Art Therapy Awareness: A Social Media Campaign

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Art Therapy Awareness: A Social Media Campaign

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For my honors research project, I have created an Instagram campaign about art therapy. My campaign includes a content calendar to give an example of the posting schedule. I also created thirteen Instagram posts, four of which are carousel posts that can be swiped through. I used the posts to create an interactive experience to showcase what the campaign could look like if it were posted to Instagram. I created the National Art Therapy Association to be the face of this campaign project which is included on the app and website.

There is minimal advertising or awareness for art therapy and it is important to have better representation for the field. Art therapy can have many benefits and can be an alternative to the common counseling method that many individuals are accustomed to. The purpose of my project is to showcase how art therapy can be beneficial to the mental health of young adults and to spread awareness about art therapy.

There are many individuals that are unfamiliar with art therapy and have misconceptions about what art therapy is and what it entails. My campaign addresses these topics and seeks to provide a way for individuals to explore an alternative option to mental health care and art based resources. Information can be found through the posts, as well as through the physical or digital brochure.
Introduction

A necessary part of any research project is the need to discover a solution to a problem. Research allows for a deeper understanding and offers a closer examination of the subject. As a graphic design student, I conduct research for my various projects to construct the best possible solution. This continuous exploration into the graphic arts has allowed me to create a meaningful work of art that can benefit my local community and beyond through this research project.

I created a social media campaign to present my research and content to the community. The social media campaign was important in not only spreading the message of my project, but also in furthering my professional development as a student. Social media is currently being used by roughly 61.4% of the global population, which equates to approximately 4.95 billion internet users worldwide. A social media campaign has a higher likelihood of reaching a larger number of individuals in comparison to a print campaign. The campaign allowed me to further my understanding of the standards of online content, how to interact with an online audience and what an online presence should look like. I was able to harness my design skills and utilize what I learned in my graphic design courses in an attempt to create an effective social media campaign.

I selected art therapy as the subject for my research project. I believe art therapy is a unique, interactive and creative alternative to the normalized counseling of today’s modern society. As I looked into the field of art therapy, I asked myself questions that would help me formulate the project. What would I like my audience to know? What does the field of art therapy need or could benefit from? How would the product of my project help others around me?

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Through my initial research, I found an absence or a void that I could attempt to fill. The field of art therapy isn’t a well known topic amongst other individuals because it lacks awareness and advertising. There is limited advertising for art therapy both in the printed and the digital world. I researched art therapy advertisements for both print and digital broadcast systems. My search resulted in articles pertaining to advertising art therapy as an art therapist, but there was no advertising for art therapy as a service. I found multiple campaigns focused on mental health, but none of them included art therapy as a resource. One campaign I discovered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, provided support and treatment options for mental health conditions for National Mental Illness Awareness Week. Their website offers a search engine for mental health facilities, but art therapy locations are not included in the search. This lack of awareness for art therapy mental health resources is a large issue that I address in my campaign.

After cementing the need for art therapy awareness, I focused on solidifying a target audience and method of delivery. My chosen target audience is young adults because they are the most likely to develop a mental health issue, in comparison to other age groups. A survey by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration stated that young adults aged 18–25 had the highest rate of mental health issues compared to older age groups.

The best approach to reaching my target audience would be to create a social media campaign on one of the most highly utilized apps among young adults. We live in a digital world and young adults make up a large percentage of the total online users, so it is logical for my project to be a social media campaign. While social media can contribute negatively to mental health by increasing risk for anxiety or depression, it is important to have content on social media that can reach those who are struggling on the social platforms. Young individuals will continue to utilize social media, regardless of its harmful effects, so it is important to provide resourceful content that individuals can have access to. I found that Instagram is among one of the most utilized social media platforms among young adults, with over 2 billion active monthly users. Instagram has diverse content applications, which is useful in spreading the same information in a variety of ways.

With a direction chosen, I began extensively researching various topics including Instagram, art therapy, art therapy related content, social media campaigns, branding and proper exhibition set up. After the near completion of a majority of the research, I began creating the content that would be an integral part of not only my research project, but also for the realization of the final project exhibition. After several weeks of researching, planning, creating and curating, the campaign became a reality and was displayed in the Projects Gallery at the Myers School of Art, located on the University of Akron’s main campus.

“In 2021, approximately 41.7 million adults in the United States received treatment or counseling for their mental health.”

Goal Outline

It does not come as a shock that mental health is a large issue, not only in the United States, but globally. The most common resource that is advertised or projected onto individuals seeking mental health care are guided towards a licensed psychiatrist. In 2021, approximately 41.7 million adults in the United States received treatment or counseling for their mental health according to Statista.com, a global data and business intelligence platform⁶. Many individuals are not well informed on or overlook the option of art therapy due to the lack of advertising for the field. Art therapy can have many benefits, as it is adjustable to a variety of different client types and can be a more engaging type of therapy when compared with the standard counseling method. The American Art Therapy Association states that art therapy uses kinesthetic, sensory, perceptual and symbolic methods to invite alternate modes of receptive communication to overcome limitations of language⁷. I created my project with the intention of helping my local college-aged community learn more information about art therapy and the available resources associated with it.

In order to help my intended audience, I established what I wanted others to gain from my project. The goals for my project are to spread awareness and resources about art therapy, while also challenging the misconceptions about the field. Spreading awareness and providing resources will allow individuals to make informed decisions about the type of mental health care they receive. There are many misconceptions that individuals hold about the field of art therapy, that I will get into later. It is no secret that young adults and college students have a high risk of developing mental health issues. More than 60% of college students had at least one mental health issue in the year 2021 and this number continues to rise⁸. Art therapy has been known by many sources to diminish the effects of mental health issues. One source cited that “A study published in *The Arts in Psychotherapy* found that 81% of patients reported improvement in their overall psychological health after participating in art therapy sessions⁹. Many studies showcase the potential healing power of art therapy, which I showcase in my campaign message.

To accomplish my goals, I planned and designed a social media campaign and displayed it in the form of an exhibition to exhibit to the community. Through careful deliberation, I decided that I would create thirteen social media posts, an interactive component, a brochure, a website and 2 phone mockups as the final product. I originally planned to complete twelve Instagram posts. The industry standard social media posting schedule is to upload at least three times per week for lower activity accounts, to not overwhelm the audience¹⁰. Three posts a week for four weeks would equal twelve posts a month. I decided to add an extra post to further diversify the content and to improve the exhibition layout.

The interactive component allows viewers to interact with the campaign content. The brochure provides helpful information and resources from the campaign. The website was chosen as a way to compile multiple sources of information into one convenient location. The mockups provide a visual of the website and Instagram app from the interactive component.

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I started my project by researching what the top utilized apps were among young adults ages 18–25. The four most popular apps in order are Facebook, YouTube, Whatsapp and Instagram; according to Kristen McCormick, the Senior Managing Editor at WordStream. Wordstream monitors ad performance and allows users to manage their online ad campaigns. I narrowed my campaign down to Instagram because it would better suit my project needs. I selected an app that had a range of different media applications. Instagram has reels, videos, stories, posts and capabilities that created optimal engagement opportunities for my audience. Reels, stories and videos are more engaging for the viewer because they are more dynamic and utilize sound. Instagram posts are adjustable for stories and allow the audience to focus on information for longer durations of time.

Many social media campaigns incorporate video components, including reels, stories or feed videos. With more resources and a longer time frame, I would have had the ability to create video components. While the project was a large accomplishment, it was not on the same scale as professional social media campaigns. Corporate campaigns have multiple individuals and oftentimes, multiple departments working on the campaign with access to a variety of resources. As a student, I do not have access to the same resources as corporate businesses do. With a small range of resources, I created content within the scope and resources that were available. Even without utilizing the full scoop of Instagram’s abilities, it was still important to select Instagram as the campaign’s platform. The content I created can be transitioned to other formats, such as video in a live format scenario. In a fully realized campaign, Instagram would be successful in spreading the campaign message through the various formats offered.

Once I selected Instagram as my campaign app, I began art therapy research. I looked into what art therapy was, who can provide art therapy, group sessions, art therapy misconceptions, benefits and disadvantages of art therapy. I searched through three art therapy related sources and took notes on all relevant information that pertained to my project theme. The sources I utilized in my research were Essential Art Therapy Exercises by Leah Guzman, Handbook of Art Therapy by Cathy Malchiodi and “Psychological and autonomic effects of art making in college-aged students” by David Sandmire, et al. Guzman’s book explains what art therapy is, the goal of art therapy, how art therapy can benefit others, types of services, case studies and how the different mediums are used. Malchiodi’s book explains what art therapy is, how art affects individuals mental health, types of art therapy, therapist role, why art therapy is effective, benefits, misconceptions and group therapy. I utilized Malchiodi’s book frequently when creating my campaign content and felt it was a great source of information for the field of art therapy. Sandmire and et al. ’s journal article cited various case studies and showed results of how art therapy impacted other individuals.

Through my research I found that “Art therapy is a psychotherapeutic approach to treating emotional and behavioral disorders that uses art and psychology”\textsuperscript{12}. Those who can provide art therapy require a master level or higher of education in both the arts and psychology. Art therapists are required to be certified before they can begin practicing in the field. Many of my sources cited that art therapy had many positive benefits. Art therapy has been known to create meaning, help individuals find relief from overwhelming emotions or trauma, resolve conflicts, enrich daily lives and increase one’s sense of well-being. Art therapy has been known to benefit individuals in both an isolated or a group setting. Group art therapy instills hope, fosters a supportive community, promotes social interaction, reduces isolation and provide a sense of belonging\textsuperscript{13}.


\textsuperscript{12} Leah Guzman, Essential Art Therapy Exercises: Effective Techniques to Manage Anxiety, Depression, and PTSD (Rockridge Press, 2020).

With every new idea, it is common for the general public to form incorrect assumptions. The main misconceptions the public has formed about art therapy is that art therapy is for children, you have to have a skill in art, anyone can provide art therapy, art therapy is similar to an art class and art would need to be made in every session\(^\text{14}\). Art therapy is open to anyone of any age group, with no art experience needed. As stated above, only a licensed art therapist with a master level or higher in education can provide art therapy services. The goal of art therapy is to create art from one’s internal experiences in order to express or alleviate strong emotions\(^\text{15}\). An art class requires accuracy and learning a new skill, which is why art therapy is very different from an art class. An art class also requires art to be made each day, but in art therapy, some sessions will focus on goals and discussion instead of art making. It is important to process the works created in the sessions, so that the patient can grow and heal through the experience.

After obtaining and sorting through the information I had gathered on art therapy, I then moved into researching social media campaigns. I have the skills required to create the content, but I lacked the knowledge on how to execute a successful social media campaign. I am knowledgeable in Adobe creation software, as well as standard graphic design rules. This knowledge aided me in creating the necessary content. I sifted through three campaign books, while also reading through articles online from reputable sources. The social media books I used in my research included *Social Media Marketing For Dummies* by Shiv Singh and Stephanie Diamond, *Succeed With Social Media Like a Creative Genius* by Brainard Carey and *Think Before You Engage: 100 Questions to Ask Before Starting a Social Media Marketing Campaign* by Dave Peck. The key points I took from these materials were to create a content calendar, have a strong call to action, understand your demographic and be specific in your message. Gathering and obtaining all of the needed information for my project took about 5 weeks to accomplish. Once I was confident that the researching stage was complete, I began taking the information and using it to create the necessary visual content for the project.


Content Calendar

An outline is a helpful tool in planning and guiding the creation process, whether it be for writing or otherwise. For the first work of my project, I created a content calendar to give me a basic understanding of the different types of content I would need for my campaign. I also created a list of content types based off of the content calendar to guide my posts. The calendar was a useful tool in helping gauge what type of content would be needed and allowed me to experience the process of creating a social media campaign from scratch.

I researched the best times and days of the week to post content and adjusted my calendar to reflect that. I found that weekdays between 7am–8am and 12pm-1pm tend to have more engagement due to work and lunch schedules¹⁶. It is important to remain relevant to the audience without being annoying with the posted content. It is best to post about once or twice a day for heavier involvement, or three times a week for lower involvement, with varied content. Content variation can be seen in my calendar example where some days there is a post and other days there is a story or a video.

The calendar was created for October because October is National Depression Awareness month. Art therapy has been known to decrease the effects of depression. If someone is suffering from depression, looking and discussing the artwork they create leads to self-reflection, which improves self-awareness and increases self control¹⁷. I utilized an orange color palette to compliment the current season for that period of time. I incorporated a color coded key in the bottom left corner to help distinguish the varied posting types. The calendar begins the first day of October with a depression awareness post.

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Instagram Posts

Planning and brainstorming are important aspects of the researching process. I found myself making multiple different lists and notes throughout the entirety of the project. One such list I created to aid in my content development listed possible Instagram post ideas. The list is as follows:

- quotes
- project images or art in general
- AT spotlight with locations and people
- resources
- info (what it is, misconceptions, etc.)
- prompts
- comparative differences of AT
- art classes
- focus on a specific condition each week
- images of art tools with a slogan

I utilized most of the items on the list that I brainstormed and I found it very helpful in generating ideas for the thirteen posts.

Much of the campaign content has a blue or cool color palette to elicit a calm or peaceful feeling. Warm yellows and oranges are also used to contrast with the blue tones to create visual interest and elicit different emotions, such as happiness or creativity. Colors can elicit different emotions from a viewer, depending on the context in which they are placed, this is known as color psychology. Color psychology is the study of how different colors affect human mood and behavior¹⁸. The color red is kept to a minimum in the campaign because red can be overpowering and strong in tone. Red is oftentimes associated with being angry and my campaign is meant to make the viewer feel safe, calm and happy.

Post 1

For the first post, I transformed a quote by Pam Holland and designed it to be visually appealing for my audience. Pam Holland is a textile artist, photographer and illustrator, who has been teaching textile art and quilting for over 25 years¹⁹. As an artist herself, I felt her words would be inspirational to those looking into the option of art therapy. Holland’s quote relates to the healing power of art, which correlates well with how art therapy can be used to treat mental health disorders. Throughout the creation process, I utilized stock photo websites, such as Freepik and Vecteezy, to incorporate photos into some of the work. For the quote, I downloaded an image of an orange abstract painting and made color edits to it in Adobe Photoshop. I made the text a yellow-orange and a red-orange to contrast with the darkness of the purple-blue background. I also added a second layer of the text in the background to push the text on the top layer into the foreground, adding additional contrast.

In graphic design it is important to have hierarchy in any work to establish visual cues for the viewer. Hierarchy is a system that emphasizes different levels of information. Usually the largest or boldest object in a composition will be more important than an object that is smaller or lighter in weight. I made the text two different sizes and two different colors, to establish hierarchy. I emphasized the words “Art” and “explain” because this is a basic mechanism in art therapy. Art therapy allows an individual to create art, while using that art to explain emotions that may be too difficult or painful to say aloud. The quote was chosen purposely to connect with the audience on a deeper emotional level. The quote also serves as a break in the content because it allows for an easier read with less content and excludes audience participation.

¹⁹ Pam Holland, I am Pam Holland, accessed December 5, 2023, https://iampamholland.com/
The second post highlights an art therapist using information I gathered from an art therapist locator website, buckeyearththerapy.org. For this post, I referenced other Instagram spotlight posts to gain an idea of what they usually include. Most spotlight posts include a name, a photo and a short bio. In my design, I incorporated contact information for the art therapist, so potential clients would have the ability to reach out when needed. I added a quote to give a voice to the art therapist and to show their personality. I chose a dark navy blue background to match the intended color scheme of my project and to give contrast to the work by illuminating the lighter information.

Art Therapist Spotlight
Michelle Davis

I specialize in working with clients who struggle with addiction, depression, anxiety, mood disorders, and other mental health needs or concerns. I am here to support you on your journey to healing and can’t wait to meet you.

“You can do anything through willpower and determination”

Certifications
- Board Certified Art Therapist (BCAT)
- Masters in Counseling

Contact
(330) 787-9307
Michelledavis@healing.com

Address
733 W Market St
Akron, OH 44303
Post 3

The third post encourages the audience to share their personal sketches and aims to promote continual creativity\textsuperscript{20}. Something as simple as sketching once a day can have a big impact on mood and creativity. By engaging the audience, there is a higher likelihood that the audience will continue to interact with other posts, which will further spread awareness. As stated above, colors can be used to provoke emotion, but they are also useful in pulling the viewer in. Accent colors, especially bright hues, are able to draw the eye more successfully than lighter or pale colors. To balance the red hue of the graphics, I set the content on a pale yellow background. While many of the posts will follow a blue color scheme, it is important to have diversity in color. If all of the posts had the same background, it would be hard to distinguish importance and the continuous hue would become boring to the viewer.

The purpose of the fourth post is to give a break in the other text dominant posts. The fourth post motivates the audience to continue to create and to make art in their daily lives. This post was brought about from the list I mentioned in the beginning paragraph of this section where I stated “images of art tools with a slogan”. I captured an image of my art supplies and brainstormed encouraging phrases to coincide with the image. In my original design for the post, I overlaid colored type onto the background image, which can be seen in figure 1. After reviewing the first design with my reader, the current layout was suggested. In this version, the type now showcases the background image and uses two different white transparency layers to give depth and contrast to the piece. The second version is more easily readable and allows for a more in depth read of the material.
The fifth post addresses the misconceptions of art therapy and utilizes the carousel feature of Instagram. The carousel feature of Instagram is a type of post that showcases multiple photos of videos as a single post. A carousel post can be viewed by swiping left through the various screens. For this post, I referenced an article from groveemotionalhealth.com by Deepti Guruprasad, a provisional registered art therapist with a Master of Philosophy. Guruprasad’s article discusses the misconceptions and the facts of art therapy. One of the main goals of my project was to bring attention to the misconceptions about art therapy, so that the field can become less stigmatized. I utilized Guruprasad’s article as a resource to create a post that addresses five art therapy misconceptions. There were numerous misconceptions, but I focused on five to keep the post shorter, to not overwhelm the audience with text dominant content.

The original design for the fifth post displayed a pink color scheme, seen in figure 2. The first design was re-adjusted because it did not align with the entirety of my target audience. While the first design was successful, it would have alienated half of my target audience. Those who are male presenting would not connect with the pink theme as well as female presenting persons might. This issue was brought to my attention during a meeting from my reader. I adjusted the color scheme to better align with the broader range of my target audience.

Figure 2

Post 6

The sixth post attempts to engage the viewer and spread creativity through a weekly exercise. I was inspired by Shelley Klammer’s list of one hundred art therapy exercises. Shelley Klammer is an Expressive Arts Educator and a Counseling Therapist. I was inspired by Klammer’s motivational collage prompt and used her prompt to frame the creation of one of my Instagram posts for the campaign. Klammer’s motivational collage exercise stated, “Collage a vision board. Fill it with images you find motivating.” An exercise social media post is necessary in curating audience involvement and encouraging the practice of making art.

The initial design of the sixth post displayed vector graphics of a pair of scissors and paper elements (figure 3). The vector graphics made the piece feel child-like and did not suit my intended target audience. My reader recommended the use of photography to better align with my target audience and to elevate the design. The updated design is more dynamic and diversifies the work as a whole.

Figure 3

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EXERCISE #34

Create a motto or phrase for yourself that reminds you to reach your goals. Then make a visual collage of what this motto or phrase will look like. Don’t be afraid to get messy!

Materials:
Glue, Paper, Magazines, Scissors, Drawing Tools

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The seventh post reveals information about how art therapy can help and what disorders art therapy can treat. I found limited examples explaining what art therapy is and what it can treat via Instagram posts, which inspired me to create this post. My initial design of the seventh post utilized a slab serif, complete digital type and a yellow hue for the accent color (figure 4). The intensity of the yellow hue and bulkiness of the slab serif, made the information difficult to read. I amended this by changing the color to green, which is the analogous complement to the blue hue. Upon discussing the design, it was recommended that I not only change the color of the yellow type, but also the style of type. My reader recommended incorporating hand lettering into the design. The hand lettering alleviated the density and rigidity of the digital type and established a more personal connection with the viewer. Upon further consideration, I decided to incorporate the mix of the two techniques into a previous post to draw connections in the work.

Figure 4
Post 8

The eighth post reveals information about the different types of art therapies and the various mediums used in the practice. I visually represented each art therapy medium through the use of vector graphics. Utilizing photographs as a visual representation would have created an overwhelming composition. Art therapy has a vast range of mediums that many individuals lack awareness on because art therapy is most commonly associated with drawing or painting. Art therapy is also commonly associated with physical art making, rather than performative art. It is important to educate individuals on the diverse options of art therapy and art therapy mediums, so they can make informed decisions.
The ninth post showcases artwork from members or followers of the National Art Therapy Association, the brand of my campaign. I incorporated three different versions of the ninth post to give the illusion of a continual posting practice. Each of the three designs contain an image of an artwork, a listed medium and a name or anonymous label. The anonymous label was recommended by my reader to be inclusive to members that did not wish to share their personal information. The artwork created during art therapy sessions are protected under HIPAA, this means that no one is allowed to share the work created without the patient’s consent. Many art therapy social media accounts lack patient work in addition to images of art. I think it is important to seek permission from patients to share their images in the hopes of inspiring others to see if art therapy is viable for them. Patient work can potentially provide a sense of community through interactive dialogue. If sharing patient work is too problematic, art therapy accounts should push to provide general art content, such as sharing art created by local or contemporary artists. Art can be very inspiring and uplifting, which is why it is important to include images or videos of art on an art therapy social media account.
Post 10

The tenth post provides a two step process for locating an art therapist for individuals who wish to start their art therapy journey. I researched Instagram art therapy accounts and art therapy accounts on other social media platforms, but could not locate posts with resource links. I was surprised in my initial search to find a lack of resources on many art therapy social media pages. I was under the assumption that art therapy accounts focused on providing resources and educating individuals. I found that most art therapy accounts are geared towards content pertaining to art therapy events or art therapists looking to start their own practice. With the lack of informational content for individuals interested in art therapy, I feel my campaign became essential in providing content for those individuals. I sifted through multiple art therapy websites to find the easiest process for beginning an art therapy journey. Many websites, including buckeyearttherapy.com, contained an art therapist locator system either through a search engine or via contact form. I used the information to create a minimal post that provided a resource for those in need of an art therapist.

My initial design for the tenth post incorporated a patterned background, but was altered (figure 5). The pattern was distracting and leaned more towards a feminine design, as addressed by my reader. The pattern was taken out to better align with my target audience and to increase readability.

Start your Art Therapy journey in 2 easy steps:

1. Search for an Art Therapist in your area
   buckeyearttherapy.org/BATA.art.therapist.referral?&tab=1

2. Contact the Art Therapist directly or fill out a new client form on their website

Similar to counseling, it may take a few tries to find an Art Therapist that you connect with. Don’t give up hope!
The eleventh post lists three things art therapy can do for individuals. It is important to inform individuals on how a service can help and what it can do for them. I took three key points from the *Handbook of Art Therapy*, by Cathy Malchiodi to create the eleventh post²³. I created visual graphics to represent each key point. The graphics provided clarity and provided a design connection to the eighth post.

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The twelfth post provides information about the services of online art therapy and the HIPAA policy. The National Art Therapy Association website is listed for those who wish to learn more information about art therapy. This style of post would be on a bi-weekly posting schedule as a way to spread information to viewers about various topics. It is essential to provide alternative ways of accessing resources. The most common method of therapy application in previous years were in-person sessions with a licensed psychiatrist. Since the Covid-19 pandemic, online sessions have been gaining popularity. A national survey by the American Psychiatric Association found that approximately 38% of Americans used telehealth services in the year 2021, which increased by 7% from the previous year. With online services increasing in popularity, it is important to provide information and resources pertaining to that mode of care.

Did You Know

Some Art Therapists offer their services online. Online sessions meet on a HIPAA compliant platform, so your sessions stay confidential.

Nationalatassociation.org

The final post provides information on aspects of group therapy, including the anticipated format, role of the therapist, open and closed groups, benefits, disadvantages, possible locations and how to join an art therapy group. Cathy Malchiodi’s book, *Handbook of Art Therapy*, was an instrumental resource for the creation of this post, as well as the campaign. A majority of the information for the post was extracted from Malchiodi’s book. Art therapy, as with any mental health field, has many facets. It is important to educate individuals on all aspects of art therapy, so that individuals can make informed decisions about their care.

The initial design incorporated a solid blue background, an illustration and an image of hands on the information screens (figure 6). The initial design of the thirteenth post was unsuccessful because it did not match the design of previous posts. The hand image was distracting and interfered with readability. The final design utilizes the illustration in a different way to better align with previous content. White boxes were added into the final design to increase readability.

**Post 13**

**Format:**
- Introductions > Warm up >
- Main Art Activity > Discussion

**Art Therapist Role:**
Encourage open communication, note the process and intervene when needed.

**Opening Exercise:**
In an open Art Therapy group, members can leave when they choose and there are differing individuals in every session. In a closed group, there is more structure and the people will remain the same.

**Benefits:**
Groups instill hope, provide support, reduce isolation, promote social skills, provide a sense of belonging and show that people's experiences are more similar than different.

**Disadvantages:**
Confidentiality is more difficult to ensure, more resources and materials are needed, a larger space is needed and there is less individual attention.

**Possible Locations:**
Hospitals, clinics, community centers, Art Therapist office, shelters, agencies, psychiatric wards, counseling centers and more.

**Getting Started:**
Call your local doctor’s office or Art Therapist to see your available options.
NEW POST!!

3 Things Art Therapy Does:

- It serves as a form of non-verbal communication
- It provides the opportunity to explore problems, strengths and possibilities for change
- It allows the expression of feelings, thoughts, and different world views
Interactive App

Seeking a comprehensive and professional project, I planned multiple touch points for my audience, including an interactive app. This created multiple ways of spreading the campaign message, which increased the likelihood of the campaign reaching a larger range of people. While social media is a common practice in many people’s lives, some individuals receive their information from other sources. The brochure and the website were created to reach individuals who may not use social media frequently. I created my project to help other individuals and potentially the art therapy field by spreading awareness.

In a real social media campaign, there would be a large amount of various moving parts and processes. I wanted my project to mimic a real campaign as closely as my resources would allow. By adding an interactive component, a brochure and mockups, my project provides more information, which in turn could potentially help more people.

After completing the posts, the next step was to create the interactive component of the campaign. I utilized Figma, which is a web application that specializes in the creation of interface designs (figure 7). I have prior experience with Figma and felt that it would be a useful tool in creating the interactive component for my campaign. Figma allows users to create a mockup of an interface using frames. The frames are white boxes that hold assets, such as type and images. Once the assets are arranged in the frame, portions of the frame can be sliced. The slices can then be connected to each other to create an interaction between various frames.

I utilized interface mockups and Adobe Illustrator to design thirty-three screens that I later imported into Figma. I referenced Instagram, its format and accounts on the app. I looked at how various content was displayed and how the different pages were arranged. After completing the interface set-up, I ran various tests to be sure the interface was working correctly. Individuals were able to scan a QR code during the exhibition to view and interact with the Instagram campaign design. Users could view each of the thirteen posts I created along with a short description under each post. This app component allowed individuals to interact with the content as they were viewing the exhibit. The app was important in showcasing how the campaign would behave and how it impacted the viewer as they moved through the physical work.

Figure 7
“Art Therapy is a form of psychotherapy that combines the creative process of art making with the theories of psychology.”

Cathy A. Malchiodi. Handbook of Art Therapy.
Brochure

Campaigns utilize many different methods of spreading information, from ads to emails to billboards. Advertising is an important part of any campaign because it creates a wider reach to a broader audience. A core aspect of my honors project is to spread awareness for art therapy. To do so, I created a physical brochure and a digital brochure that can be accessed via a QR code. A brochure is a quick and easy way to gain and spread information. The brochure contains more information than a standard Instagram post and the information can be easily referenced as a whole instead of in parts. The digital brochure spreads information to the audience through an online format. The physical brochure was created for the exhibition for individuals who prefer physical copies of information or for those who do not primarily use social media as their source of information. It is important to have multiple delivery methods when exposed to a wide audience. While my target audience is young adults, I hoped my message would help other individuals as well.

To create the brochure, I filtered through the various pages of research notes I had previously taken and used the posts I made as references. I researched multiple art therapy websites and included links of the quality websites in the brochure’s resource panel. I determined what websites to include based on the age of the information, how much information was available and if the information was relevant to my audience. I sorted the various sites into sections in the resource panel to differentiate the purpose of each site. The resource panel is an essential part of the brochure because the purpose of my campaign is to help individuals connect with art therapy and available resources.

Inside the brochure I compiled topics that would be most beneficial for individuals to learn about. I included what art therapy is, what disorders it can treat, how it can help, online art therapy, myths, group art therapy, resources and how to get started with art therapy. I incorporated images of art tools and images of the creation process. Many brochure examples that I researched lacked appealing images and some did not include any at all. It is important to give visuals when presenting information to clarify the topic and give a resting place for the eye among large amounts of text.

The first two cover designs of the brochure were unsuccessful. After meeting with my sponsor and my reader, I was able to improve the design quality. My sponsor recommended creating more cohesion with the posts and my reader recommended changing the design to be more attention grabbing. My second reader also provided feedback on the typography and leading of the information. The previous unsuccessful cover designs can be seen in figure 8. The previous cover designs lacked contrast and visual interest. I changed the background graphics to be more illustrative and further diversified the type by changing the size and color of the titles. The final cover contains more hierarchy and is more visually pleasing to the eye.
Healing Through Art and Creativity:
WHAT ART THERAPY CAN DO FOR YOU

ART THERAPY GROUPS
If individual Art Therapy sessions are too intimidating or not the right fit for you, consider joining an Art Therapy group.

Benefits
Groups tend to provide support, reduce isolation, establish connections, promote social skills, provide a sense of belonging and show that people’s experiences are more similar than different.

Disadvantages
Confidentiality is more difficult to ensure and there is less individual attention.

Open vs Closed Groups
In open Art Therapy groups, members can leave freely and there are different group members in every session.

A closed group is more structured and the people will remain the same.

RESOURCES
Websites
1. Art Therapy right for you
   alanabandman.com/therapies/creative-arts-therapy/
2. Locate an Art Therapist
   arttherapy.org/locate-an-art-therapist
3. Art and Art Therapy
   psychologiesdaily.com/art/what-is-art-therapy/
4. American Art Therapy Association
   aota.org/About-Us/Find-An-Art-Therapist
5. Information
   arttherapy.org/what-art-therapy-can-do-for-you

Books
1. Essential Art Therapy Exercises by Leah Gorman
2. The Art Therapy Way: A Self Care Guide by Anne Malis

Healing Through Art and Creativity:
WHAT ART THERAPY CAN DO FOR YOU

WHAT IS ART THERAPY?
Art therapy is a form of psychotherapy that combines the creative process of art-making with the theories of psychology.

HOW CAN ART THERAPY HELP ME?
- Aid in building emotional resilience
- Aid in building social skills
- Become self-aware
- Diminish effects of depression
- Foster self-esteem
- Gain a sense of control
- Improve cognitive function
- Reduce stress, anxiety and pain
- and much more

WHAT DISORDERS CAN ART THERAPY TREAT?
- Addiction
- ADHD
- Anxiety
- Aspergers
- Bipolar disorder
- Dementia
- Depression
- Eating disorders
- OCD
- PTSD
- Schizophrenia
- Stress
- Trauma
- and many more

ART THERAPY MYTHS
- Art Therapy is similar to an art class
- Anyone can provide Art Therapy
- Art making happens every session
- Art Therapy is for children
- Art Therapy requires art skills
- Art Therapy is for people with big issues
- An adult coloring book is Art Therapy

GET STARTED ON YOUR ART THERAPY JOURNEY
Contact your local doctor’s office or Art Therapist to see your available options. Locate an Art Therapist near you using the links in the resource section.

ONLINE SESSIONS
Many Art Therapists offer their sessions online. Online sessions are required to meet on a HIPAA compliant platform, so your sessions are confidential.

Online sessions may be useful for individuals who have busy schedules, who may live in remote areas and for those who have physical limitations or disabilities.
Every company or brand has a specific mark that helps identify who they are. A successful and versatile mark or logo is important for a brand to establish their individual identity to the consumer market. At the beginning of the planning stage, I thought about whether I should redesign a social media campaign for an existing company or invent a new company to be the face of the campaign. I created my own brand so that I would have more creative freedom and wouldn’t have to worry about matching an existing art therapy brand’s identity.

To establish a brand for art therapy, I first needed to create a brand name and a brand logo or identity. I started off with creating a list of potential brand names that did not already exist. The list is as follows:

- The Art and Mental Health Group
- Art is Health
- Art Therapy Collaborative
- National Art Therapy Association
- Patients For Art Therapy
- Art of Healing Mental Health Group
- Creative Therapy Coalition

I selected the National Art Therapy Association as the brand name for the campaign. The National Art Therapy Association or NATA, implies that the organization helps individuals on a national scale. NATA is short, abbreviates well and is similar in format to other art therapy brands, such as the Buckeye Art Therapy Association. After I solidified the brand name, I progressed to the sketching stage for the logo design. I researched other art therapy logos and symbols associated with mental health and art for reference. I discovered an image of a paint brush with paint strokes and decided to base my logo off of a paint stroke design. I sorted through a variety of different typefaces and compared them next to each other before choosing Yantramanav as the typeface for the logo. Yantramanav is a clean, professional looking typeface with a hint of playfulness in the depiction of the R letterform. This allowed my logo to exhibit professionalism, while also exhibiting a slight playfulness (figure 9).

I experimented with multiple variations of the logo using the original reference image as a guide. The reference image inspired me to create a logo with paint strokes. The paint element plays off of art therapy materials, while also drawing correlation to the curvilinear element of the R letterform in the brand’s typeface. My initial design was static and lacked a clear representation of paint strokes. My reader recommended pushing the design of the strokes to further resemble real paint strokes, rather than organic shapes. The evolution process of the logo design is shown in figure 10.
Types Of Art Therapy Sessions

Art therapy can be provided in individual sessions or in a group setting. Individual sessions can be either an open or closed group. Group sessions involve multiple individuals and can incorporate the creative process to help work through various emotional and behavioral issues. This can include art, music, dance, and drama. Group sessions can be beneficial for individuals who may feel more comfortable expressing themselves in a group setting.

Types Of Art Therapy Mediums

Some individuals may prefer specific art therapy mediums, such as drawing or painting. Art therapy can also be adapted to individual needs and preferences.

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Website

Almost every brand in today’s world has a website that individuals can access to learn more information about that brand. Websites are helpful in displaying multiple pages of information on a specific business or topic to anyone who has access to the web. My reader made the suggestion that I create a website, so that the Instagram posts can guide viewers to the site. The website allowed the posts to have a consistent call to action with a short link that took up less space. The website also added another layer to my campaign project and helped tie in more information about art therapy. The website was an important aspect in my campaign because it allowed content to be connected across platforms. The website also gave the ability to deliver a larger amount of information and resources to the audience.

For the website, I designed a homepage and a full length about page that provided various information about art therapy. The brand colors on the website are blue and orange to correlate to the brochure design and the Instagram posts. The about page contains five tabs that lead the viewer to different pages of information. There is an about tab, find a therapist, locations, materials and an art therapy research tab. Much of the about information was taken from my previous research of the brochure and the Instagram posts. The about page is text heavy, so to balance out the text, two images were placed on the page. One of the images used on the about page inspired the final cover design of the brochure. It is necessary in a campaign to create connections between the different works. These connections create a theme and an identity for individuals to follow, which furthers understanding.
What Is Art Therapy

Art Therapy is an established mental health profession that utilizes a form of psychotherapy that combines both the creative process of art making with the theories of psychology to improve and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals of all ages.

What Does Art Therapy Do

Art therapy can help people resolve conflicts and problems, develop interpersonal skills, manage behavior, reduce stress, achieve insight and enhance self-esteem and self-awareness. Art Therapy can be useful in treating a wide range of mental health disorders, including:

- Addiction
- ADHD
- Anxiety
- Aspergers
- Bipolar
- Dementia
- Depression
- Eating Disorders
- OCD
- PTSD
- Schizophrenia
- Stress
- Trauma
- and more

Who Can Provide Art Therapy

Art Therapy can only be provided by a licensed mental health professional that has obtained the proper credentials. Art Therapists are required to complete a Master’s Degree (MA) in Art Therapy, among other requirements. There are many types of certification an Art Therapist can receive, the two most popular are Registered and Board Certified.

The designation “ATR” (Art Therapist Registered) is granted by the Art Therapist Certification Board (ATCB) to art therapists who have successfully completed the required graduate education and post graduate professional experience, which includes supervision by an ATR-certified art therapist.

The designation “BC” (Board Certified) is granted by the ATCB to ATR art therapists who have successfully passed the national certification examination. Recertification is provided every five years by documentation of continuing education, publication, presentations, exhibits, and other activities which demonstrate continuing professional competence.

Types Of Art Therapy Sessions

Art therapy can be provided in individual sessions or in a group setting. Individual sessions involve the art therapist and the patient. Group sessions involve multiple individuals and can be either an open or a closed group. Open art therapy groups have new members almost every session and are very fluid. Closed groups work with the same set of individuals in a more structured setting.

Types Of Art Therapy Mediums

Many individuals think that Art Therapy is just drawing, coloring or some kind of painting. This is partially correct. Art Therapy can involve drawing or painting, but it also involves a wide range of different mediums. The mediums used in art therapy sessions depend on the individual or group members in the session. Some mediums you may find in a fine arts, Art Therapy session include:

- Clay
- Charcoal
- Crayons
- Drawing Tablet
- Graphite
- Paint
- Pastels
- Plaster
- Play Dough
- and more

Ready to start your Art Therapy journey?

Click here to search for an art therapist in your area.
“The long-term benefits of this process include improved self-esteem, richer self-empowerment and the development of skills that can be used in the future to deal with life’s challenges.”

Leah Guzman. Essential Art Therapy Exercises.
Mockups

In the design profession, mockups are used to showcase an idea or body of work. A mockup is similar to being a visual draft of what the final product is intended to look like. I created four mockups for my project, two for my website and two for the Instagram app. My first web mockup displays a laptop on a white background, with the homepage. This mockup is intended to show viewers what the website would look like if it were to be displayed on a laptop screen. The second website mockup displays the about page on a computer monitor, with two separate views of the about page on a dark brown background. The monitor shows what the content would look like on screen and the two screens give an idea of how long the actual page would be.

The first phone mockup shows the Instagram homepage with one of the carousel posts displayed across the phone. This style of mockup allows the viewer to view the entire carousel post while also having an idea of how the swipe feature would function. The second phone mockup showcases two visuals, one of the home page and one of the account page. This mockup allows the viewer to see the content used in different placements, while also making connections to the interactive app.
Exhibition

Arrangements

It is a common practice in any field, to display a given project or data collected from the investigative process of research to colleagues or the general public. As an art major, I felt it would be fitting to display my project to the community through an exhibit format. There are many components of gallery exhibition, but the most important being the space where the work will be displayed. I chose to reserve the Projects Gallery at the Myers School of Art on the University of Akron’s main campus. This location suited my needs for the project by providing convenience, adequate space and easy access. I reserved the gallery space for one week which consisted of installing the show, presenting the work to the public, deinstalling the show and reverting the gallery back to its previous state.

Construction

To begin exhibiting my project, I ordered thirty-six 8in by 10in black frames for the posts and content calendar to be displayed in. I then ordered six 11in by 17in black frames for the mockups and artist statement. I borrowed screws, a drill, a level, a step ladder, spacklel and a pedestal from the Emily Davis gallery team. Once the supplies were gathered, I printed, cut and framed each piece. After each work was printed out and framed, I moved to installing the exhibit.

Installation

As an art major I have had many wonderful opportunities to exhibit my work in a variety of gallery locations. Displaying my work in exhibitions has become a common practice for me over the last few years. One would think that having my work exhibited frequently would correlate to having the ability to install my own exhibition of my own work. This was not the case for me because I had no previous experience with installing my own work before, especially something of this volume. I relied on my previous gallery experience and the help of the Myers gallery director.

Before I was able to put any holes in the wall, I first sketched the design layout of the space. It was important to correctly arrange elements so that the work would exhibit unity and harmony. I gathered measurements for each of the three walls I planned to exhibit the work on. I decided to split my work into three groups. The artist statement, content calendar and printed brochures were placed on the wall closest to the door. This arrangement allowed for an introduction of the exhibition. The middle wall contained each of the printed Instagram posts along with the QR code for the interactive app. The middle wall allowed the audience to experience the printed material at the same time as the interactive app. The final wall held the mockups and effectively led the viewer to the end of the exhibited work.

For the final arrangement of the work I placed the artist statement closest to the door, with a pedestal a few feet away with the content calendar positioned above. The artist statement introduced the show which is why it needed to be placed close to the entrance. The pedestal offered physical brochures for viewers as a reference as they moved through the exhibit. I positioned the content calendar above the brochures to give individuals something to think about before moving into the rest of the exhibition.
On the middle wall of the gallery, I arranged each carousel post above one another, in descending order. Each carousel post was intended to be read straight across, which correlates to how the mockups were displayed. The second section of posts were arranged in a four by three grid. This allowed the content to be closer to the viewer and followed the arrangement of the mockups. I originally planned for each frame to be positioned two inches apart, but upon further consideration I decided to increase the distance to four inches. The increased distance allowed the posts to take up more space and made the arrangement of content appear less crowded.

The remaining posts were diverse in design and color choice, therefore, each post had to be thoughtfully placed. I did not want to place similar colors next to one another because the composition would become too visually concentrated in that area, instead of being evenly dispersed. I attempted to keep content with the same colors in different rows. I also considered how the type heavy posts would interact with the image posts. For many of the type heavy posts, I placed an image post next to it to balance out the amount of text. This arrangement kept the composition harmonious and allowed the viewer’s eye to rest as it moved through the material.

At the end of my last scheduled exhibit day, I collected materials to begin deinstalling my work. I removed each frame from the wall and removed the screws and patched the walls. With the gallery returned back to its former glory, all there was left to do was ponder the impact of my project.
As my project came to a close, I contemplated about the effects of my project, my project goals, the overall success of the project and if I would have done anything differently. My initial project proposal stated that I would utilize my graphic design knowledge to create a project that would benefit young adults and students on campus. It also stated that my project would spread awareness for art therapy, while investigating how art therapy can be beneficial to mental health. I experienced many changes as my ideas and perceptions shifted, but I continued to create a project that reflected my original values.

My social media campaign would allow individuals, especially college aged students on campus, to explore art therapy. My campaign would provide resources for those interested in connecting with art therapy and it also would provide valuable information on the topic. I had the opportunity to further my graphic design skills by creating multiple different types of content for the campaign. I also learned a decent amount about art therapy and social media campaigns through the extensive research process. I am now more well informed about how social media campaigns are created and what one should entail.

With any first time project, there will be room for improvement. The biggest critique of my project is that much of the work was exhibited as physical content, opposed to digital content. This approach was contradictory to the subject of the project. The campaign is designed to be interactive, but this was lost in the static way the exhibit was displayed. For future consideration, I would attempt to create a digital interactive atmosphere for the campaign. This could have been done through the video component or by providing a device with which the audience could utilize to interact with the project. My reader remarked that the display of the material was uninteresting and static. One proposed solution to this would be to arrange the frames to look like a large phone or have the frames be mounted off the wall in clear frames. The shape of the frames were also an issue because the posts were created as a square format, but were placed in a rectangular format. My reader also recommended the use of plexiglass or a non-shiny material because the material used in the frames created a glare, which interfered with readability and presentation craft.

In the beginning of the research process I had a difficult time visualizing a final product and what everything would look like. I was very back and forth on a few things at the start, but I managed to pull everything together and I created a cohesive and meaningful project. If I were to do this project over again, I would like to bring in real art therapists and get more creative with the exhibit display, following my reader’s advice. I might also build out the website more fully and make that an interaction along with the app, while making the interactive elements more prominent in the exhibit. I am glad to have had the opportunity to learn while trying to make a difference in the lives of others.

A big thank you to each of the individuals who have helped in shaping my project by providing support, feedback and materials. I greatly appreciate my advisor Elisha Dumser, my sponsor McKenna Vietmeier, my readers Brittyn Murdock and Anthony Samangy and Arnie Tunstall, the Emily Davis Gallery Director, for helping me see this project to completion. This project would not have been as successful without all of their help.


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Signatures

Art Therapy Awareness: A Social Media Campaign
Hannah Barnes
Department of Graphic Design

Honors Research Project
Submitted to
The Williams Honors College
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