

## What is it like?

On your first visit, the art psychotherapist will usually ask several questions about you, your history and problems or illness. They will also introduce you to the art space and materials available to work with. The first meeting will help you both think about how you can work together and if art therapy will be suitable for you.

In a typical session the therapist will encourage you to make an image or object, after which you might talk together about your thoughts and feelings about what you have created. People often worry that they aren't very good at drawing but the aim of art psychotherapy is more about expression than increasing your art skills. Sometimes very simple images can say quite a lot.

Sessions are confidential, however the therapist may break this confidence if they feel there is a risk of serious harm to yourself or someone else. Your therapist will inform you if they are going to do this. Your case may also be discussed with the specialist palliative care team in order to provide the most complete service to you, however, you can ask for specific information from the sessions not to be disclosed.'

Art psychotherapy is available for St. Benedict's Hospice patients and their families or carers. Please contact a member of staff if you would like to try art psychotherapy or speak to our art psychotherapist.

### Further information please contact:

The Art Psychotherapist  
St Benedict's Hospice  
and Centre for Specialist Palliative Care,  
St. Benedict's Way,  
Sunderland.  
SR2 0NY

Main Reception: 0191 5128400  
Website: [www.stbenedicts.co.uk](http://www.stbenedicts.co.uk)

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We are committed to raising the standard of written information for patients, their carers, people who use the NHS and the general public.

This information can be made available in another format or language on request. For further copies of this leaflet please contact on the telephone number above.

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St. Benedict's Hospice  
& Centre for Specialist  
Palliative Care

# Art Psychotherapy



choose

South Tyneside **NHS**  
NHS Foundation Trust

Providing a range of NHS services in  
Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland

This leaflet is for patients of St Benedict's Hospice and their families or carers and describes what art psychotherapy is and how it might help you or someone you know.

### What is art psychotherapy?

Sometimes difficult thoughts, feelings, experiences and behaviour can build up and cause problems in our lives. Art psychotherapy is a psychological therapy that uses art and the creative process to help people express these concerns with the aim of gaining understanding, or discovering ways to make these things more manageable.

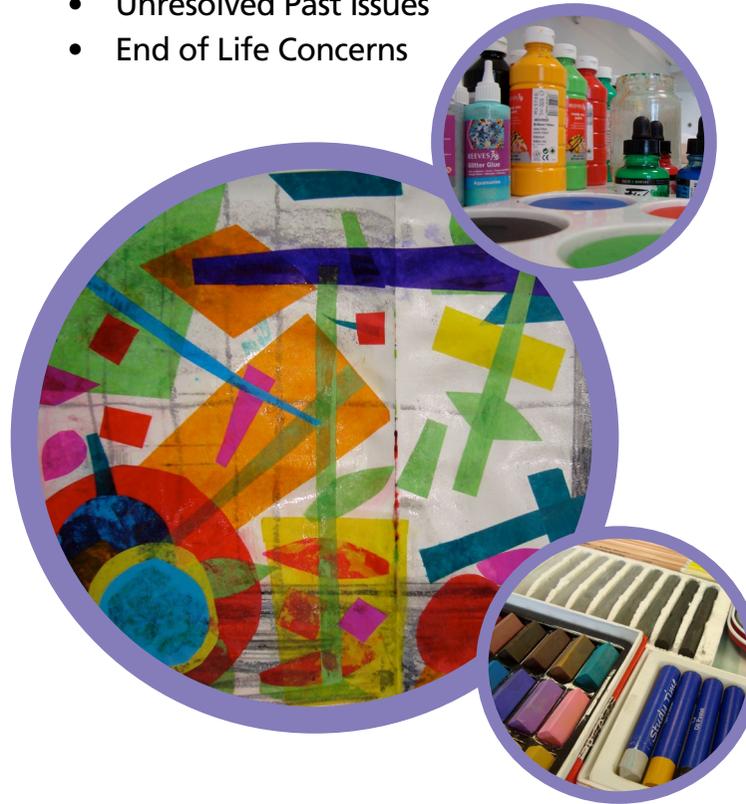
Art psychotherapists are trained to help create an environment where you feel comfortable enough to begin exploring your thoughts and feelings through art materials. They do not teach art but instead will help you to think about your expression and how this might relate to your concerns. No artistic talent or experience is necessary, simply a willingness to try using art materials.

Sessions usually last up to one hour and may take place as a 'one-off' event or happen over a number of weeks, either in groups or on a one-to-one basis.

### Who is it for?

As it does not rely on verbal communication, art psychotherapy may be particularly useful for people who find it hard to talk about their problems or for issues that are difficult to describe in words. It may be helpful for people experiencing:

- Stress, Anxiety or Depression
- Relationship Difficulties
- Identity Problems
- Grief, Sadness and Loss
- Spiritual Concerns
- Unresolved Past Issues
- End of Life Concerns



### How might it help?

Sometimes it can be hard to talk directly about our difficulties and feelings, so communicating through images may be easier or a more accessible way of describing what is going on.

Art making can be a very relaxing activity and many people find that the act of creation helps them to feel calmer and think more clearly.

Making a picture about a feeling or event may be a way to gain a new perspective on it or get rid of things that have been bottled up inside.

Discussing your thoughts and feelings with an art psychotherapist in an environment where you feel safe and accepted can help relieve stress and stop worries from building up.

