

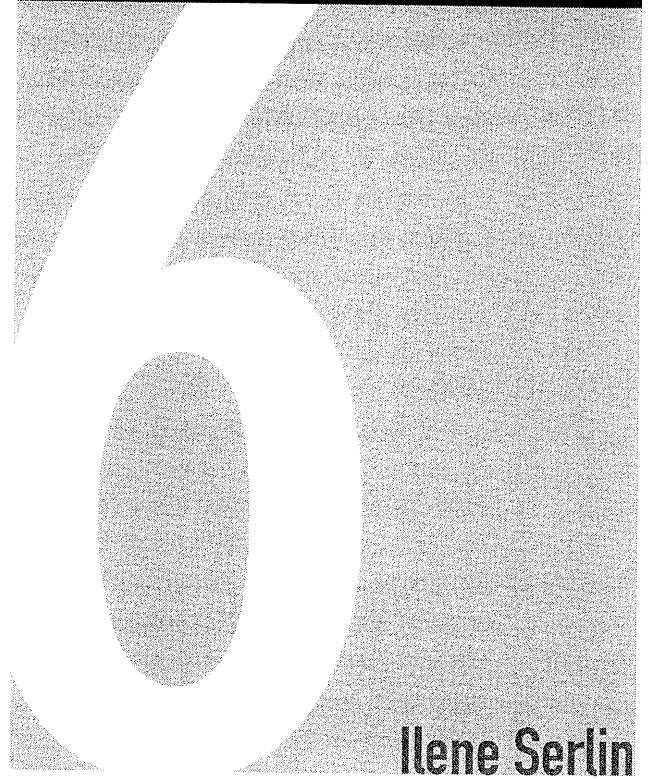
# Complementary and Integrative Medicine in Cancer Care and Prevention

**Foundations &  
Evidence-Based Interventions**



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# Expressive Therapies



## Introduction

Expressive therapies are a powerful tool for mind/body healing, and their use as a complementary therapy can greatly enrich the range of those therapies. The intention of this chapter is to explain what expressive therapies are and demonstrate their role in an integrative treatment team and clinical setting and out in the community. Practitioners who are interested in bringing these practices into their own work are encouraged to explore further training. Although this chapter cannot provide that training, it can point out some of its underlying premises, processes, and applications. Additional resources for further study are provided at the end of the chapter.

Medicine has traditionally addressed issues of personal and community health but has also carried a 19th-century worldview of science and an image of the healer deity. However, a shift is happening in the way medicine is being viewed and practiced (Sperry, 1995). The popularity of Bill Moyer's show *Healing and the Mind* on alternative healing and the revelation in the January 28, 1993, issue of *The New England Journal of Medicine* that over one-third of Americans were then utilizing "unconventional medicine" signal a major shift in attitudes toward healing. This trend is growing (Dittman, 2004; Eisenberg et al., 1998; Gazella, 2004). At the National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Congress funded an Office of Alternative Medicine to support research into alternative approaches. Now called the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, its budget has been growing yearly. The new views of medicine are bringing about new imagery and metaphors for the healing professions. For example, a growing number of patients and health care practitioners see medicine with its roots in ancient healing practices and the physician as a wounded healer (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Healing is distinguished from curing; whereas curing seeks to reduce symptoms or prolong life in a *quantitative* sense, healing

is a process to improve the *quality* of life (Dossey, 1992). Healing brings an understanding of the meaning and full experience of symptoms (Dossey, 1991), the role of the mind in illness, and the centrality of imagery in the expression and relief of human suffering (Achterberg, 1985).

Western high-technology scientific medicine, in its effort to separate reason and science from religion, has excluded subjective experience and the “irrational.” Expressive therapies bring this dimension back into the healing process. Understanding the meaning of the illness can bring acceptance, which relieves a good part of the suffering. Symbolic expression of the experience of living with illness is indirect and less threatening than direct expression. Therefore, patients can move beyond acceptance to a deeper confrontation with mortality and an awareness of the preciousness of life. The transformative power of the arts can be mobilized by recalling images of the healer as artist and shaman, connecting illness through meaning back to its roots in soul (McNiff, 1992).

The art therapies use a symbolic language of image, symbol, metaphor, myth, body, and ritual. They can convey images of both individual and collective ills, like the individual existential crisis portrayed in Munch’s well-known figure of *The Scream*, or in the image of a whole society at war, as in Picasso’s *Guernica*. Rollo May, the eminent American existential-analytic psychologist, understood the artist to be a prophet or a mirror of society. Expressing the soul of a culture takes courage. Facing death and still creating takes a leap of faith. Creating in the face of the void or the blank page or one’s own mortality is a metaphor for the creative act in everyday life (May, 1975). The arts are both a modern and an ancient form of healing. As preventive health, art helped maintain the individual’s balance among spirit, soul, and body, illustrating patterns of connection between the individual, the community, and nature.

The expressive therapies are especially useful to us today because they provide a cost-effective complement to traditional medicine. The creative force awakened in the healing arts is a powerful medicine when used in the service of healing. With this force, people are better equipped to face life with energy, flexibility, improvisational skills, an enriched inner life, and stronger resources. Through the arts, people can express their experience and meaning of having an illness, explore their own imagery and resources for healing, and decrease loneliness by sharing rhythmic and nonverbal connections with others (Goodill, 2005). In 1998, a survey showed that although 42% of Americans use alternative therapies, most do not inform their physicians of this use. To coordinate and maximize the different aspects of their patients’ health care, therefore, it is helpful for physicians to know about their patients’ use of complementary medical practices, such as expressive therapy (Eisenberg et al., 1998).

## What Is Expressive Therapy?

Expressive therapy is a psychotherapy that employs the arts and an indirect symbolic language to help patients deal with emotional, cognitive, and physical challenges. Expressive therapists often work with physicians in treating patients as diverse as those with breast cancer, cardiac illness, stress, and strokes. They are employed in all kinds of settings—in clinics, hospitals, special schools, and private practice. They work with

individuals, groups, couples, and families. They work with adults, children, and geriatric patients. When they are part of a treatment team approach to medical care, expressive therapists can help ease some of the fears patients have about medical treatment, as well as their accompanying physical and psychologic issues. In particular, expressive therapists work with the debilitating depression and anxiety caused by life-threatening illness and treatment and help patients rebuild their lives.

Expressive therapy has been defined as follows:

An orientation or an approach to therapy, rather than a series of techniques or tools. Underlying such an approach is a value system that believes in the inherent worth of creative expression and the importance in making the excitement and joy that originates in our innermost symbols find some expression in our outer behavior. (Robbins, 1986, p. 38)

Congruence between one's inner and outer realities is the primary goal of therapy, says Robbins. The process is improvisatory, with the therapist tracking, clarifying, and sometimes challenging the patient's images. These images are "verbal, visual, spatial, kinesthetic and aural" (Robbins, 1986, p. 17), to which the therapist responds with an equal "ability to see, hear, and experience his patients on a . . . visceral level" (Robbins, p. 20). Thus, many expressive therapies are multimodal, using either one primary modality or a mix of modalities to reflect the complex world of the patient. By containing the many levels and seeming contradictions of the patients' world, the expressive therapist helps the patient contain his or her own complexities.

For example, if a patient is experiencing extreme grief, he or she may not be verbal about it; in fact, prematurely verbalizing emotions can prevent or disguise the real experience of them. Symbolic or creative processes, however, are indirect forms of expression that provide some distance from the experience. Because of this relative safety, they allow patients to go deeper into their grief, understanding its meaning and feeling its full force. The symbolic expression helps to contain the enormous grief while giving it a form through which it can be resolved or transformed. This grief can be expressed in a drawing, a dance, lines of poetry, or in nuances of silence (Freud, 1959). The therapist picks up on it, using words or rhythms or images, and the experience is deeply shared. Through dialogue, the loneliness of carrying the illness alone is reduced. Through the connection with the warm and facilitative presence of the therapist, the patient can reexperience and release old memories and feelings, thus opening channels of deep healing.

## Origins of Expressive Therapies

What are the origins of expressive therapies? Images of healing appear in the early creation stories and in ancient healing practices (Bartenieff, 1972–1973). For example, the Ring Dance was basic to all mystery celebrations in the Mediterranean. The celebration of the Eleusian Mysteries "was combined with a ring dance which appears to have begun when the spirit emerged from its symbolic underworld journey and reached the splendid fields of the blessed" (Backman, 1972, p. 3). Midsummer dances, which are still performed in Scandinavia, originated in the 10th century with pagan dances in which dancers would go

to the streams, dance in a circle around a fire, heap flowers, and leap through the flames, purging themselves with smoke and fire. This dance was intended to cure illness and also as preventive medicine to bring good health and harvests. The leader, or shaman, is an image for the expressive arts therapist as a wounded healer who is close to the sacred sources of healing. Combining art, ritual, diagnosis, and treatment, the expressive therapist helps restore the individual's courage to create life and find balance in relation to his or her community and world (Serlin, 1993).

## Storytelling as Healing Art

The act of shaping raw material or emotion into symbol or image is healing, as it helps objectify the emotions, get some distance from them, and make active discriminations to portray them (Feinstein & Krippner, 1988; Jung, 1966; Serlin, 1999). The very act of telling a difficult story in the presence of empathetic others is at the heart of the talking and narrative therapies, allowing the teller to experience him- or herself with respect and compassion. This shift transforms "affliction" . . . into "a powerful teacher" who brings "a turning point in one's life" (Kabat-Zinn, 1994, pp. xvi–xvii) so we feel ". . . like an important if not crucial participant in what is happening in our lives, with at least some degree of influence and control" (Kabat-Zinn, p. xvii).

Art has always healed, as the Greeks knew. As Aristotle explained, the function of art in Greek drama was to promote an identification with and working through emotional blocks via mimetic action and symbol. The working through was accompanied by *catharsis*, which cleansed the psyche. Art, therefore, functioned as a collective healing ritual.

## Applications of Expressive Therapy

Finally, movement rituals with roots in traditional religious practices have applications in everyday life today. For example, expressive therapy has been used successfully with patients with life-threatening illness to help them regain feelings of self-esteem and control over their lives. Studies show that expressive therapy can help patients cope with pain and ease depression, increase vitality, and improve body image (Cohen & Walco, 1999; Serlin, Classen, Frances, & Angell, 2000).

Like other forms of psychotherapy, expressive therapy helps people control high blood pressure and manage migraine headaches. Breast cancer patients who participate in group psychotherapy are known to survive longer than those who do not (Spiegel et al., 1989). Studies show that psychotherapy can reduce risks for heart disease, cancer, and HIV, according to the American Psychological Association. Dean Ornish has shown that a diet plan, combined with stress-reducing yoga and stretching, may help reverse heart disease. Dance therapy draws on stretching and yogalike movements, integrating them with imagery and expression and a strong therapeutic relationship and building on these benefits. Stroke patients in expressive therapy classes attain needed exercise and build their coordination skills, as well as getting a boost in self-esteem.

In expressive therapy, the patient learns to transform illness or physical pain through the sheer joy of movement. In addition to cancer, stroke, and heart disease, expressive therapy may help with the following illnesses by providing exercise, emotional release and stress reduction: chronic fatigue, high blood pressure, fibromyalgia, and chronic pain.

## How Does Expression Affect Health?

Expressive therapies rest on the belief that mind and body are interrelated (Rossi, 1986). The work of Candace Pert has shown that the processing of emotions often affects physical illnesses and the ability to heal. Neuropeptide receptors in the brain and throughout the body are associated with emotional processing. They help regulate immunocyte trafficking and bolster the immune system. Research on healthy humans, as well as cancer and HIV-positive patients, has shown significant increases in immune function or positive health outcomes with emotional expression, such as that practiced in dance therapy (Pert, 1997). These findings suggest that emotional expression generates balance in the neuropeptide receptor network, which contributes to a functional healing system. Also, evidence that the expression of emotion is healthy was demonstrated by Pennebaker (1990), in his study of college students who kept a journal of their feelings and thoughts. Continuing the use of his experimental design, he collaborated with dance therapist Anne Krantz to explore the impact of dance therapy on health (Krantz & Pennebaker, 1993). Finally, neurological correlates of altered states have been investigated by Valerie Hunt in her laboratory at UCLA (Hunt, 1984).

Expressive therapy also addresses specifically psychologic functions. The physical and emotional expression of expressive therapy eases stress and increases healthy body image and self-esteem. Such treatments are vital in our society, where nearly half of Americans between the ages of 15 and 54 experience a psychologic disorder during their lifetime. As many as 75% of all patient visits in primary care practice, in fact, can be attributed to psychosocial problems that present through physical complaints, according to the American Psychological Association.

## Benefits of Expressive Therapy

The benefits of addressing these psychologic health problems are obvious. The economic burden of depression in our society is high. Statistics show that depression in the American workplace may cost as much as \$43 billion, and depression is high in patients with cancer and other life-threatening illnesses. Expressive therapy, through the free expression of intense and preverbal emotions, is effective alone or with medications for some patients. The American Psychological Association supports the claim that cognitive and interpersonal psychotherapies, such as expressive therapy, have proven to be beneficial and effective treatments for depression.

Expressive therapy can also help address denial and resistance, fear and anxiety, grief and loss, isolation, and eating disorders. The ability to develop their own narratives helps patients regain their own voices, decrease depression and hopelessness, and increase psychologic well-being and life satisfaction, according to a study by researchers Haight,

Michel, and Hendrix (2000) in the *International Journal of Human Development*. Because it also provides a physical outlet, expressive therapy can also improve skills such as coordination in stroke patients.

## Patients as Partners in Their Treatment Process

Expressive therapy may also help patients cope with their fear of medical treatments. Expressive therapists can work with physicians to teach patients how to listen to their own body wisdom and make confident choices about medical procedures. The therapists may create individualized audiotapes, for example, using the patients' own imagery to help them prepare for medical procedures.

Expressive therapy may ease anxiety reactions before examinations, mastectomy, reconstructive surgery, cosmetic surgery, general surgery, use of needles to give medications, and compliance with aftercare.

The arts can also be a powerful aid to counteract the adverse effects of the dehumanization of medicine. For example, one patient described her radiation treatments as follows:

The simulation, which is the preparation for treatment where they take all the measurements, was . . . it was sort of like an acid trip really. It was so surreal. . . . You know, the room is very sterile and there's the big machine in there . . . and the whole thing involves four or five different people who come and go out of the room . . . you're alone in the room while they do an X-ray. They run out of the room. They'll make a mark on you. . . . Take an X-ray. Come back. Someone else will come in. They'll measure something. They make a little mark with a marking pen on your breast. And I felt almost like I was being sacrificed to some strange god. . . . Somehow I have been the one who was captured and I was being offered up, I guess, to the radiation machine.

Not only was the dehumanization distressing and disorienting, but it also kept her from functioning in her everyday life. A single mother with two children, she had to take care of herself while taking care of two children and a complicated life. With the shrinking resources of hospitals, patients have to do much of their own aftercare, which needs the kind of full energy and concentration unavailable to those undergoing debilitating treatments. This woman noted:

But, you know, when I finished the simulation and I came out, I was in a semi-trance for about an hour. . . . We walked out of the clinic. I really wasn't sure where I was. That was the first time I got lost. This was the beginning of my getting lost.

It all started with the simulation and then after that, every time I went in for a treatment, I would get lost. . . . And then I'd leave and I couldn't find my car and I lost my car every day for a week. . . . It was very upsetting, and I was afraid to stop and do any errands on the way home because I thought I'd forget where I left my car again. . . . I was really, really spaced out by the whole experience. I remember thinking maybe I was getting radiation to the brain.

Are these experiences inevitable? Can anything be done to counteract them? Yes, certain ways of moving and feeling can counteract feelings of dehumanization. Some practices, such as Authentic Movement (Adler, 1972), help people rediscover their core experiences and bodily memories. Changing dehumanizing hospital environments into healing spaces is even the focus of a new profession of health care architects and a group called the Society for the Arts in Healthcare. This is an interdisciplinary group, bringing their thinking about health from a variety of perspectives. One example of such a healing environment is the healing garden at Marin General Hospital. In this garden, a patient could sit in peace before a medical procedure, thus having a chance to reflect and ready him or herself in advance. Patients who have a voice in the design of their healing rituals generally report a better adaptation to it. A total treatment plan, therefore, optimizes emotional and physical healing by creating a healing environment in which patients feel free to discover their own healing movements and images.

For example, this patient noted:

So the things that we did in the group were really helpful. We developed a ritual to help me back into my body. We did some movements on the floor that were sort of comforting and rocking and sort of womb-like. It relaxed me quite a bit to do those movements and, after that, whenever I felt anxious, I actually went home and I did movement, not necessarily on the floor, but some sort of dance movement, some repetitive rocking type of movement, and it helped a lot. It's important to get going again, to revive yourself, to begin to move and feel alive . . . that's where movement starts, the center of gravity, the center of the wave.

Another patient described her discovery that movement mobilized her life energy:

Meaning like when I walk into the group sometimes I'm real constricted, my body is constricted, I'm stressed, I'm tensed, you know, and then all of a sudden we start with some of the conversation, the movement, the stories and I'm just a different human being. It gives spaciousness to my cells so it allows them to breathe and allows them to flow more freely and then it gives spaciousness to my spirit because all of a sudden I'm free, and joy or pain or whatever comes out. So that's where I find the healing in the work.

## Releasing Creative and Sexual Energy

The movement allowed her to access repressed parts of herself, explore herself as a *woman* and use the unleashed creativity for healing:

. . . when we were dancing with the scarves. I was in there and what I got in touch with was how, when I was a young girl, I kind of shut down to my femininity . . . and really to the freedom that I felt. I went back and remembered that, even when I was in first grade, I loved to dance. . . . I remember my father saying that I was fat or something like that, and that I would never dance again. In the group I got in touch with that pain . . . and then I danced my dance. Out of that it freed up in me . . . the joy and the love that comes into my life from it. Also, the essential woman who has been in there was really afraid to

come out because, to me, it was always bad to be that way and bad to be interested in sensuality and sexuality.

*Self-care* is another benefit of healing practices that use group support. Through this support with others in a similar situation, patients learn to treat themselves with compassion and patience. The arts teach about pacing, space, and balance, elements needed to restore the experience of balance in life. Mary Catherine Bateson says: "Today, the materials and skills from which a life is composed are no longer clear. It is no longer possible to follow the paths of previous generations . . . A good meal, like a poem or a life, has a certain balance and diversity, a certain coherence and fit" (Bateson, 1989, pp. 2–4).

For example, one woman wrote:

And so I see that happening in the group where people are learning to take care of themselves . . . and therefore enhancing the creative process because, as I find as I take care of myself, all of a sudden I see what I'm willing to do and not willing to do and I have more space to do what I want to do.

She was able to translate this individual balance into a sense of balance within her group:

I will carry it as a renewed sense of who I am in a group . . . of being apart of a group of women and will carry over some of the artistic expressions . . . when I have something I need to express . . . rather than sit with it or not share it. . . .

Creativity teaches us this freedom and gives us resources and new alternatives. Hungarian psychoanalyst Susan Deri writes, "The creative side of life-enhancing good gestalts always implies a considerable plus on the side of Eros, of libido, which counteracts inertia and disintegration" (Deri, 1988, pp. 13–14).

## Cancer as a Metaphor

Expressive therapies help patients get in touch with that part of cancer that is symbolic and understand what it means. The meaning of the illness is expressed through imagery and metaphor.

One image that appeared with frequency was that of *speed*. Women in a support group at the Institute of Health and Healing at California Pacific Medical Center drew pictures of frenzied lines and talked of the overwhelming speed of modern life, of lacking time to rest, to digest, or to reflect. A cancer cell can be seen symbolically as a cell out of control, speeding and multiplying crazily. These pathologies of time, space, and composition, disorders of postmodernity, show up in the experience and symbolic representation of disconnection and speed in the body.

One woman, talking about this sense of speed, wrote:

What is cancer? Cancer is a cell that goes out of control. I think that's what's happening is that as a people we're out of control. We don't connect. It's a power kind of society and we need more support and more connections from each other. . . . With the technological revolution, we deplete our immune systems and therefore allow these opportunistic diseases to come in.

The meaning of the image of speed spoke to her perception of her daily life:

So it's pretty lonely being an isolated woman in the 90's, I think. We think we've made it, but we haven't. I think we've lost it more than anything.

The symptom of *disconnection* was replaced by a new one of *connection*:

I don't know what that means, art. . . . I know that in the group it's happened consistently that as we draw, all of a sudden people's drawings reflect each others' . . . sometimes I'm sitting next to a person I feel particularly connected to that day, and our drawings reflect the same kind of color or issue, or sometimes it's loneliness or sometimes it's anger and sometimes it's sadness or sometimes it's fire, sometimes it's isolation and the reds, the heat, or the green or the explosions of color when people feel energetic. It seems like there's very much an alignment going on in that particular process in the group. By opening it up, the creative process transforms life.

In today's postmodern world, we must ask ourselves how to live with the fragmentation and isolation. Much has been written about the problems of a postmodern society, but not much has been written about how to live with it. Do we surrender to despair? Or do we have enough existential freedom and resources to create a constructive alternative? Community healing rituals use practices from around the world "to enable the individual to help and sustain others" (His Holiness the Dalai Lama, 1999, p. 67).

## Healing the Family

Expressive therapy can involve the entire family as well. Friends and family members can participate in expressive therapy sessions and contribute to their loved one's emotional and physical health. Communication and emotional bonds within families can be strengthened by such participation. Improved communications helps family members deal with the illness of a member, so they can be more supportive in the healing process.

## Ecologic Body

The inability of the body to feel, to grieve its losses and the trauma of the Earth, has been related by contemporary theorists to our current ecologic crisis and the threat of extinction (Macy, 1991). We have become numb, inanimate. Susan Griffin makes a powerful case for the need to feel, to wake up, to bear witness to the suffering of human beings and of the planet when she says:

... For perhaps we are like stones: our own history and the history of the world embedded in us, we hold a sorrow deep within and cannot weep until that history is sung. (Griffin, 1992, pp. 6-8)

The symptom of disconnection from self from others as a consequence of the Western, heroic, male myth of independence has often been described. In fact, the moment of

self-consciousness, of separate identity, of the shift kinesthetic to visual perception, has been described by some as the beginning of alienation from the world (Berman, 1989). Singing, or telling the story, reminds us to bear witness to each other's stories and to the story of the Earth. Awakening to our own sense perceptions and embodied reactions of fear, grief, and compassion, we reconnect to the Earth. One image that came from a group dance is as follows:

I liked a lot of the exercises where we would bend low and swoop up the earth and bring that energy up and then down through us. I think that is a movement I could continue to employ in my life. I think that whole sense of trying to stay grounded. . . . I look at in a different way, it is a beneficial thing to me to be rooted and grounded on the planet.

Drawing on the Gaia hypothesis (Lovelock, 1979), which suggests that the Earth is a living organism and our bodies and the Earth partake of the same elements, Roszak (1992, p. 93) reminds us that modern science and psychology have shifted our cosmologies away from the animistic worldview of "primitive" people who understood the whole world to be alive and who painted, sang, and danced about the forces animating their world. Some alternative and complementary medicine practices, however, such as acupuncture and a new area of medicine called "energy medicine," use a similar understanding of animating forces to facilitate the body's natural healing.

## Healing Rituals in the Community

Because they do not need expensive technological equipment, the arts can take the patient out of a clinical setting into his or her naturalistic setting. The integration back into community and movement away from an illness to a wellness model helps patients recover. The following are examples of community healing rituals that have pioneered this use of arts and healing.

## Movement Choirs

Rudolf von Laban (1879–1958) developed a system of space harmonics and dance, a highly sophisticated movement notation system used for diagnosis, research, and treatment. As a grandfather of modern dance, he developed a movement scale based on qualitative factors of movement. During the early 1900s, he created a series of large-scale events that involved whole villages moving in choirs together. Like singing together, this choir helped bring large groups of people into shared activities (Laban, 1980). In 1976, the form of movement choirs was introduced to the American Dance Therapy Association by Laban's student, Irmgard Bartenieff (Bartenieff, 1972–1973). In 1996, they were pioneered at the Race for the Cure to open the race. This race is an annual fundraiser, sponsored by the Susan G. Komen Foundation and other breast cancer associations, which gathers thousands of people together in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. In the meadow, participants created circles of movement that, like a folk dance, brought people together and focused their energies. In 1997, the circles were

expanded to include the annual Hike Against the Odds, sponsored by the Breast Cancer Fund, featuring a climb up Mount Tamalpais in Marin County.

## Conflict Resolution

Two expressive arts therapists from Lesley College and the Boston Arts Institute have developed a method of working directly with community healing projects through the arts. Calling it a “developmental approach,” Marcow-Speiser and Speiser use a multimodal arts process to conflict resolution (personal communication, 2001). They describe their intention as follows:

Working with the arts promotes the value of social relatedness among individuals of different backgrounds, through arts based activities which explore cultural differences and similarities. This approach is a cornerstone for developing conflict resolution and violence prevention strategies. These strategies emerge directly from the participants themselves and reflect their needs as related to their work places and communities.

Working directly with cultural symbols and narratives, the group leaders help participants recognize images of “common humanity” and “individual expression,” mobilize and focus their energies, and use conflict for constructive change.

## Tamalpa Institute

Another example of a community-based healing arts project is the independent Tamalpa Institute, cofounded by Anna and Daria Halprin. Tamalpa takes support groups for cancer patients out into nature and sponsors a yearly healing dance called “Circle the Earth.” In this dance, people who need healing are combined with families and other community members to celebrate Mount Tamalpais and draw from its healing energies.

## UCSF Cancer Support Group

Using movement and other art forms to amplify and work through themes also characterizes the work of Anne Krantz, a psychologist and movement therapist who started a support group for cancer patients in the winter/spring of 1996, as part of the program of the Cancer Resource Center of the UCSF Clinical Cancer Center (former UCSF/Mt. Zion Hospital). It meets weekly throughout the year, is open to both men and women with a variety of cancer diagnoses, and is an open group, free to the public. Based on the work of dance therapist pioneer Blanche Evans, it uses a semistructured format that flexibly follows the energy level and thematic material of the group and is based on improvisation. Krantz describes it as follows:

Often the thematic content comes from the participants and focuses on dealing with cancer related health issues or on aspects of their psychophysical experiences of life.

such as dealing with loss, death, pain, trauma, the unknown, and change. We start with the body and what each person comes in with. The warm-up is both educative about the body's potential for movement, and oriented to self-directed movement, guided by subjective experience.

The goals of the group include the following healing skills: "the skill of listening to one's body, feeling more of what is there, interpreting the signals, such as pain or fatigue" . . . or "applications of their group work toward their life situations, what they will be facing today, this week, etc., so there is a reality focus as well" (personal communication, November 11, 2001). Psychologically and spiritually, the "group is very life-affirming and inspiring for all of us."

## Art for Recovery

Another healing arts project at the California Pacific Medical Center is "Art for Recovery," run by artist and cancer activist Cindy Perlis. Although Perlis and her students take their art to the patients' bedside, they are probably most known for their cancer quilt, which has become a traveling art show. Perlis and group take less of a clinical approach, and more of a community- and arts-based approach, to recovery.

## Art With Children

At Shands Hospital in Florida, John Graham-Poole, pediatric oncologist, poet, and clown, Mary Lane, nurse and artist, and their colleagues have created a beautiful environment that helps children with cancer cope. They have painted stars and clouds on the ceiling, hung the walls with only original patient art, and brought artists in from the community to create art with the patients. The hospital has become a gallery for their works, making it an environment devoted more to health than to illness (Rockwood & Graham-Pole, 1994).

## Summary

In conclusion, the arts are both a modern and an ancient form of healing. As preventive medicine, they have helped people maintain their balance among spirit, soul, and body and harmonize the patterns of connection among themselves, the community, and the cycles and forces of nature. Expressive therapy helps many kinds of patients express their emotions, and share and dissipate their fears. It provides a way for them to deal with chronic illnesses and live healthier lives. In today's health care environment, the expressive therapist offers holistic solutions for physicians and patients. The expressive therapist is, in essence, a healer who combines art, ritual, diagnosis, and treatment to restore patients' insight and well-being.

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