



C

An outline of the definition, research, and treatment benefits

Training

Creative Arts Therapists are trained and certified in accordance with the academic and clinical requirements of the Council for Higher Education, determined in collaboration with the Ministry of Health. The training process involves tertiary education at a Master's degree level.

A definition of the profession

The Creative Arts Therapies form part of the mental health professions whereby artistic and expressive creations and processes are used in the treatment of mental, behavioral, developmental, and organic disorders.

There are six fields within the profession:

1. Visual art
2. Bibliotherapy
3. Drama therapy
4. Music
5. Psychodrama
6. Movement and dance

The uniqueness of Creative Arts Therapies for older adults

- The overarching goal of creative arts therapy is to cultivate an individual's mental abilities and strengthen his/her coping and adaptation skills on both personal and social levels in an effort to improve quality of life and optimal functioning.
- The language of the arts is a language of communication that is not necessarily verbal, but which allows for an indirect manner of expression, alongside verbal communication. Creative arts therapies have a unique place in the treatment of the aging population. Through this non-verbal means of communication, creative processes take place that enable change, encourage growth and a sense of vitality and improve functional abilities. The creative process and the artistic products during therapy allow for:
 - a heightened awareness of the self and of others
 - the strengthening of cognitive and emotional abilities
 - an improvement in dealing with symptoms and difficulties in the mental and physical realm associated with old age
 - the development of a more positive self-perception
 - creative activities that can expand an individual's involvement in community life



Major therapeutic goals that emerge during treatment sessions

- Gaining a sense of meaning while dealing with the changes inherent to old age
- Strengthening individual coping resources when facing loss and grief
- Preserving and identifying individual physical and mental strengths that can assist with living a fulfilling and meaningful life
- Maintaining a sense of self and strengthening a positive self-identity
- Strengthening an individual's sense of belonging and interpersonal relationships in order to reduce an experience of loneliness
- Working with family members who are primary caregivers

Research

Studies from recent years suggest that the creative arts therapies improve measures of mental health and cognitive functioning. Creative arts therapies reduce depressive symptoms in older adults and have been found to be effective in improving positive measures of mental health including: strengthening a sense of meaning, sense of ability, positive relationships with others, and self-expression. In recent years there are studies that indicate that music and movement and dance therapies also improve cognitive functions such as attention and memory functions. The following list includes examples of research in the field:

Chen, C. T., Tung, H. H., Fang, C. J., Wang, J. L., Ko, N. Y., Chang, Y. J., & Chen, Y. C. (2021). Effect of music therapy on improving sleep quality in older adults: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

Chamberlain, D. (2019). The experience of older adults who participate in a bibliotherapy/poetry group in an older adult inpatient mental health assessment and treatment ward. *Journal of Poetry Therapy*, 32(4), 223-239.

Dunphy, K., Baker, F. A., Dumaresq, E., Carroll-Haskins, K., Eickholt, J., Ercole, M., ... & Wosch, T. (2019). Creative arts interventions to address depression in older adults: a systematic review of outcomes, processes, and mechanisms. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9, 2655.

Dassa, A., & Harel, D. (2019). People with dementia as 'spect-actors' in a musical theatre group with performing arts students from the community. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 65, 101592.

Ho, R. T., Fong, T. C., Chan, W. C., Kwan, J. S., Chiu, P. K., Yau, J. C., & Lam, L. C. (2020). Psychophysiological effects of dance movement therapy and physical exercise on older adults with mild dementia: a randomized controlled trial. *The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, 75(3), 560-570.

Keisari, S., & Palgi, Y. (2017). Life-crossroads on stage: Integrating life review and drama therapy for older adults. *Aging & Mental Health*, 21(10), 1079-1089.

Li, H. C., Wang, H. H., Chou, F. H., & Chen, K. M. (2015). The effect of music therapy on cognitive functioning among older adults: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Journal of the American Medical Directors Association*, 16(1), 71-77.

Masika, G. M., Yu, D. S. F., & Li, P. W. C. (2021). Can visual art therapy be implemented with illiterate older adults with mild cognitive impairment? A pilot mixed-method randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Geriatric Psychiatry and Neurology*, 34(1), 76-86.



The potential of Creative Arts Therapies with older adults

Research and experience in the field indicate that the creative arts therapies have great potential to meet the growing need for support and emotional therapy to be readily available and accessible to the elderly population in Israel, both within the community and in various institutional frameworks.

This understanding led YAHAT (The Creative and Expressive Arts Therapies Association in Israel) to establish a special committee dedicated to this issue and which consists of trained therapists who specialize in the field of aging. The committee aims to promote the public's awareness of the unique contribution of the creative arts therapies during old age as a process that enhances an individual's quality of life.

Professional frameworks for creative arts therapies with the elderly population

Therapy can take place in an individual or group setting, and in various frameworks:

- Voluntary associations that provide mental health care at home or in designated centers
- Daycare centers
- Geriatric and nursing institutions
- Assisted living residences
- Retirement clubs or centers
- Home-based care
- Private settings, institutions, and clinics

We welcome questions and inquiries: yahat2013@gmail.com

Sincerely, (alphabetical listing)

Amani Mosa, Drama Therapist

Carmit Ezra-Arad, Committee Chairwoman, Movement and Dance Therapist

Dalya Weisbrod, Art Therapist

Dr. Dovrat Harel, Drama Therapist

Iris Gruss-Cohen, Movement and Dance Therapist

Michal Bogin, Art Therapist

Dr. Miriam Druks, Music Therapist

Dr. Shoshi Kaisari, Drama Therapist

Tami Yermiyahu, Chairwoman of YAHAT

Ziona Frankel, Art Therapist