The Effect of a Creative Art Program on Individuals with Multiple Sclerosis

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Objective
To determine if there was a difference in self-esteem, hope, perceived social support and self-efficacy at individuals with MS following a 4-week creative art program.

Background
Creative activity is thought to create hope and help patients manage debilitating problems. The most remarkable aspect of using art for healing is the simplicity of the process. Art is naturally healing and creative arts have been found to be successful in healthcare settings (June, 2003).

Sample
Convenience Sample of 14 women with MS
Recruited from Several MS Centers and the MS Society in Missouri
Aged range 25 to 70
Mean age 53

Design and Methods
A one-group pre-test/post-test design
The research approved from Monmouth University
Instruments:
- Visual Art-Evaluation Scale (VASE)
- Hope Appraisal Index (HAI)
- Modified Social Support Survey (MSSS)
- MS Self-Efficacy Scale (MSES)
- Sociodemographic Questionnaire

The Creative Art Program
- The creative art sessions were held once a week and lasted for two hours.
- The creative art sessions included:
  - Week 1: Collage
  - Week 2: Newspaper
  - Week 3: Painting
  - Week 4: Knitting

The Creative Art Program Participants
- Each session was facilitated by a registered nurse with expertise in MS
- Creative art was utilized primarily and provided a hands-on experience for each of the creative art projects.
- Participants were free to share thoughts, experiences and words of support and encouragement during each session.

Conclusion
The creative art intervention was found to be effective in having a positive influence on self-esteem, hope, social support and self-efficacy to function and control MS.

What Participants Learned:
- Building Self-Esteem
- Sharing Feelings and Experiences
- Comfortable, Slow Pace

What Participants Enjoyed:
- Being with Others
- Opportunity to Be Creative
- Feeling Relaxed
- Learning a New Skill
- Enjoyment