



Madras School of Social Work

Department of Psychology

under the aegis of

Vriddhi'21

conducting a 2 - day workshop on

Expressive **Art** **Therapy**



**Resource Person -
Ms. Magdalene Jeyarathnam**

Counselor, Psychodramatist

Date: 24 & 25 March 2022

Time: 2:00pm

Venue: Department of Psychology






Expressive Art Therapy:

Expressive arts therapy is a multimodal approach, combining psychology and the creative process to promote personal growth and healing.

The focus is less on the mind making shifts or coming up with answers, but rather, it trusts that by creative expression, the mind and body will find a way to process and resolve some pressing issues.

About the Resource Person:

- Magdalene Jeyarathnam is an expressive arts therapist and a board certified Psychodramatist working with individuals, couples and groups including family groups in India.
 - Magdalene has more than 25 years of experience in working with addiction, HIV/AIDS and mental health issues, she has worked with several state and central government agencies in India.
 - She is the founder of East West Center for Counselling which is an Expressive arts therapy center providing therapy services to schools, universities and organizations; She also founded the Indian Institute of psychodrama which is the first psychodrama training institute in India.
 - She is one of the founding members of the Indian academy of professional supervisors; she is also on the board of directors of the International Association of Group Psychotherapy and group Processes. She is a co-founder of Expressive Arts therapy Association of India.
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MADRAS SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WORK

DEPARTMENT OF M.SC COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

A WORKSHOP ON EXPRESSIVE ARTS THERAPY – VRIDDHI'21



A workshop on Expressive Arts Therapy was organized by the department of M.Sc Counselling Psychology, under the aegis of Vriddhi'21, the department forum. The workshop was conducted by Mrs. Magdalene Jeyarathnam, a counsellor and psychodramatist on the 24th and 25th of February 2022, from 2 pm to 5 pm. The main objectives of this workshop were to allow the individuals to express themselves in a unique way through art, be empathetic towards oneself and other people, to create a safe space of confidentiality for one another and to provide a platform to explore themselves.

Mrs. Magdalene Jeyarathnam is an expressive arts therapist and a board certified psychodramatist working with individuals, couples and various groups in India. She has more than 25 years of experience in working on areas such as addiction, HIV/AIDS and mental health issues, and has worked with several state and central governmental agencies in India. She is the founder of East West Centre for Counselling which is a centre for Expressive Arts Therapy, and it provides therapy services to schools, universities and organizations. She also founded the Indian Institute of Psychodrama which is the first psychodrama training institute in India.

On the first day of the workshop, the students of the department were asked to perform several activities following the instructions of the facilitator, such as

- Role reversal, The students were given roles to play – for example, one student had played the role of a blind man, and another student played a truck driver helping the blind man cross the road, after which the roles were reversed. Several more roles were given as well. The aim was to create an understanding on what it is like to be in a certain situation.
- Rating the level of anxiety at the moment and explaining why. The students had to choose numbers and they would stand in different lines, indicating different ratings. The aim was to assess anxiety levels and what it feels like to have anxiety.
- The resource person had given us a gist on sociometric assessments, that are used to measure interpersonal relationships between people. So, an activity was done where the students had shared their past experiences of being negatively judged by people for expressing themselves in a unique way, leading to an environment of feeling safe.
- Then, the last activity for the day was to take a drawing sheet, divide it into 6 boxes by drawing lines. In the first box, the students had to draw a protagonist. In the second box, the purpose of the protagonist. In the third box, all the support systems of the protagonist, in the fourth box, the challenges the protagonist faces, in the fifth box, how the protagonist copes up with these challenges, and in the final box, the students had to draw their own ending that they think of, for the story.

On the second day of the workshop, the students were asked to perform more activities. They were:

- Wrapping a blown balloon with tissue papers after applying glue, post which they were asked to cut the balloon's edge slowly to get the air out, which led to the tissue ball existing on its own without the balloon. Then, the students were asked to cut the tissue ball into two halves so they would become two masks. Then they were asked to paint the masks, one mask indicating the inner self and the other mask indicating the outer self. This activity helped the students to explore themselves further.
- Three of the students had to enact in a way that one student was a whole person, the second student enacted as one aspect of the whole person and the third student acted as another aspect of the person. This activity provided an insight on how the parts of a person come together to form a whole personality.
- In the next activity, students were divided into two partners each, and were asked to write five words about nature, after which they were asked to form sentences using those words. Then, they had to demonstrate their poem in action, and then they had to make a drawing based on how their partner responded and the words they wrote.

To conclude the session, the facilitator had shed a light on her experiences with conducting group therapy and psychodrama for various groups, followed by the students thanking each other in the group as well as the facilitator for an enriching art therapy workshop. The students had experienced a great amount of learning, knowledge and development through creative arts. It had enhanced interpersonal relationships, expanded self-expression, self-knowledge, self-actualization and self-efficacy. It had also helped to stimulate creative thinking and exploration, regulates emotions, boost confidence among the students, and gave them the opportunity to reflect and express their inner most, suppressed thoughts that seemed too dangerous to let out, in the past, through art. The inspiring aspect of the workshop was every student's piece of art was subjective and had their own interpretations behind them. Students sharing these interpretations to the facilitator and the rest of the group members, was an empowering moment as it led to an insight about themselves and about other people, this increasing rapport building and support.

Tanuja V,

M.Sc Counselling Psychology, II Year

General Secretary, Vriddhi'21