

The Healing Art of Creativity Class

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Instructor: Brett Curtis Weber, Ph.D.

- **What are the goals of this class?**

First: to guide members (who may not have had any previous training in the arts) towards a greater appreciation of art and its cathartic value.

Second: to help members construct, interpret and present an original piece of artwork that says something about each person's experience with MS.

- **Why instruct a class like this?**

People with multiple sclerosis (MS) (and other diseases and disabilities) oft-times find themselves overwhelmed by circumstances related to their disease that contribute to an intensity of emotions (and at worse depression) which may become increasingly difficult to cope with over time. Creating artwork in a supportive group environment can offer class members a unique opportunity to explore their own personal health related issues, emotions, and thoughts in a nonverbal symbolic way.

- **What artistic skills are required by our class members?**

The simple answer is none. Art done for Wellness requires no artistic training. The members of our class come to the project with whatever experiences they own. As their instructor, I only offer guidance, support, and encouragement providing the class with an opportunity to "pool their natural resources" and explore the topic of "art" creatively using a variety of materials.

- **What has the class physically accomplished most recently?**

Recently, there were 12 to 17 people attending our class over a five week period. Class met on Thursday morning from 10:00am to 11:00am at Good Shepherd Rehabilitation Hospital. The class was provided with acrylic paints, watercolors, appropriate paintbrushes, stretched canvases, cold press paper, water, glue and salt. Class members were then encouraged to collect different kinds of textures, photographs, almost anything that could be used in a "collage" that they would be creating over the five week period. The finished artwork will be on display in the near future (to be announced). Our class was featured in the Parkland News on Wednesday, May 31, 2007. On any given day, members of our class were encouraged to offer assistance to other class members who were not as physically capable of creating artwork on their own, or who were feeling less creative, less self-assured, and may have been more mentally challenged by the artistic project.

- **Why should a hospital invest in this kind of class?**

Supporting an on-going creative art class instills members with an added sense of self-confidence, purpose, and may promote other life enhancing activities through the hospital. To learn more, contact CreativityClass@BrokenArtGallery.com. Thank you for joining the fight against MS in 2007, and for visiting the NationalMSSociety.org and BrokenArtGallery.com for direction. Set sail!

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