



# Art Therapy and Creative Coping Techniques for Older Adults (Arts Therapies)

By Susan Buchalter



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Art and the therapeutic uses of art provide older adults with valuable ways in which to express and share their feelings, needs and fears, and with a resource for coping with life's major changes. This practical book is filled with step-by-step exercises for art therapists and other professionals to use in work with older adults, either individually or in groups.

The author provides brief, imaginative warm-ups, which encourage participants to become more at ease expressing themselves creatively. She offers ideas for engaging and innovative creative projects across a range of media, including art, music, movement, poetry and creative writing, all of which can be adapted, personalised or combined to meet the particular needs of individual participants. Points to consider when working with this client group are explored, and case study examples, with participants' artwork, are included throughout.

Appropriate for use with all relatively able older adults, including those with depression, anxiety or in the early stages of dementia, this will be an invaluable tool for art therapists as well as counsellors, psychotherapists, social workers and carers.

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### **Editorial Review**

#### **Review**

The vast number of activities makes this a valuable resources and a starting point for those planning their own activities. There is a useful index that allows the readers to search by emotion, materials or subject. Each of the activities is well planned in terms of physical resources. -- NursingTimes.net Buchalter's clear, imaginative and empathic way of explaining this creative work with older people and the offering of man moving stories and illustrations arising from it, gives a sense that her therapy groups are places of real dialogue with older people as dynamic, surprising and whole individuals, rather than abstract and quantifiable problems to be solved. I liked the fact that every group member mentioned is named, and that each group session whether drawing, writing, reminiscing, creating collages, movement or music, allowed for the participants' self-reflection and mutual support... Without needing to be an art or music expert, I could dip in and out of this book as people to perceive themselves as images of God, to creatively and thus living their lives towards their promised fullness. There is such a dearth of practical, older-people led resources, I constantly have to adapt from resources for younger people, for my own ministry, so I am encouraged and rather pleased by the author's counter cultural generations and disciplines. Certainly the vast and diverse array of issues embraced in her work has universal relevance, but Buchalter's dealing with these issues in the particular context of older people reveals ageing as a time for personal growth , healing and potential, a rich varied seam of experience to offer back to every generation. -- Plus, Quarterly magazine of Christian Council on Ageing Reading this book sparks thoughts about your own creative ideas for working with older people. If you are an artist, a carer or an activities facilitator looking for new ways to engage a group then this is a great resource to dip into for inspiration. -- Dementia UK

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#### About the Author

Susan I. Buchalter is a senior clinical therapist at the University Medical Centre at Princeton. She is a certified art therapist, licensed professional counselor, and certified group psychotherapist, and has over 25 years' experience of leading art therapy and psychotherapy groups. Susan is the author of *A Practical Art Therapy* and *Art Therapy Techniques and Applications*, both published by JKP.

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