

**Creative Synthesis Project Assignment**

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### **Abstract**

Engaging in this creative synthesis project has also proven to be therapeutically beneficial, insightful, rewarding, and transformative. For the Creative Activities Fair, the Emotional Color Circle exercise was researched, chosen, and presented to the professor and fellow classmates. This activity is very meaningful, increases self-awareness, and will be integrated into every aspect of the counseling experience. This creative synthesis project entails the following: a brief description of the activity, the steps of the activity, ethical and cultural considerations, and a synthesis of everything that has been learned in the class, including the application of what has been learned in this class to my biblical worldview. This project will highlight the skills and knowledge that has been learned from this course and will also highlight what has been especially meaningful or helpful. This fair and this project has influenced and broadened my view of the arts in counseling. My life has been positively changed for the better due to this project.

*Keywords:* creative synthesis project, emotional color circle, therapeutic, transformative, soul care

### **Introduction**

My presentation for the Creative Activities Fair is known as the Emotional Color Circle. This therapeutic exercise was discovered on YouTube. It caught my attention and interest in how this exercise uses colors to represent feelings, in how this exercise increases self-awareness of conscious and subconscious thoughts and feelings, and in how this exercise does these things creatively with either crayons, coloring pencils, or paint and paper. My hope is that you will enjoy my brief description of the activity, the activity steps, the ethical and cultural considerations, and the synthesis of everything that I have learned, as a result of taking this class.

### **Brief Description**

The Emotional Color Circle exercise is the name of the therapeutic activity that I presented for the Creative Activities Fair. This exercise was discovered and observed on YouTube @ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TcGPc80f2VM>. The premise of this exercise is to explore and meet the individual's emotional needs and to increase self-awareness of conscious and subconscious thoughts. This exercise incorporates the following: brief breathing exercises to ground the individual; exploration of feelings; imagination; creative/artistic use of a circle and colors; and use of a scripted or intuitively led questions to engage with the drawing/artwork and to explore and discover its emotional needs and how to fulfill those needs. The circle does not have to be perfect, contains everything, and is seen as a safe place for the emotions to be contained (IABET- Jungian Art, 2020).

There is no right or wrong way of approaching this exercise. Colors become representative of the individual's conscious or subconscious feelings or thoughts. For this activity, colored pencils, crayons, or paint and paper are the only things needed. I selected this exercise because it is explorative of thoughts and feelings; different from the other activities I

had read about; provides an alternative and artistic way of exploring and expressing thoughts and feelings; and can increase self-awareness. Furthermore, I engaged with this activity and found it to be therapeutic and revealing. It increased my self-awareness, and I wanted to share it with Dr. Sosin and my other classmates in the Creative Activities Fair.

### **Activity Steps**

This therapeutic exercise consists of several steps. First, the individual closes his/her eyes and takes a few moments (or as long as desired) to breathe in and out. This is done to ground the individual. During this time, the individual imagines that those tight spaces are being loosened up in the body during the breathing exercises. While doing this, the individual explores and thinks about his/her current emotional state and assigns or uses colors to represent those feelings. Next, the individual opens his/her eyes, draws a large circle on the paper, and draws/paints those colors abstractly (or in the use of shapes) inside of the circle. Then, the individual imagines that the artwork becomes a living/breathing creation, can be spoken to, and can respond to questions because that artwork is a colorful representation of the individual's conscious/subconscious thoughts and feelings. Finally, the individual spends time with the drawing, writes down and asks it questions, and imagines that the drawing responds to those questions and write down those responses. The questions can begin as general questions like, "What is your name?" "How did you get here?" "What have you come to tell me?" The questions then can become more focused on discovering its needs and how to fulfill them like, "What do you need to feel happier?" "How can your needs be met?" "Is there a part of you where those needs feel met?" These suggested questions can be used, or the individual can intuitively ask questions that he/she feels led to ask the drawing.

### **Ethical & Cultural Considerations**

There are some ethical and cultural considerations that counselors and counselor educators must keep in mind as it pertains to this therapeutic exercise. It is important that counselors and counselor educators consider the following things: the rationale behind implementing the exercise; the client's "readiness" to engage with the exercise; the client's welfare; the client's awareness of the possible effects of the exercise; providing them with extra mental health services if they need to process subconscious and conscious thoughts afterwards; and meeting the needs of clients with disabilities (Gladding, 2021; Hunter et al., 2025). Professional ethics codes must be adhered, and if counselors and counselor educators do not have competence and a level of expertise in the exercise, the exercise should not be administered (Gladding, 2021).

Culturally, counselors and counselor educators must consider their client's culture and how that exercise might affect the client and must explain and give the client the opportunity to choose to do the exercise. According to Gladding (2021), it must be considered that different cultures and clients of those cultures possess preferences in how they express artistic and creative abilities. A question to keep in mind is if the exercise goes against that client's cultural beliefs.

### **Synthesis**

I have grown so much as a counselor and counselor educator after participating in this class. I learned that some of the rationales for incorporating the arts into counseling are as follows: assists people in becoming integrated and connected; requires energy, process, focus, and creativity; and increases self-awareness/resiliency (Gladding, 2021). I learned how to implement disability-related competencies in creative therapies for adults who deal with physical disabilities and that the DRCCs encourage a strengths-based approach and an environment that is empowering and supportive (Hunter et al., 2025). I also learned about the benefits of

expressive arts in family counseling, i.e. “enhanced communication, understanding, and emotional relatedness of family members” (Degges-White & Davis, 2018). Furthermore, I learned about the importance of grounding the client in the beginning of each session, in order to clear the mind of outside influences; about the importance of the process of the artistic activity and what is experienced and felt during the process; about encouraging self-expression through therapeutic artistic activities; and that various art forms can be used simultaneously to increase overall impact (Gladding, 2021).

What I have learned from this class is that God has blessed us with the arts, which can be used therapeutically and simultaneously with various art forms to bring about self-awareness and healing to the client (Gladding, 2021). This can be seen in the story of David and King Saul. I Samuel 16:23 says, “Whenever the spirit from God came upon Saul, David would take his harp and play. Then relief would come to Saul; he would feel better, and the evil spirit would leave him” (NIV, 2011). I have also learned that it is important to do everything for God’s glory, which encourages me to always be ethical, empathetic, culturally sensitive, and competent in administering artistic activities. (See I Corinthians 10:31.) I further learned to provide the client with a safe space to “process” the artistic activity and to allow the Holy Spirit to speak to the client through the activity (Degges-White & Davis, 2018). The Holy Spirit will lead and guide the client into “all truth.” (See John 16:13.)

Several things were especially meaningful and helpful to me this term. First, I loved the grounding exercises before each class. That, along with Dr. Sosin’s voice and music, allowed me the opportunity to calm down from trying to find the class link to log into class on time. Next, my self-awareness increased, as a result of the class activities and projects. I realized that the arts can be beneficial in bringing up and addressing subconscious and conscious thoughts. Finally, it

was a blessing to consistently be exposed to new artistic activities from Dr. Sosin and from my fellow classmates. My outlook on the arts in counseling has been expanded, and I have begun introducing the Emotional Color Circle exercise to my clients. They have responded positively to the exercise. This class has changed the way I view the arts in counseling, and I plan to continue to implement the arts in my therapeutic sessions.

### **Conclusion**

The creative/expressive arts activity presented at the Creative Activities Fair was a transformative experience for me. I learned and realized a lot about myself, as a result of engaging in the Emotional Color Circle exercise, and I was excited to share this activity with everyone. I will implement the knowledge and skills that I have learned and acquired after engaging in this class. There is still so much to learn concerning how to implement the arts into counseling, and I plan to continue to learn the various artistic activities, in order to improve engagement in the counseling sessions, to increase self-awareness, and to make an overall impact in the clients' lives. Concerning my constantly, evolving biblical worldview, I have a better appreciation for the "process" of every artistic exercise and for allowing God to meet each client where he/she is while they engage with the exercise(s). The Holy Spirit is the leader and the guide, and it is about God receiving the glory throughout every aspect of the process. Every aspect of this class has changed my life, my perspective, and how I view the arts in counseling. I am full!

### References

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