



# Research on Graphic Art Healing Applications for the General Population

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**Abstract.** As an extension and supplement to art therapy, art healing is aimed at the general population with sub-healthy or healthy psychological states. In today's fast-paced and high-pressure societal context, art healing is more suited for widespread promotion and application. This paper analyzes the mechanisms of common types of graphic art healing and summarizes their processes, proposing a general application process for graphic art healing. It provides a theoretical foundation and practical reference for the standardization of graphic art healing applications.

**Keywords:** Art Healing; Graphic Healing; Mental Health.

## 1 Introduction

In 1940, Margaret Naumburg, a special education teacher in the United States, defined the concept of art therapy as the treatment of mental patients through artistic media and means<sup>[1]</sup>. In the 1960s, numerous scholars conducted in-depth research on the relationship between art and mental health in various subfields, developing directions such as Art Therapy, Therapeutic Art, and Art Healing<sup>[2]</sup>. As an extension and expansion of art therapy, art healing targets individuals under high mental stress who are either sub-healthy or healthy, offering functions like emotional regulation and stress release, making its subjects more universal<sup>[3]</sup>. Since 2000, the application of art healing in niche areas has rapidly developed, including dance healing, music healing, drama healing, design healing, and graphic healing<sup>[1,2]</sup>. Among them, graphic art healing, dominated by images, uses visual art as a safe container to involve both patients and healers in a process of self-awareness and exploration beyond verbal communication, achieving individual physical and mental integration after release and catharsis. This allows individuals to rediscover and integrate themselves from a distanced observer's perspective after completing graphic healing. Graphic perception, an innate human ability, makes graphic art healing universally applicable without requiring

professional artistic knowledge or literacy, thus suiting the general population's art healing needs.

## **2 Graphic Art Healing Mechanisms**

Graphic art healing encompasses portrait photography healing, painting creation healing, painting analysis healing, interactive group painting healing, image creation, secondary creation analysis of photographic works, and collective image healing, all dominated by images. Despite sharing imagery as their core, different types of graphic art healing have their unique mechanisms.

### **2.1 Portrait Photography Healing Mechanism**

Portrait photography healing captures individuals' expressions, personalities, current emotional states, and their relationships with the surrounding environment and society at large. Initially, photography and healing were separate categories explored and practiced independently without any intersection. Therefore, when the camera is in the healer's hands, the task is to return the portrait to the visitor and healing to itself. Combining psychology, photography, and healing into a form of image healing allows individuals to gain more personal growth and self-awareness during the healing process while promoting emotional adjustment. From an art healing perspective, through teaching and guidance by the healer, "art" acts as a safe outlet for self-exploration that combines visual images with personal symbolism; the portrait photography process adds elements of mindfulness and bodily kinesthetic experiences, enabling visitors to open up about their physical sensations and connect with their body and mind. Thus, throughout the healing process, the interaction between the visitor and healer in terms of symbolic and verbal expression is crucial, with the portrait being just one result among many in graphic art healing.

### **2.2 Painting Analysis Healing Mechanism**

Painting analysis healing integrates visual psychology and humanistic therapy psychology into a purely visual form of art therapy. It involves a multilayered combination of bodily kinesthetic perception, vision, and language to achieve healing. In painting analysis art therapy, psychoanalytic art therapy theory encourages individuals to use art as a method to express unconscious traumas or other psychological characteristics leading to habitual stress responses. By expressing these through paintings, hidden parts of the unconscious are "leaked out," and healers consciously guide visitors to verbalize themselves based on their artworks, seeing, analyzing, and accepting—thus transitioning from unconscious to conscious self-awareness during graphic painting art healing.

### **2.3 Artwork Creation Image Healing Mechanism**

Artwork creation image healing focuses on using art to narrate the process of psychological healing. Many artists express themselves and document the present through their works, achieving self-expression and self-healing. Here, the healer first serves as an experimental subject for their own healing, capable of self-observation and exploration, expressing themselves through artwork creation images to ultimately achieve self-healing experience. Additionally, healers need a theoretical understanding of artwork creation image healing and experience in creating their own image works. On this basis, healers guide visitors to discover their inner creative parts, establishing and maintaining a creative environment together, engaging in the "world of art creation." This environment allows healers to guide visitors in seeing more aspects of themselves, the world, and their relationships with it, gaining varied experiences. Through processes like release, observation, conflict, integration, and acceptance in artworks, aiding in producing artworks that closely match visitors' expression desires, visitors also see more possibilities in themselves and their creations, thereby achieving a foundation for self-improvement and self-healing through artistic creation. Thus, this phase of healing is not necessarily for "visitors facing practical problems that need solutions" but also for individuals "without psychological issues who seek more self-expression, artistic style creation methods, and self-improvement."

### **2.4 Interactive Painting and Group Healing Mechanism**

Creation is a natural act; in ancient times and among most young children, creation rarely involved premeditation—humans created and painted even before verbal communication evolved. Hence, extending the relationship between humans and their surroundings, when verbal communication fails to address negative emotions and confusion arising from relationships, how can effective communication be achieved? Interactive painting art healing combines painting analysis healing and artwork creation image healing, using creative images and painting analysis as means of communication and bridges, aiding visitors in expressing dialogues about relationships with others while revealing each other's needs and personality traits for better understanding and empathy—suitable for exploring various issues brought by intimate relationships around the visitor. When conducting group art healing, interactive painting and image art exploration are equally applicable.

## **3 General Process of Graphic Art Healing**

The processes for portrait photography healing, artwork creation image healing, painting analysis healing, interactive painting healing, and group healing are illustrated in Fig. 1:

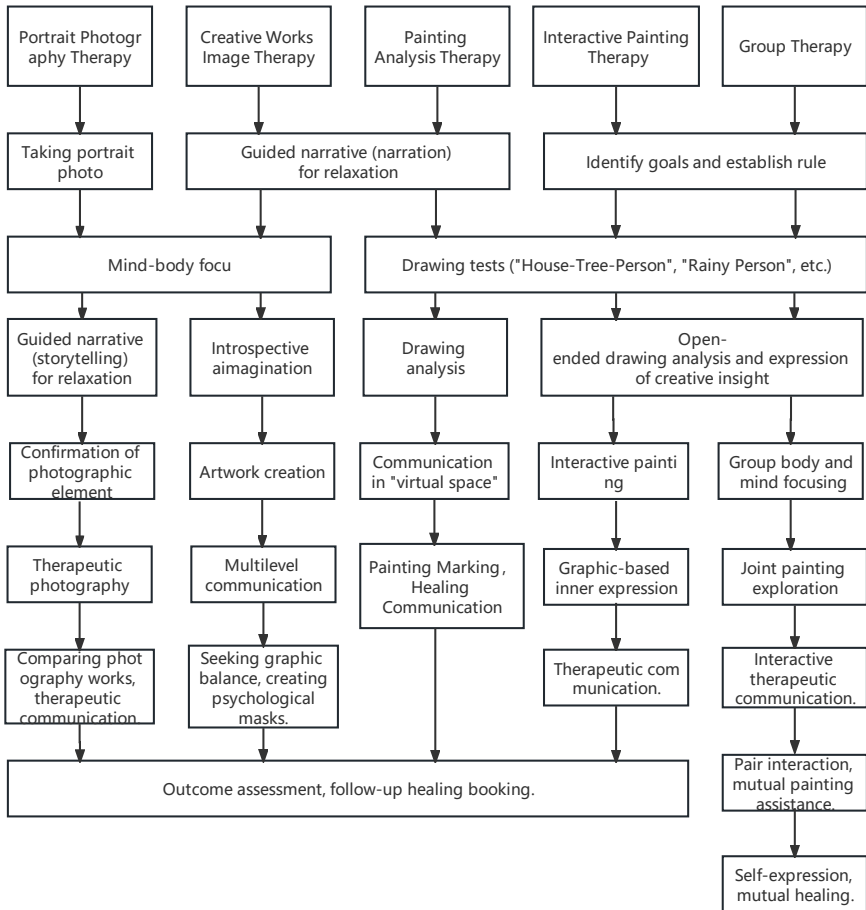


Fig. 1. Various Processes of Graphic Art Healing

From the five types of graphic art healing processes outlined above, it's evident that a complete art healing session requires detailed preparation and thorough summarization and planning by the healer, beyond the healing process itself. Therefore, graphic art healing is attempted to be divided into three main phases: preliminary preparation, healing process, and end assessment, with specific tasks and goals for each major phase as follows:

### 3.1 Pre-Healing Preparations

**Tailoring Healing Goals:** Before meeting with visitors, it's necessary to collect background information on them, referencing Sandberg's outline; simultaneously, visitors should fill out a healing goals card indicating their personal purposes or specific directions for experiencing art healing and the desired state to achieve.

**Determining Healing Methods:** After understanding visitors' backgrounds and healing goals, healers need to assess the visitors' conditions and introduce and recommend the most suitable graphic art healing methods for them at that time.

### 3.2 Healing Phase

**Initial Consultation Reception:** Upon first meeting with visitors, healers should introduce the healing stages, gain visitors' trust, explain how to utilize the chosen healing methods during the process, and guide visitors into the right mindset.

**Healer's Preparation:** Healers should cultivate a consistent inner and outer state as a measure of their spontaneous expression during consultations. Healers must explore their motives behind spontaneous behaviors during the healing process: (1) ensuring actions are entirely for the visitor's benefit rather than personal satisfaction; (2) firmly establishing that the healer's modes of self-expression, including affirmative words, intentional moments, serving actions, and physical touch, do not make visitors feel invaded or oppressed nor misunderstood<sup>[4]</sup>.

**Unconditional Positive Attention, Establishing Healing Relationships:** "Unconditional positive attention" signifies objective understanding and neutral acceptance of visitors. Everyone exists with meaning and reason; we haven't lived with or extensively focused on summarizing visitors' journeys during our first healing stage and cannot grasp their inner motivations, thoughts, and emotions. However, healing requires expressing positive attention, acceptance, and respect—the potential start of healing.

**Entering the Visitor's Inner World:** Healers must adhere to (1) scheduled times; (2) addressing visitors by their preferred names and remembering them; (3) allowing visitors to be themselves, choosing how they relax or comfortably express; (4) interacting verbally, responding to the key details of stories shared by visitors; (5) empowering visitors with "self-help" authority. Visitors are experts on themselves and always understand more than healers. Based on this stance, using visitors' strengths and information resources to advance healing, healers collaborate with visitors to achieve pre-set healing goals<sup>[5]</sup>

**Tailoring Healing Plans:** After completing the above steps and understanding visitors through different psychological perspectives—biological (Charles Darwin), psychodynamic (Sigmund Freud), behavioral (Watson and Skinner), cognitive (1950s), and humanistic (responding to behavioral and psychodynamic) (Cracking Psychology by Dr. Sandi Mann, Cassell, 2017)—healers discuss with visitors to confirm their specific tasks, responsibilities, rights, and obligations. **Guiding Visitors to Focus on Their Body, Calming Thoughts:** We're accustomed to thinking with our minds, overlooking the wisdom of bodily sensations. This phase helps healers and visitors awaken bodily feelings through deep experiences, triggering inner awareness. Healers should guide helping visitors evoke bodily sensations at the beginning of each healing session. Though not always successful initially, interspersing body awareness activations becomes easier with practice.

**Healer's Guidance and Psychological Intervention During Graphic Art Healing:** Different healers have distinct healing styles. Based on humanistic psychothera-

py, regarding "the philosophical significance of Nietzsche's Dionysian culture spirit," healers should assist visitors in narratively expressing their emotions, using visitors' self-understanding as a "benchmark" for empathy, further understanding and communication, guiding visitors to confront inner shadows, integrate self-conflicts, and engage in detailed, genuine awareness and feeling of their emotions, achieving self-understanding, self-acceptance, self-choice, ultimately facilitating visitors' self-realization. This dynamic, creative interaction process is also shaped by the healer's style.

### 3.3 Post-Healing and End Phase Assessment of Graphic Art Healing

Toward the end of the healing phase, healers should assess visitors' outcomes; visitors should evaluate their goals using the initially set "goal card." Both healers and visitors should jointly assess the experience of the current healing method. Assessments include: (1) evaluation of visitors' states before and after healing; (2) visitors' perceived changes in mindset; (3) experience of the healing method; (4) changes in visitors' behavior, attire, preferences; (5) alterations in social functionality, choices, range, ability to establish close relationships, relationship improvements; (6) subsequent healing sessions and scheduling.

These assessment points are not only for the post-healing phase but are dynamic throughout the healing process as conditions may fluctuate, thus applicable for evaluating feelings throughout the entire healing journey. It's important to note that regardless of the chosen healing method, healers must guide visitors into focusing on their bodies and becoming aware of bodily sensations.

## 4 Conclusion

Given the broad target audience of art healing—the general population—and its substantial size, there's a significant demand for art healers and art healing activities. To establish a scientific training system for art healers and standardize art healing procedures, researching the art healing process is crucial. Based on numerous successful cases of graphic art healing practices and analyzing their general patterns alongside existing art healing research findings, this study delves into graphic healing mechanisms and proposes a general treatment procedure for "healing preparation—healing process—post-healing," providing fundamental theoretical support for the development of art healing and references for the industry's growth and future research.

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