition present at this time which are giving you concern? For example: toothache, soreness or pain, a chronic condition which may have been with you for some time or a condition which has recently come about. Or perhaps you may have some anxiety or feeling of remorse and powerlessness (or even impatience with this exercise!) In your mind you may feel scattered, dull or lacking enthusiasm. Become aware of any area in yourself which you would like to transform into an expression of well-being,
- Chose just one condition which you have identified and focus particularly upon its feeling within you and around you.
- Imagine the shape of this feeling - is it jagged, symmetrical, irregular, is it foggy, yielding, soft, hard or immovable? Chose your own shape for the feeling of your condition and at the same time imagine using colours to represent the feeling and the lights and shades of it.
- When you feel ready, reach for your colours and, in no more that 30 seconds, draw it out on the paper in its shape and colour (for example a red zigzag line, a grey mass plus yellow). It is very important that you draw it out quickly for the longer you take in representing and working on this initial sketch, the more energy you will be giving to the condition and that is opposite to the purpose of this exercise.



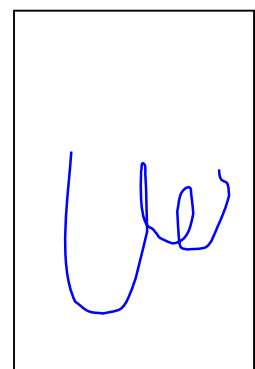
example 1

The Presenter asks if there are any questions and if everyone understands what is required. They then start the process and calls out "Stop" after approximately 30 seconds.

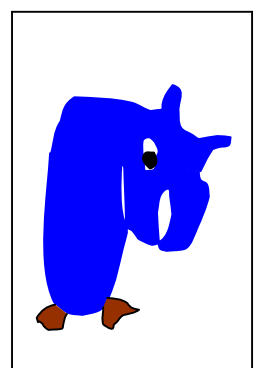
It is important to the process to avoid any sharing of diagrams at this point.

The Presenter continues as follows

- Now release from your mind what your sketch represented, it is important to the exercise that you do not hold onto the idea of your drawing being, for example, your injured knee. It should be for you nothing more than a coloured shape on the paper.
- Turn the paper around and around - not over onto the reverse side and for the next 10 minutes (or however much longer you would like to take) develop the shape in front of you into something which you are going to enjoy looking at afterwards. Become the child you once were and begin without too much thought, just have fun with the colours. Create whatever takes your fancy; a pattern of colours, flowers, a garden, a landscape, mandala, a surrealist fantasy. But all the time that you are creating your delight, please do keep your mind away from the original meaning of the shape; as it will inhibit the action of this exercise.
- It is important to release all of the conditioning you may have received around the so-called 'meanings of colours'. The fact is: colours can mean whatever you chose them to mean. If you want to use black then use it. Just have fun as you did when you were three years old and didn't worry what other people thought about your 'artistic merit'. If you find yourself saying something like "I will surround my condition with healing green" then you have totally missed the point of this exercise and the opportunity it offers.



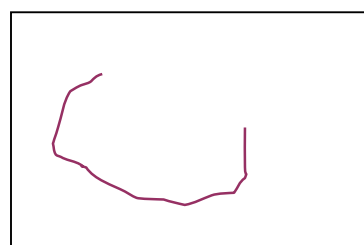
example 2



example 3

The Presenter calls out "Stop" after approximately 10 minutes, reassembles the group and then continues:

- Your picture is what it is so do not attempt to analyse it, this process is not an Art Therapy Exercise. Just enjoy the experience of its creation and we are not interested if other people are not enjoying it too! (example 2)
- While you are looking at the picture you might ask yourself questions like:
 - "How am I feeling now?
Do I feel that anything has shifted in the condition I originally identified?"
 - "Did I enjoy doing the drawing and if not, why not?"
 - "How would my condition look now if I were to focus on it again?
Would it be the same shape and colour?"
- Take another piece of paper and use it to answer that last question. Again it should be done quickly - 30 seconds.



example 4

The Presenter calls out "Stop" after approximately 30 seconds.

- See the difference!

If the group of participants is less than eight then the Presenter invites each participant in turn to share their transformed picture with the group. If the group is more than eight then the Presenter invites each participant to share with the person next to them.

The Presenter continues:

- Use the Healing Painting process to transform situations of stress in your working life too. If you are concerned about the meeting you have to attend, just grab the nearest ball point pen and an old envelope and scribble out your feelings of stress. Then take a couple of minutes to create something pleasing from the shape, a little flower, a happy face and then go to your meeting - there will probably be less stress emanating from you and often the process of the meeting goes better than expected. Something in the atmosphere seems to have shifted and more 'light' seems to be around. Try it for yourself, bring it into your life, your work and relationships with those around you.

The session ends with a group feedback and the Presenter's announcement of next workshop.

ART SURGERY - 1hr 30 mins.

Set up

Flip chart of at least 8 sheets of plain paper on stand.

Demonstrator's set of oil pastels (paper wrappings removed)

Sets of oil pastels with wrapping removed incl. 7 spectrum colours and black and white.

Roll of paper towel.

One A4 lap board for each participant

Sets of eight sheets of plain A4 80gm. paper - allow two sets per participant.

Chairs set out as a horseshoe with the presenter's chair and flip chart completing the circle.

Two or three rectangular tables outside of the horseshoe.

Tea, coffee, water, biscuits. Hot water thermos flasks. Polystyrene cups.

Clock

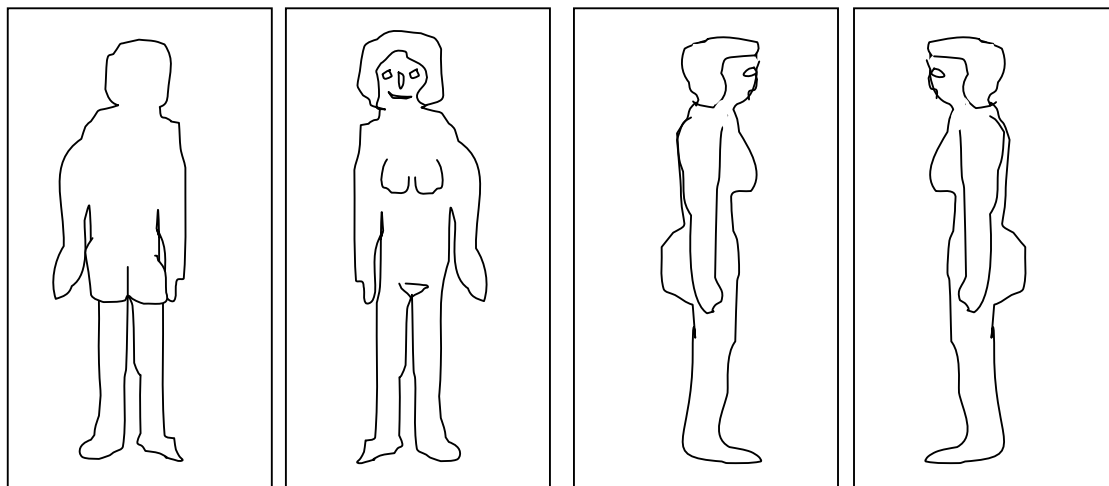
If appropriate, some relaxing music.

Introduction to Art Surgery:

In this exercise we are going to suppose that you are the landscape, your full length portrait can be seen as the doorway through which you can explore yourself. Step-by-step to visually move through your body and expose areas wherever your curiosity leads you. You will have the means to see what is going on and do something about it. I call this process "Art Surgery". I could have called it "Body Revealed" but thought if hospital surgeons can use the word surgery to describe their enterprise then why shouldn't artists? For the "Art Surgery" clean hands are advisable / masks are optional!

The Examination

- It is time to examine the patient, which is you, and it will take ten minutes. This will test your memory - on two sheets of your paper and from memory make four drawings of yourself in the nude, from head to toe, in a standing position. It's quite safe here so don't be shy of yourself, put in all of your bits because they might be important to this exercise. The first sheet should have front elevation on one side of the first piece then turn it over and draw the rear elevation. On the second piece of paper draw your right side elevation, then turn it over and draw the left side elevation (when held up to the light both right and left side should face in the same direction). The best way is to imagine that you are standing nude in front of a full length mirror. But don't be too concerned if your sketches are inaccurate and out of proportion for they are only there to provide points of contact for the operation.

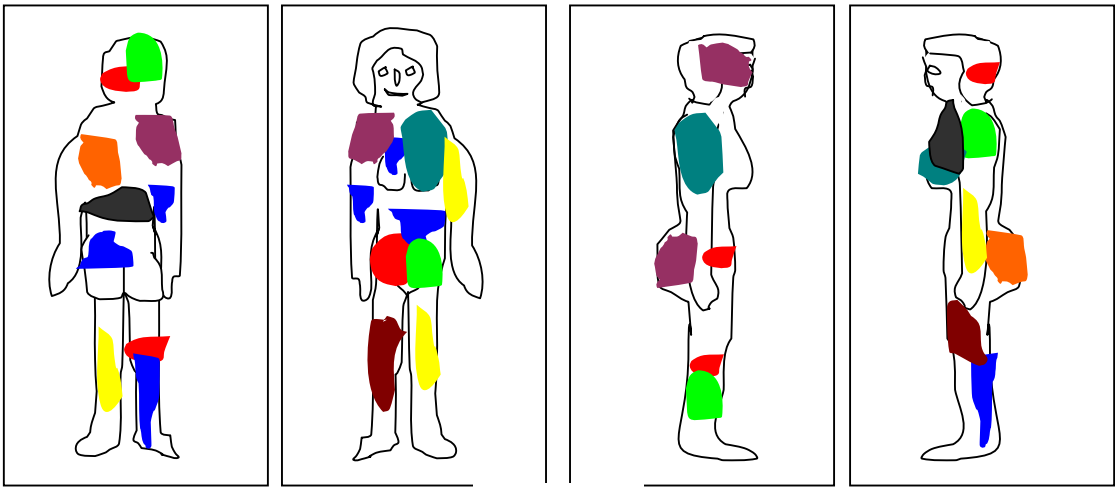


example 1

The Presenter asks if there are any questions and if everyone understands what is required. They then start the process and say "Stop" at the end of ten minutes.

The Presenter asks the participants the following:

- What are your attitudes to your body? Look at the sketches and feel your responses. You may have parts you are proud of. Other parts may cause you acute embarrassment, there might be areas for which you have concern and other areas you are resigned to or accept as being one of the burdens you carry through your life!
- On a separate sheet of paper list three negative words and three positive words to describe your general attitude or feeling related to your body parts for example: *happy, concern, pain, resignation, pride, gentleness, graceful, embarrassment, hardness, softness, ache, passionate*. Then choose one colour to represent each word and apply a small patch of that colour against each quality.
- Now apply the colours to the four full length portraits of yourself covering the areas where you feel those qualities. Apply one colour at a time and don't assume that the same quality will be felt on two elevations of the same area - for example the front of your knee might be quite different from the sides and back of your knee.



example 2

- Be as sensitive with yourself as a Surgeon might be in examining his or her patient. We will break for tea at the end of ten minutes when everyone is finished.
- Look at your coloured portraits and chose just one area which you would like to examine more closely and perhaps begin a process of healing transformation there.

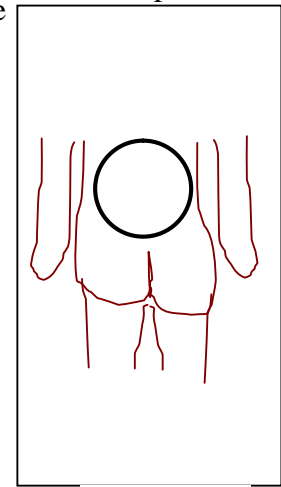
The Operation

The Presenter allows some minutes for this and then continues to guide:

- You can now release the meanings for each colour you have chosen because they have served their purpose. From now on use all the colours you want. Step-by-step you are going to draw your way inwards at the area you have selected and possibly uncover what is lurking there.
- Throughout the following stages of this exercise try to keep the sheets of paper, below the one you are working on, tightly held together on your board, this will enables the energy to build as you work through the various levels which will be of considerable help in the final process.
- Step A. Imagine that you are standing about 18 inches away from your body in front of the area you would like to enter. On the next sheet of paper sketch out a 'portrait' of that area of your body.
- Step B. Now imagine that you have placed your eyes against the surface of the skin, what does it look like, its pores, hairs, texture? Use your imagination and on the next sheet draw it out .
- Step C. Getting under your skin is the next stage of the operation. Imagine you are seeing the area just below the surface. Let your imagination flow out on this sheet. Invent the colours and shapes of the living cells, the veins, tissues and muscles, remembering the meaning of the colours are now whatever you choose for them. Of course, you are not expected to be an expert in anatomy; you only have to be yourself and acknowledge your feelings. If you can let the drawing take its own shape you will find that intuitively, it begins to influence how it wants to appear. As you feel this begin to happen you will know that the 'energy' of the intention of the operation is beginning to advance ahead of your progress through the remaining sheets of paper on the drawing board like a beam of light preparing your way.
- Step D Continue the process of visual exploration to wherever your curiosity might lead you. You might see in it several details which attract your attention. i.e. a squiggle which seems to appear as if by mistake, a dark mysterious caterpillar thing which disappears from sight into the background. Select one detail which seems to beckon you inwards further and step into it in the next drawing
- Now we are into areas of fantasy and this is a wonderful opportunity for you to become a child once again, the one who was very happy to draw out their imaginings on any surface and during the process oblivious of the opinions of others. Try to let the picture itself draw itself out. You will probably be surprised that your inner body begins to look more like some landscape or coloured pattern than an assemblage of cells and tissue. Perhaps for the very first time you are acknowledging aspects of yourself and going far deeper and it is beginning to communicate with you in the ways that you can visually represent.
- Allow the process to continue until you feel that you have progressed as far as you want to go at this time. It may be that you travel inwards right up to the 8th sheet of paper or you may feel that you want to stop before that. It is important is that each time you finish one picture you select some detail which draws you into beginning the next one until you feel this part of the process is complete.
- In this very last picture there lies a transformation opportunity. Chose some detail which, for you, appears negative, worrying.



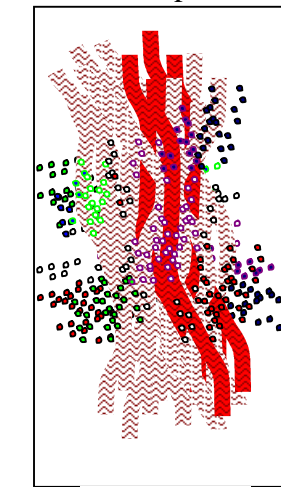
example 3



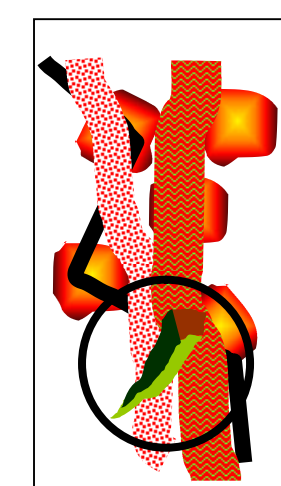
example 4



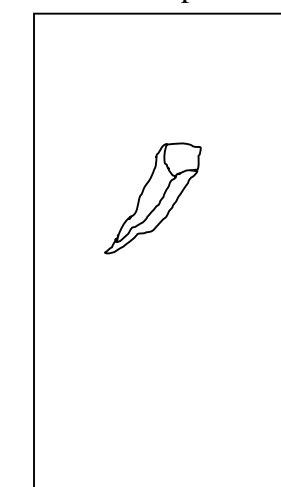
example 5



example 6

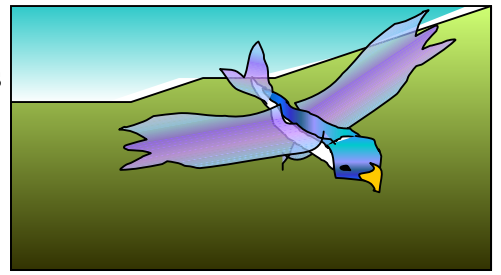


example 7

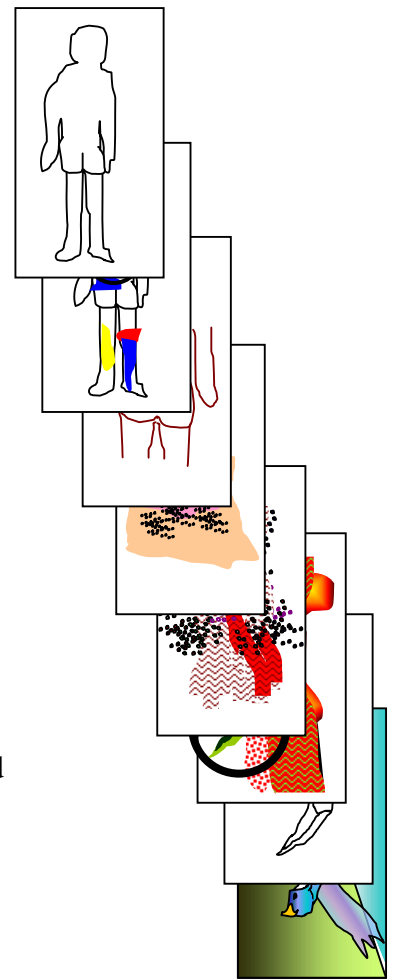


example 8

- As in the Healing Painting exercise turn the paper around and around - not over onto the reverse side and for the next 10 minutes (or however much longer you would like to take) develop the shape in front of you until it becomes a picture you enjoy looking at. Become the child you once were and without too much thought have fun with the colours. Create whatever takes your fancy - a pattern of colours, flowers, a garden, a landscape, mandala, a surrealist fantasy. But all of the time you are creating your delight, do please keep your mind away from the original meaning of the shape; otherwise it will inhibit the action of this exercise.



- Now one-by-one replace the sheets of paper on the board - 8,7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 experiencing the feeling of travelling backwards towards the outside of yourself. You will eventually arrive at the first two sheets with the full length self-portraits. Look at the area you identified for the operation. How does it feel now? What is your attitude now? What are the new qualities of feeling you have for this area?
- You will know that you have travelled very deeply into the area of concern and have participated in a creative event having the courage to go right up to something deep within you. It has now been given your blessing which can help in relieving any stress which previously surrounded it and now the doorway is open wide for your natural healing energies to flow more freely and do their work.
- This exercise can be done by anyone at anytime and can offer a great deal of comfort to those who might be hospitalised and feeling powerless in their situation.



Conclusion

Reassemble the group in a horseshoe for a sharing and feedback - either as a whole group or one-to-one sharing in pairs according to group preference and/or the personal intuition of the presenter.

End the session by giving details of any subsequent courses and how you might be contacted.