

Bereaved parents and art therapy: A process to help develop positive adjustment post-loss

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Introduction

- 3,676 children between the age of 1-4, and 5,497 children between the age of 5-14 die every year in the United States of America (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2020).
- The grief and loss parents face leave them feeling disoriented and confused about their purpose (Xiu et al., 2020).
- Art therapy uses art as a medium for communications, self-exploration, while boosting cognitive and sensory motor functions, and resolve stress and conflict (American Art Therapy Association [AATA], 2017).
- Expressive arts therapies as an intervention for anxiety, trauma, grief and depression.
- Since children use creativity as their primary form of communication, can bereaved parents forge a connection with their child and thereby positively process their loss?

My hypothesis



Art therapy could help parents who have faced loss of their children by helping them develop positive adjustment and meaning making post-loss. These can be assessed through a decrease in depressive symptoms, stress and negative affect.

Selection Process



Methodology

Positive adjustment post-loss = Participants x Art therapy

GOALS

- ↓ Depression
- ↓ Distress
- ↓ Negative affect
- ↑ Positive affect

RULES

- ✓ Refrain from starting new activities (extraneous variable)
- ✓ 8 weeks study with pre-test, 6 weeks of counseling, post test.

Scales: Beck Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II), Impact of Event Scale (IES), Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS).

Anticipated limitations

- No current studies to show the impact of art therapy on bereaved parents.
- Most studies using art therapy have employed qualitative method of research.
- Most participants in literature review were women.