



## **Informed Consent and Other Ethical Considerations in Community-Based Emergency Interventions: The Case of the Safe Space Open Studios**

**הסכמה מדעת, וסוגיות אתיות נוספות בהתערבויות חירום קהילתיות:  
המקרה של הסטודיו הבטוח**

**Elana Lakh**

The open studio approach has been the cornerstone of art therapy since the dawn of the profession in the 20th century. Art therapy was born out of the open studio and has since developed in various directions. In emergency situations, it is one of the central interventions offered to affected communities. Returning to the open studio model in emergency community interventions presents unique yet familiar ethical and practical questions.

The proposed presentation focuses on the ethical questions that emerged in a community-based emergency trauma intervention conducted in the Safe Space Open Studios (SSOS) following the traumatic events of October 7th in Israel. The SSOS initiative was originally developed in 2022 by YAHAT – the Israeli Association for Creative & Expressive Arts Therapies as an art-based community intervention for Ukrainian refugees, and was later adapted for survivors of the October 7, 2023 Hamas attack in the south of the country. Within just a few days, hundreds of creative arts therapists within YAHAT simultaneously established dozens of studio spaces serving thousands of survivors and evacuees. During this period of collective national trauma, the SSOS provided participants with a healing space both in the acute phase and in the months that followed.

The aim of the proposed presentation is to discuss ethical issues and considerations arising during open-studio-based emergency interventions, drawing on the example of the SSOS. Issues related to the goals of emergency intervention and the characteristics of the SSOS setting—which differ from a clinical setting—will be discussed. Conventional art therapy principles concerning the storage of artworks, as well as the need to remove them from the studio, will be revisited. Questions concerning informed consent, the photographing of



artworks during the acute stage of trauma, and dilemmas of research ethics and documentation will be further explored.

### **Biography**

**Elana Lakh**, PhD, is a senior supervising art therapist and a Jungian analyst. She is a senior lecturer in the art therapy MA program in Bar-Ilan University in Israel and conducts a private practice in Jerusalem specializing in the treatment of sexual abuse survivors. She is a supervising member of the Israeli Institute for Jungian Psychology in honor of Erich Neumann. She teaches art therapy and Jungian psychotherapy and analysis in Israel, Ukraine, Vietnam, etc. She explores creation mythologies, and her research interests include archetypal aspects of art made in therapy, as well as the ethics of the helping professions. She has presented in many conferences including in the UN, and published papers and books. She is currently the chairperson of YAHAT, the Creative & Expressive Arts Therapies Association in Israel. She volunteered in the SSOS near Jerusalem and is participating in a team researching the SSOS.

### **Recent Publications**

Lakh, E. (2025a). **'Pictures from the unconscious' – Art making within Jungian analysis.** *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 95, September 2025, 102318.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aip.2025.102318>

Lakh, E. (2025b). **To release or not to release? That is not the question. Therapeutic considerations concerning the release of art works created in therapy.** *Journal of Creative Art Therapies*.14, (2), 1695-1705. (Hebrew).  
<https://www.calameo.com/read/0076515878894214e1f62>

Lakh, E., Gavron, T. and Bat-Or, M. (2023). **Safe Space Open Studio: Creative Community Space as an Emergency Intervention following October 7 Catastrophe in Israel.** *Journal of Creative Arts Therapies*, 13(2),1601–1610. (Hebrew)  
<https://www.calameo.com/read/005201130b8751078d481>