

## Towards a theoretical and methodological model for art therapy in community crises:

**Ephrat Huss**

Crises such as man-made and natural disasters, and epidemics such as corona create a complex 'shared reality' situation where both therapists and clients are dealing with the same stressors at the same time. Issues such as loneliness, fear, uncertainty, poverty, boredom, emptiness, loss of routines, loss of hope as to when it will be over, loss of professional identity and loss of loved ones all pose strong challenges to communities on the most external ecological level of the community. On the level of the family, systemic problems arise such as being together without structure, or being alone, or caring for children teachers and old people. Finally, these stressors impact the individual level, with ensuing psychological problems such as re-traumatization, depression and anxiety to name a few. Art therapy, like all social practices, is ethically committed to using its skills to help society in times of crises. The question arises: how can art therapy address these issues while maintaining professional boundaries? How can the art therapist help overcome the challenges of social distancing and online therapeutic contact, through the embodied elements of arts?

Over the last few months, based on questions that repeatedly arose in the workshops and supervision groups that I led, I have attempted to create a theoretical and methodological model and set of protocols that can help address these issues.

### Abstract of presentation in Hebrew

הדרכה זאת תתמקד בטיפול באמנות בזמנים של משבר: היא תעלה שאלות על המחויבות של מטפלים באמנות לתרום לחברה והקהילות בתקופות של משבר: היא תתייחס למוסגים כמו מציאות משותפת, שחיקה של מטפלים, החווים את הדחק באותה המידה של המטופלים. היא תתייחס ליישום של תיאוריות של משבר, כוחות, טיפול קצר מועד. ויצירת ידע משותף עם מטופלים. הדרכים שבהם אפשר לשמור על סטינג, לטפח קשר, ולהשתמש באמנות. ההרצאה תספק מודל יישומי וגם תיאורטי על איך להמשיג טיפול באמנות בזמן משבר חברתי וקהילתי. צר

### Biography

**Professor Ephrat Huss** worked as an art therapist for twenty years and wrote her doctorate on art as empowerment with arts-based Bedouin welfare women's groups. She presently chairs an MA in arts therapy for social practitioners at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev in Israel. She has published over 80 articles and 2 theoretical and 2 edited books on art therapy, social arts- and arts-based research. She has received competitive grants in these fields. She has given plenary and invited lectures at international art therapy conferences. She is part of the Arts in Social Practice Round table think-tank. Her overall areas of research are the interface between social theories and arts therapy, as well as the use of arts in high context social situations and in health-care contexts. She has opened, with the help of national funds, an arts-based youth group for Jewish and Arab children in Israel.

### Recent publications and conference presentations

Huss, E. <sup>PI</sup> (2015). *A theory-based approach to art therapy: Implications for teaching, research, and practice*. London: Routledge. 200 pages.

Huss, E. & Samson, T. (2018) Drawing on the Arts to Enhance Salutogenic Coping with Health-related Stress and Loss: *Frontiers in Psychology, section Clinical and Health Psychology*. (in press)

Goshen, I. & Huss, E. & Koch, S. (in press). Creating an Embodied Phenomenological Typology for Describing the Qualitative Experience of Traumatic Space from Continued Bombings *Journal of Loss and Trauma*.

Segal-Engelchin, D., Achdut, N., Huss, E. & Sarid, O. (2020). CB-Art Interventions Implemented with Mental Health Professionals Working in a Shared War Reality: Transforming Negative Images and Enhancing Coping Resources *Journal of Environmental Research & Public Health* 2020, 17, 2287

### **Plenary lectures**

2018: Anzacata Australian and Asian art therapy conference, December. Using Arts to Converge with the Other: Integrating Systemic, Narrative, and Contact Theory through Art Therapy.

2019: BAAT art therapy conference, August. Plenary lecture BAAT conference 2019 *International Art Therapy Practice /Research Conference London*. The missing social theories in art therapy.

2020: Art & Education for Social Justice symposium. Using the theory of Embodied Socially Embedded Aesthetics as a Theoretical Base for Socially transformative arts.  
Webinars on arts in corona crises Yahat Art Therapy association; Anzacata association; Efat Association