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Integrating Restorative Justice Approaches in an Art Therapy Group

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by

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to explore the integration of restorative justice approaches within the structure of group art therapy. The research approach was based on a mixed methods design that incorporated both a survey and a case study of a group. The open group structure posed some challenges; however, four of the adolescents agreed to participate in the research study. Each of the eight group art therapy sessions was structured to include an art directive, psychoeducation, and group discussion. Based on the analysis of the data, restorative justice approaches can be successfully integrated into group art therapy. Findings suggest that the participants experience an ambiguity between the roles of victim and offender and had difficulty distinguishing the short-term and long-term effects of behavior. The developed curriculum can be beneficial for incarcerated and anger management populations, as well as in school-based programs. Future research may include explorations into the efficacy of the curriculum in a school setting with a closed group format. This research has opened the door for several future studies and has provided valuable information to the art therapy field.

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Introduction

Study Topic

The purpose of this research is to explore the integration of restorative justice approaches within the structure of group art therapy. Restorative justice approaches allow offenders to take responsibility for their actions and allow victims to have a voice in the process (Steiner & Johnson, 2003, p. 53). Restorative justice is essential in the process of understanding the impact and consequences of behavior. Recent studies indicate that restorative justice approaches are effective in reducing recidivism rates. Utilizing art therapy to visualize these concepts may contribute to the participants' understanding of the past behavioral experience and deepen the meaning they derive from group therapy.

The main research question guiding this exploration asks how restorative justice can work within the context of group art therapy. The main tenant of restorative justice focuses on providing a reparative process for both the offender and the victim. As an offender, can personal experience as a victim provide a frame of reference for responding to other offenders? If so, perhaps offenders can engage in reparative interactions without specific victims being present in the group art therapy process. How can the art therapy process aid participants in better understanding the impact of their behavior on victims? This may increase participants' abilities to take responsibility for their actions.

Significance of the Study Topic

After taking a class focused on behavioral disorders in childhood and adolescence in my undergraduate work, I became interested in this population. My professor would always say, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". This really stuck with me throughout the years. If we provide preventative measures and early intervention

programs, perhaps we can reduce the escalation in severity of mental and behavioral disorders. If we treat the "problem behavior" before it becomes criminal, perhaps we can reduce incarceration rates as well.

At this time, research focused on incorporating restorative justice approaches into the structure of group art therapy could not be found. It is the intention of this research to bridge that gap and provide valuable information to the art therapy field. If this treatment protocol is found to be beneficial to group art therapy participants, it may open a wider exploration into the efficacy of such a program. This research opens a wider consideration regarding the potential inclusion of art therapy utilizing restorative justice approaches in school-based groups to address peer violence issues within school systems. Such programs may necessitate evidence-informed exploration of the proposed curriculum as it develops further. Additionally, this research sheds light on a new treatment modality for juvenile offenders and behavioral disordered adolescents that could aid in reducing incarceration and recidivism rates.

Background of the Study Topic

Restorative justice principals can be found in the histories of ancient societies including the Chinese and Roman empires. In the modern world, approximately 80 countries report using restorative justice programs (Palmero, 2013, pp. 1051-1052). There are several types of restorative justice programs that aim to allow offenders to take responsibility for their actions and allow victims to have a voice in the process (Steiner & Johnson, 2003, p. 53). Restorative justice approaches have been correlated to significantly lower recidivism rates among many populations (Bergseth & Bouffard, 2007; Bergseth & Bouffard, 2012; Liebmann, 2007; Steiner & Johnson, 2003).

Likewise, art therapy research shows the effectiveness of group art therapy with those involved in criminal activities. Group art therapy has been correlated with reduced rates of depression and other symptomology, as well behavioral modification (Erickson & Young, 2010; Gussak, 2006; Gussak, 2009a; Gussak, 2009b; Meekums & Daniel, 2011; Smeijsters & Cleven, 2006). Though researchers have spent time investigating the effectiveness of art therapy with criminal populations, no research was found that incorporated art therapy, restorative justice, and early intervention with the adolescent population.

In her book, Liebmann (2007) introduces an art therapy intervention for incarcerated individuals incorporating restorative justice goals for individuals. Her intervention is aimed at allowing the participant to understand and take responsibility for his or her behavior (Liebmann, 2007). This research study is informed by Liebmann's interventions, yet is expanded to include art processes within an art therapy group treatment setting.

Though a single intervention for individuals was discovered, research focused on the integration of group art therapy and restorative justice approaches could not be found at this time. However, research has shown the benefits of each modality separately. There is also art therapy research demonstrating the effectiveness of group art therapy processes with incarcerated adults and juvenile delinquents (Erickson & Young, 2010; Gussak, 2006; Gussak, 2009a; Gussak, 2009b; Meekums & Daniel, 2011; Smeijsters & Cleven, 2006).

Based on the research outlined here, it seems that group art therapy and restorative justice approaches could be effective in reducing rates of incarceration and recidivism. This integration of methods could be especially useful with juveniles in early intervention programs. Utilizing art therapy to visualize restorative justice concepts can contribute to the participants' understanding of the past behavioral experience and deepen the meaning they derive from group therapy.

Literature Review

Introduction

In modern society in the United States, criminals are forced to pay for their crimes, often literally. Justice regularly includes punitive punishments focused on retribution rather than restoration. One study found that more than 67% of violent offenders are rearrested within three years of their release from prison (Hughes & Wilson, 1994). It seems that criminals serve their time or pay their fine and then return to society in much the same state that they entered the justice system. Other countries, including many European nations have turned to an alternative form of justice that focuses on restoration and taking responsibility for one's actions. These practices are encompassed by the term restorative justice.

Restorative justice principals have been used as far back as ancient Chinese and Roman societies. (Palmero, 2013, p. 1051). There are several types of restorative justice programs that aim to allow offenders to take responsibility for their actions and allow victims to have a voice in the process (Steiner & Johnson, 2003, p. 53). Such practices began emerging in the United States in 1978 (Leibmann, 2007, p. 260). Restorative justice approaches have been correlated to significantly lower recidivism rates among many populations (Bergseth & Bouffard, 2007; Bergseth & Bouffard, 2012; Liebmann, 2007; Steiner & Johnson, 2003).

Other restorative processes have been used with criminal populations, including art therapy. Art therapy research shows the effectiveness of group art therapy with those involved in criminal activities. Group art therapy has been correlated with reduced rates of depression and other symptomology, as well behavioral modification (Erickson & Young,

2010; Gussak, 2006; Gussak, 2009a; Gussak, 2009b; Meekums & Daniel, 2011; Smeijsters & Cleven, 2006).

Though researchers have spent time investigating the effectiveness of art therapy with criminal populations, little exploration has been done into a conjoint art therapy and restorative justice program. Research into group art therapy utilizing restorative justice approaches is lacking and could be a beneficial addition to the retributive punishment system of the United States. Research regarding restorative justice, group art therapy with adult incarcerated populations, group art therapy with juvenile incarcerated populations, and the integration of art therapy and restorative justice practices are reviewed in the following sections.

Restorative Justice

Restorative justice brings "those harmed by crime or conflict, and those responsible for the harm, into communication, enabling everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward" (Restorative Justice Council, 2013). Restorative justice principles date back to ancient Chinese philosophies. The Romans also utilized restorative practices (Palmero, 2013, p. 1052). Currently, approximately 80 countries have reported utilizing restorative justice practices (Palermo, 2013, p. 1051).

In modern times, restorative justice practices were first put into practice in Canada in 1974 (Liebmann, 2007, p. 38). In this first documented victim-offender mediation and reparation service, a Mennonite probation officer took two young men to apologize to 22 families whose homes they had vandalized. Since then, restorative justice has disseminated through the Mennonite communities first into Indiana and then throughout the United

States. In 2002, 773 restorative justice-based projects were reported in the United States (Liebmann, 2007, p. 38). In Europe, many of the first mediation services were started by religious groups including Anglican clergy and Quakers (Liebmann, 2007, p. 39).

Throughout the world, restorative justice typically includes a wide range of programs, including victim-offender mediation, community reparative boards, family group conferencing, and circle sentencing (Bergseth & Bouffard, 2007; Bergseth & Bouffard, 2012; Liebmann, 2007; Steiner & Johnson, 2003). In most circumstances, these programs allow offenders to take responsibility for their actions and allow victims to have a voice in the process (Steiner & Johnson, 2003, p. 53). "For offenders, restorative justice is about understanding the pain of the harm done, working through feelings of guilt, and attempting to redress the hurt and reconcile with the victim or victim's family; for victims it is about healing" (Palermo, 2013, p. 1052).

Many research studies have been conducted to determine the efficacy of restorative justice programs. According to Steiner and Johnson (2003), restorative justice has been proven effective in reducing recidivism rates, increased compliance, and increased victim satisfaction (p. 55). Research has also shown that restorative justice practices are effective with juvenile delinquents (Bergseth & Bouffard, 2007; Bergseth & Bouffard, 2012; Liebmann, 2007; Steiner & Johnson, 2003). In a study by Bergseth and Bouffard (2007), restorative justice, when compared to traditional juvenile court proceedings, was correlated with significantly lower recidivism rates (p. 445).

Group Art Therapy with Adult Incarcerated Populations

Group art therapy has been found to be effective with incarcerated adult populations (Erickson & Young, 2010; Gussak, 2006; Gussak, 2009a; Gussak, 2009b;

Meekums & Daniel, 2011; Smeijsters & Cleven, 2006). Generally, art therapy allows clients to meet goals such as regulation of tension, impulse control, regulation of aggression, and behavioral modification (Smeijsters & Cleven, 2006, p.39). "It is evident that art therapy groups can provide an effective therapeutic treatment option for incarcerated clients and an efficient, economical treatment option for correctional facilities" (Erickson & Young, 2011, p. 50).

Studies have shown that inmates who participate in group art therapy have decreased rates of depression, increased locus of control, decreased aggressive and destructive impulses, improved attitudes, and improved social interactions (Erickson & Young, 2010; Gussak, 2006; Gussak, 2009a; Gussak, 2009b; Meekums & Daniel, 2011; Smeijsters & Cleven, 2006). Not only does art therapy influence symptomology, it can also increase empathic responding and promote a safe environment for interpersonal feedback to be exchanged (Erickson & Young, 2011, p. 39). In the group art therapy format, clients have the opportunity to respond to one another. They can do so in a safe, mediated space where they have the opportunity to have interpersonal exchanges that might not be possible outside of the therapeutic environment.

The art process can also mirror processes that incarcerated participants are working to master in their lives. For instance, "the act of selecting, composing, and creating collages helped them (incarcerated women) to see relationship patterns repeated throughout their lives and to visually organize their ideas and memories" (Williams & Taylor, 2004, p. 50). Creating images of their crimes allows incarcerated clients to reflect on the events, cognitions, feelings, and behaviors that happened during the clients' crimes (Smeijsters & Cleven, 2006, p. 49). "By reflecting on the image, the patient can be

confronted", hopefully leading to an increased understanding of their behavior (Smeijsters & Cleven, 2006, p. 49).

"Group art therapy is a way of stimulating introspection, building self-esteem and self-awareness, and allowing insights to come to the surface" (Erickson & Young, 2010, p. 38). Gussak (2009b) found that group art therapy with interventions progressing from individually focused to group focused, promoted problem-solving and socialization skills (p. 204). According to Erickson and Young (2010), group art therapy can evoke the instillation of hope, enhancing interaction, promoting universality, providing catharsis, and allowing altruism, which have been identified as curative factors by Yalom (pp. 39-40).

Group Art Therapy with Juvenile Incarcerated Populations

As cited in Hartz and Thick (2005), Riley believes that adolescents have a strong creative drive and art therapy offers an opportunity to express and experiment with the central developmental process of creating an identity (p. 73). Art therapy "both minimizes resistance and offers many avenues for positive identity development" when working with adolescent females (p. 73). "Art therapy is effective because it enlists the clients in doing" (Gerber, 1994, p. 374).

In a study by Persons (2009), it was determined that art therapy addressed several areas important in working with incarcerated, teen boys. The results demonstrated that art therapy is effective in addressing identity issues, safety concerns, interpersonal relationship needs, sexual needs, spiritual needs, and mental health concerns including trauma and depression (Persons, 2009, p. 451). Others report that art therapy is most effective at addressing self-image and emotional concerns of adolescents (Gerber, 1994;

Smeijsters, Kil, Kurstjens, Welten, & Willemars, 2011). Often, "working with artistic materials helps to distance the emotion and to integrate it (Smeijsters et al., 2011, p. 47).

Art Therapy and Restorative Justice

In the United Kingdom, providers have used art in conjunction with restorative justice practices. Some providers utilize art as a therapeutic exercise through which offenders can reflect on their crime (Liebmann, 2007, p. 398). A particular restorative justice program encourages offenders to use artwork as a means of making amends with their victims. For instance, offenders are encouraged to make pictures, mosaics, or paintings to offer as gifts to their victims or to the community (Liebmann, 2007, p. 398).

Another approach offers a specific program in which offenders may use art to understand the perspective of the victim (Liebmann, 2007, p. 392). This method is utilized before offender-victim meetings to encourage offenders to develop empathy for their victim. This practice may also allow offenders to develop a better understanding of their behavior (Liebmann, 2007, p. 397). Liebmann (2007) has developed a protocol in which she asks offenders to create a comic strip of the incident (p. 398). She utilizes this approach in hopes that offenders will take responsibility for their actions after focusing on the harm caused to the victim (Liebmann, 2007, p. 398).

Conclusion

When considering the population of juvenile offenders, the literature supports that art therapy is a beneficial option for restorative work. "Boys report that art therapy decreases their anger, depression, and anxiety. They report also that art therapy helps to build up positive relationships with others and that they learn to be tolerant and to accept others" (Smeijsters et al., 2011, p. 42). The facilitative nature of art therapy as described in

this study, may be an important factor in group art therapy incorporating restorative justice principles.

The main goal of restorative justice practices is to allow victims and offenders to repair the damaged relationship between them. Offenders are encouraged to understand that they have caused harm and to take responsibility for their actions. Meanwhile, victims are allowed an opportunity to understand the perspective of the offender and to grant forgiveness.

Based on the research outlined above, it seems that a combined group art therapy and restorative justice approach could be effective in reducing rates of incarceration and recidivism. This integration of methods could be especially useful with juveniles. Utilizing art therapy to visualize restorative justice concepts may contribute to the participants' understanding of the past behavioral experience and deepen the meaning they derive from group therapy. Similarly, offenders in the group may be able to respond as victims in response to other group members and enact a symbolic restorative justice process.

Research Approach

The research approach was based on a mixed methods design that incorporated both a survey and case study. Mixed methods approaches are typically used when the "strengths of both quantitative and qualitative research can provide the best understanding" of the material being explored (Creswell, 2009, p. 18). Since the early 1990s, researchers have been using mixed methods designs to integrate qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell, 2009, p. 14). This approach was chosen so that both the survey, observations during the case study, and data gleaned from artwork could be utilized in drawing a conclusion.

Specifically, case studies can be useful when developing a treatment protocol (French, Reynolds, & Swain, 2001, p. 195). This research explored a new art therapy treatment protocol, within a group therapy context, informed by restorative justice approaches. Case study designs also allow researchers to incorporate multiple sources of data (Creswell, 2009, p. 175). Data collection methods during the case study included observation and creation of artwork for analysis. Analyzing and reviewing artwork can allow researchers to look for patterns and themes in images that participants create (Kapitan, 2010, p. 109).

The use of a survey allowed the researcher to gather information about participants' personal experience and attitudes before and after treatment. Surveys can be particularly useful to gather information about attitudes, trends, and opinions from participants in a systematic way (Creswell, 2009; French, Reynolds, & Swain, 2001). The survey allowed participants to respond without interactions with the researcher that may have biased or influenced responses.

This research was conducted sequentially, beginning with the quantitative approach (survey), proceeding into qualitative data gathering (case study), and finishing with the quantitative survey. The data was mixed in the analysis stage, allowing the researcher to draw conclusions incorporating the client's experience (survey), researcher observation during the case study, and data drawn from artwork analysis. This format allowed the researcher to conduct a logical interpretation of themes that emerged from the mixed methods research design.

Methods

Introduction

A mixed methods research approach was used to gather and interpret the data. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the process. The first section discusses definition of terms that may apply to this research study. The next section outlines the design of the study including sampling, data gathering, and data analysis procedures.

Definition of Terms

Aggression. "Hostile, injurious, or destructive behavior or outlook especially when caused by frustration" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2013). In this research, aggression refers to both hostile, injurious, or destructive verbalizations (verbal aggression) and behavior (physical aggression).

Empathy. "The action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another of either the past or present without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2013).

Offender. A person who "causes (a person or group) to feel hurt, angry, or upset by something said or done" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2013). For the purposes of this paper, the offender is the person that has caused harm to another. The offender has not necessarily been charged criminally.

Self-Regulating. To keep oneself "from exceeding a desirable degree or level (as of expression)" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2013). In terms of this research, self-regulating refers to monitoring one's level of arousal and knowing when to take a break in order to avoid possible aggressive outbursts.

Restorative Justice. "Restorative processes bring those harmed by crime or conflict, and those responsible for the harm, into communication, enabling everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward" (Restorative Justice Council, 2013).

Victim. "One that is acted on and usually adversely affected by a force or agent (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2013). For the purposes of this research, victims are not necessarily associated with a crime.

Design of the Study

Participants engaged in group therapy informed by both restorative justice approaches and art therapy interventions. The group consisted of eight consecutive weekly meetings of sixty minutes in length. During each meeting, participants were asked to complete art tasks and to engage in group processing. Specific art tasks were designed help participants explore and understand past behavior. Participants also were asked to complete a pre-survey and a post-survey aimed at gauging each participant's attitudes, personal behavioral experiences, and experience of therapy.

Sampling. Adolescents (13 to 18), both males and females that had attended a court-approved anger management class at a local after school program, had the option to self-select for participation in group art therapy focused on understanding behavior. Although some of the participants may have been court mandated to the anger management class, participation in this research was voluntary and unrelated to the participant's court-mandated requirements. The criteria for participation included age range, willingness to participate in art expression, and attendance of the anger management class. As a requirement from the after school program, participants that did

not wish to engage in the research were still allowed to participate in the group without discrimination.

Gathering of data. At the beginning of the first of the eight weekly sessions, participants were asked to complete a self-administered, written pre-survey. The pre-survey was aimed at gathering basic demographic information; information about past aggressive behavior, both physical and verbal, including scaling questions about frequency and intensity of such behaviors; and information about past individual, group, and art therapy experience. The post survey asked the same questions about past behavior and asked participants to rate the helpfulness of the group, as well as provided an opportunity to write in comments.

Each group art therapy session was structured to include an art directive, psychoeducation, and group discussion. The curriculum followed can be found in Appendix C. Regardless of their choice to participate in the research, each group member engaged in the same activities and curriculum. The artwork created by willing participants in the research, as well as the observation of discussions, served as data for the research exploration.

Analysis of data. The data gathered was analyzed as a basis for understanding how the participants experienced the group art therapy process. The artwork was organized categorically to discover patterns that emerged between participants and between sessions. The pre and post-surveys were analyzed to evaluate pre and post group differences in reporting of experience and attitudes. Neither the survey information nor artwork created by group members not participating in the research was included in the analysis of data.

Results

Presentation of Data

Four members of an anger management class at a local after school program chose to participate in this research. Before attending the group, participants were asked to sign up, were given consent and assent forms, and the research and group process was explained. The four research participants came from varying ethnic backgrounds, including Caucasian and Latino. Three participants were female and one male. Their ages included one participant at 14 years old, one 16 year old, and two 18 year olds.

The four research participants were among seven members of the art therapy group incorporating restorative justice principles. Per the request of the after school program, group members that did not wish to engage in the research were still allowed to participate in the group without discrimination. The group was conducted in an open format and new members were allowed to join at any point during the eight week art therapy group.

Session one. In the initial group meeting, three total group members attended, of which two were research participants. Although four research participants signed up before the first session, only two attended the initial session. Consent and assent forms were reviewed and the group members were introduced to the group rules and the general format of a group session. Participants were informed of the group rules and asked to state any additional rules that they would like the group to follow. Group rules included confidentiality, commitment, respect, sobriety, no electronics, and no food.

As explained to the participants, group sessions were to include a topic for the day, a check in about their week, a psychoeducation component, as well as an art task.

Participants were informed that they would be asked to discuss the daily topic and their artwork, and respond to each other as they felt comfortable.

After a general discussion of how the group would function and group rules, participants were asked to create a name tag as a way of introducing themselves to the group. Participants were asked to write their name on a piece of paper and embellish the letters with things that represent them. Each participant shared briefly.

Participants were then introduced to the weekly check in format. Participants were given a piece of paper with a printed rectangle. They were then asked to think about the previous week and consider the emotions that they felt throughout the week. Participants were asked to choose a color, shape, or symbol to represent each emotion. They were asked to fill in the rectangle according to the ratio that each emotion was felt during the week. Participants were then asked to share with the group as little or as much information about their art as they would like.

In general, participants discussed feeling overwhelmed and feeling unsure how to handle the emotions. As seen in figure 1, participants filled in the entire rectangle with color. One participant included four emotions and the other noted three emotions from their experiences throughout the week.

After participants shared their weekly check in, participants were introduced to the topic for the day, self-monitoring and knowing when to take a time out. Participants were taught relaxation and self-soothing techniques, including deep breathing exercises and other de-escalating techniques. Participants were informed that the subsequent group session may evoke uncomfortable feelings. Participants were instructed to pay attention to their feelings and consider when they may need a time out from the group. Group members

were informed that relaxation and self-soothing techniques would be incorporated into meditations at the end of each of the remaining sessions.

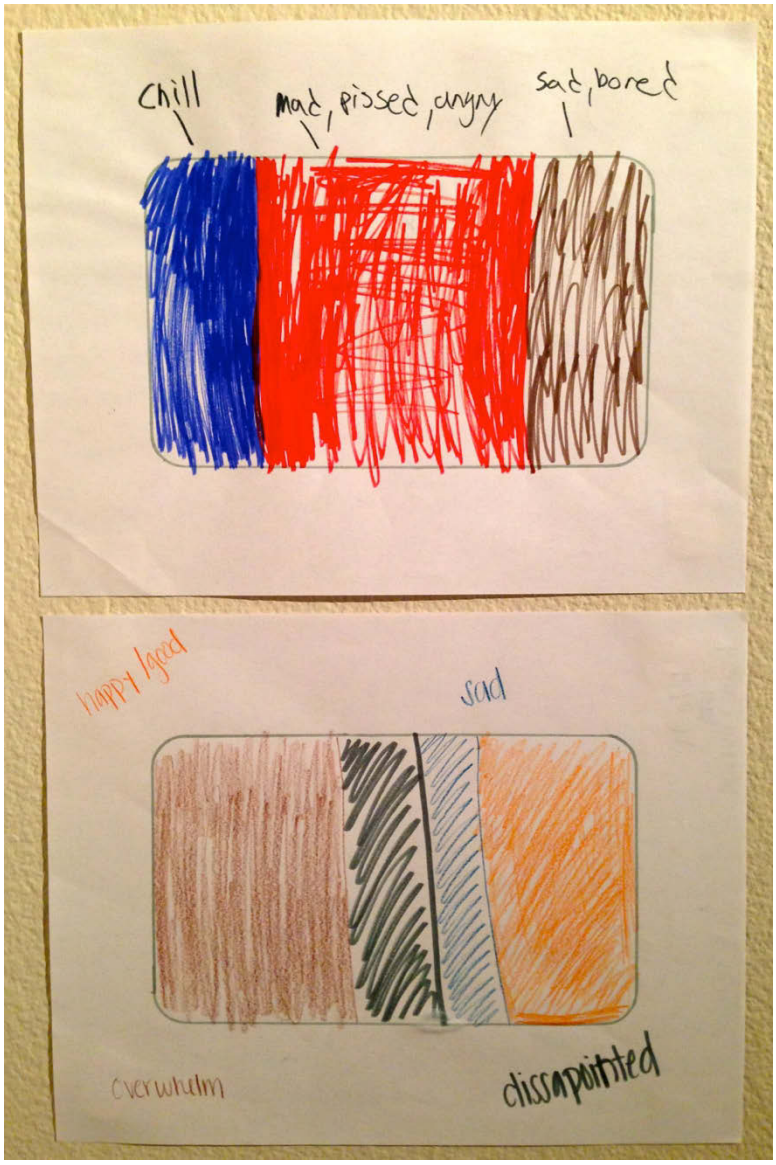

Figure 1. Weekly check-in directive- Session one. This figure shows the weekly check-ins from two research participants present in session one.

Session two. During the second session, three total group members were present, of which two were research participants. Group members first were asked to check in using

the format introduced in the previous session. After a discussion about their emotions from the previous week, participants were asked to explore behavior. As seen in figure 2, participants filled the rectangle completely with color and again noted three or four emotions from the previous week. Next, participants were introduced to the cognitive behavior triangle (CBT) of thoughts, behaviors, and underlying beliefs. Participants were encouraged to consider a time when someone has acted hostile, verbally or physically towards them. Participants were asked to explore that experience in connection to the CBT triangle by giving examples and discussing how thoughts, behaviors, and underlying beliefs may be connected.

After a discussion about what influences behavior, participants were introduced to the art task for the week. Participants were asked to look through a collage box of images to find one that depicts an act of aggression. They were instructed to glue the image down to a piece of paper and include thought bubbles and feeling bubbles to explain how they think the offender and the victim in the picture were thinking and feeling. During the discussion, one participant remarked that the victim must have provoked the offender in some way. Participants also concluded that the offender and the victim could be thinking or feeling similar emotions.

One participant chose an image one driver of a car yelling and gesturing at a passing car. As seen in Figure 3, the participant labeled the man in the image as “me” and the second car as “offender”. In the participant’s explanation, he stated that the offender sideswiped the other car. The participant stated that the driver of the car that was hit was reacting by yelling and calling the other driver (offender) names.

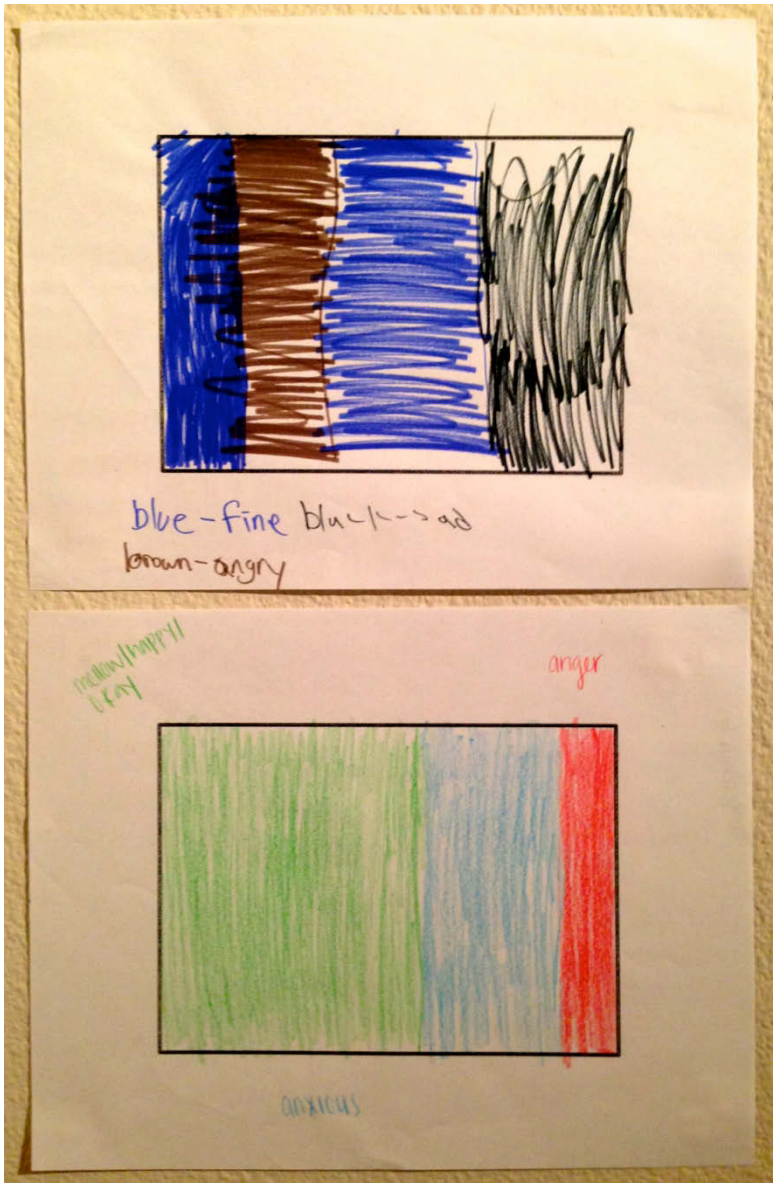

Figure 2. Weekly check-in directive- Session two. This figure shows the weekly check-ins from two research participants present in session two.

Figure 3. Participant artwork- Session two. This image shows one participant's collage with victim and offender thought bubbles created following the directive from session two.

Session three. During the third session, four total group members attended, of which one was a research participant. The four participants present were asked to check in about their week using the art task from the previous sessions (Figure 4). Next participants were introduced to the topic for the week, exploring the effects of behavior. Participants received psychoeducation about long-term and short-term effects of aggression and behavior. Participants engaged in a discussion about what different effects of behavior could be, including emotional and physical effects.

After the brief, general discussion, participants were asked to use their collage image from the previous week and create the "next scene" showing a potential short-term effect and then another scene with a possible long-term effect of the interaction depicted in

their collage image. Participants were asked to use thought and feeling bubbles to explain how they think the offender and the victim in the scenes are thinking and feeling. After creating their art, participants were encouraged to discuss with each other what they depicted in each scene. As seen in Figure 5, the participant noted that short and long term effects were similar and again, both victim and offender may experience the same effects. The long-term effects also included relational issues. The group ended with a meditation.

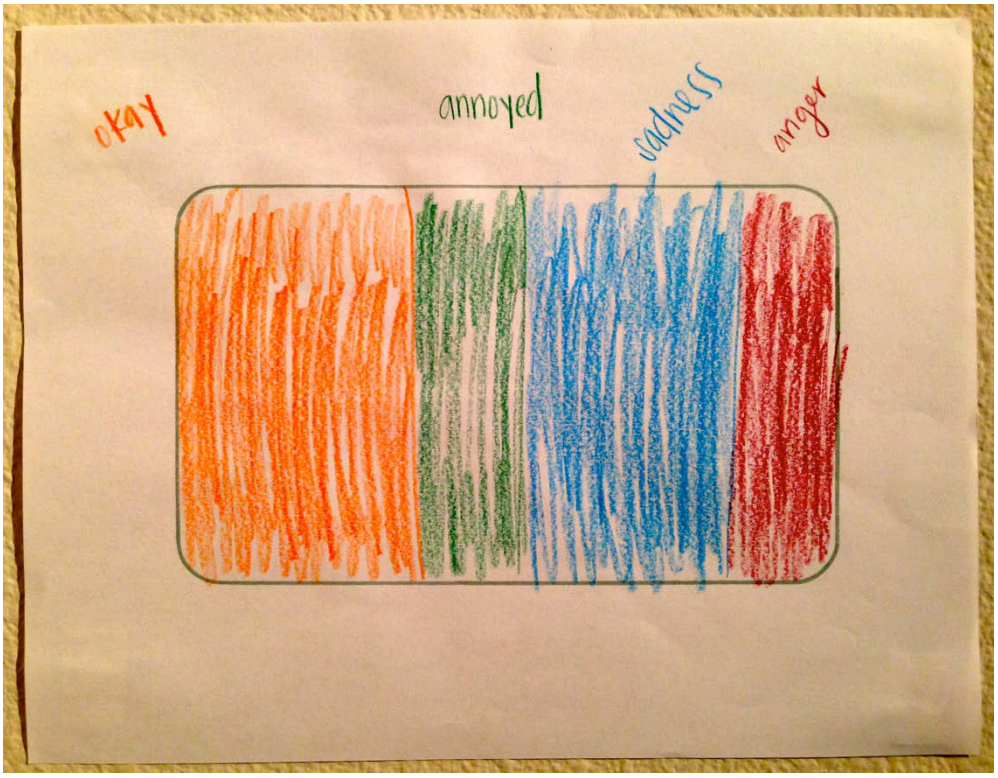

Figure 4. Weekly check-in directive- Session three. This figure shows the weekly check-in from one research participant present in session three.

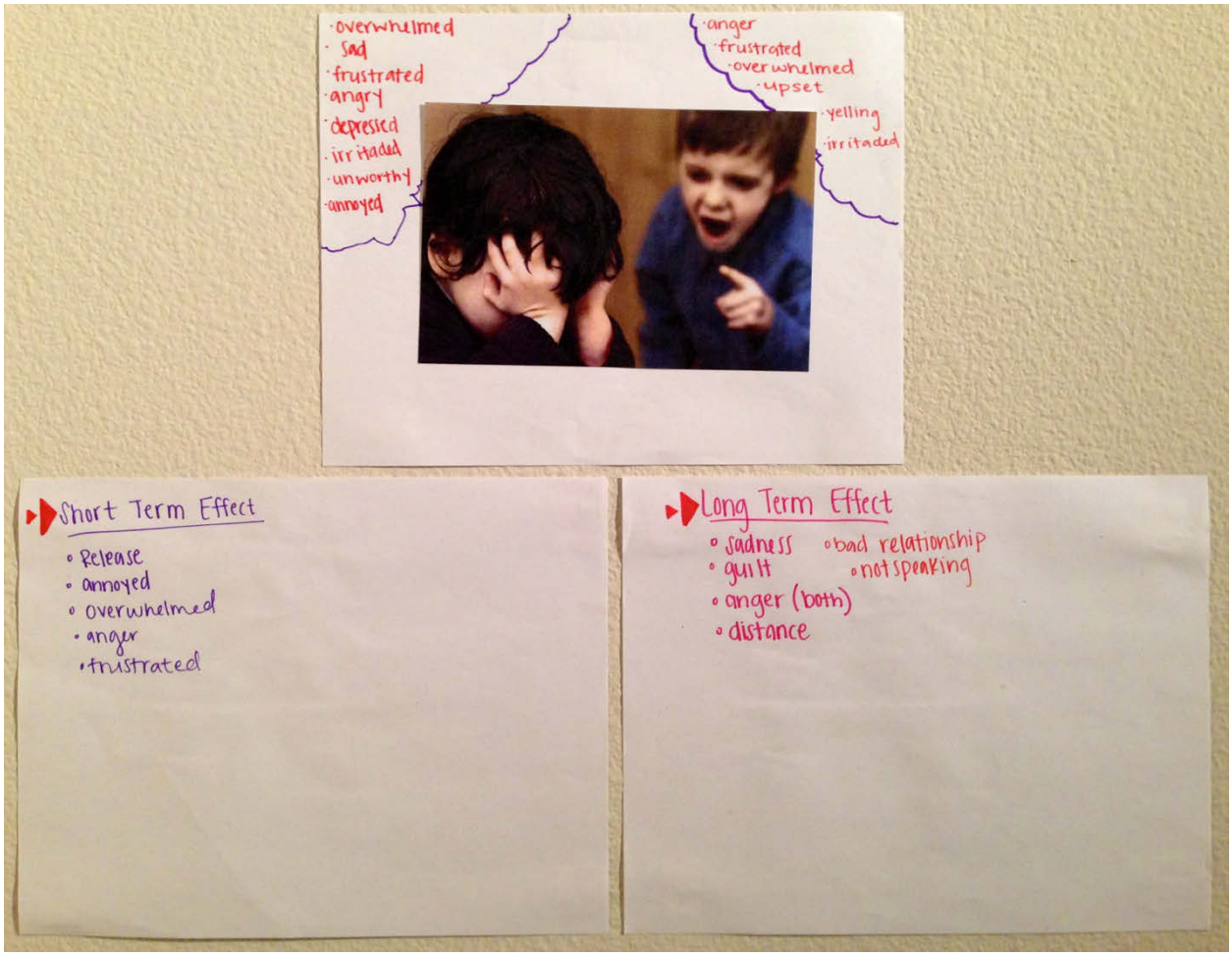

Figure 5. Participant artwork- Session three. This image shows one participant's collage creation from session two with the short and long term effects imagined following the directive from session three.

Session four. Five total group members were present in the fourth session, of which four were research participants. As usual, participants were asked to check in about their week using the format presented in the previous sessions. As seen in Figure 6, three of four participants used a single color and included one emotion from the previous week. None of the participants filled in the entire rectangle with color. Participants were then asked to consider the discussions from the previous weeks and think about a time when their

behavior had negatively impacted another person. Participants were asked to start thinking about what thoughts and feeling surrounded that situation.

Participants received psychoeducation about the connection between behaviors and emotions, including a brief introduction to the James-Lange theory of emotion. According to the James-Lange theory, there is an activating event which leads to physical arousal. One interprets that arousal and labels it as an emotion. Participants were asked to discuss and give examples of how this process may function for them.

Next, participants were asked to synthesize the discussions and art tasks from the previous weeks and create a comic strip depicting a situation in which they acted aggressively or in which their behavior negatively impacted another person. Participants were asked to depict what happened before and what happened during the incident. Participants were asked to create the "next scene" showing a short-term effect and then another scene with the long-term effect of the interaction. Participants were instructed to include thought and feeling bubbles to explain how they were and how they think the victim of their behavior was thinking and feeling during the incident. Participants were asked not to discuss their art until the next session. After the art task, the group ended with a meditation.

Figure 7 shows one participant's completed comic strip. The participant chose to divide her paper into four sections, the first two describing the incident in picture form, and the last two listing the effects of the incident. The participant included conversation bubbles, but only listed two feelings for each individual throughout the entire incident. The short-term effects included feeling a sense of calm and anger after the event, while the long-term effect indicates a relational change.

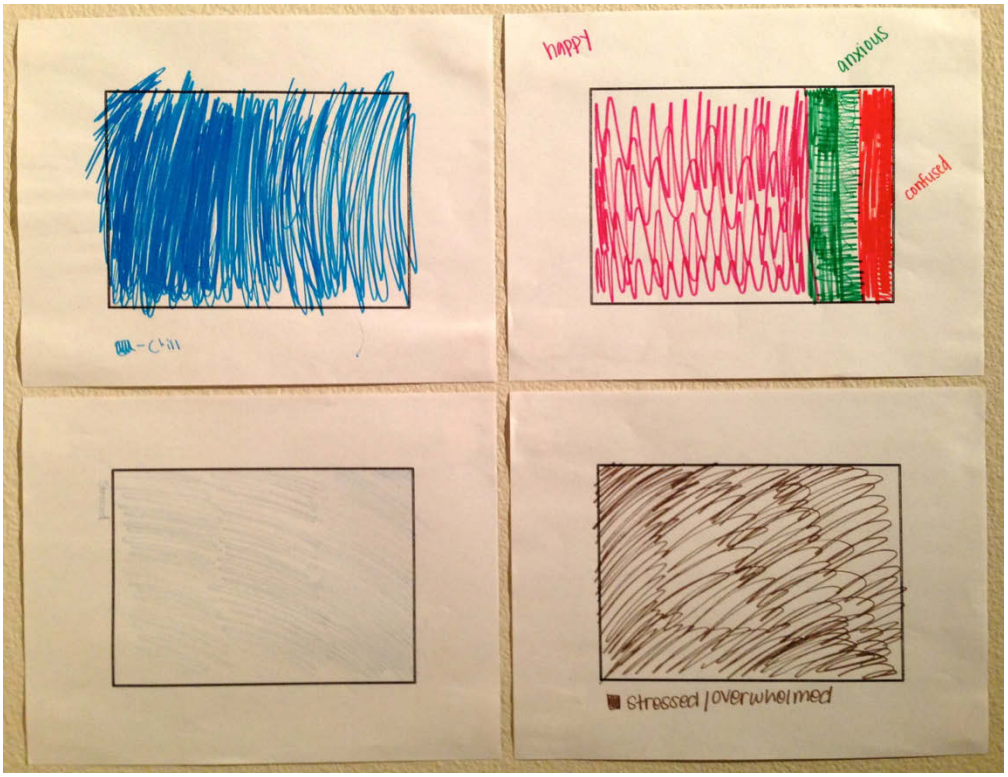

Figure 6. Weekly check-in directive- Session four. This figure shows the weekly check-ins from four research participants present in session four.

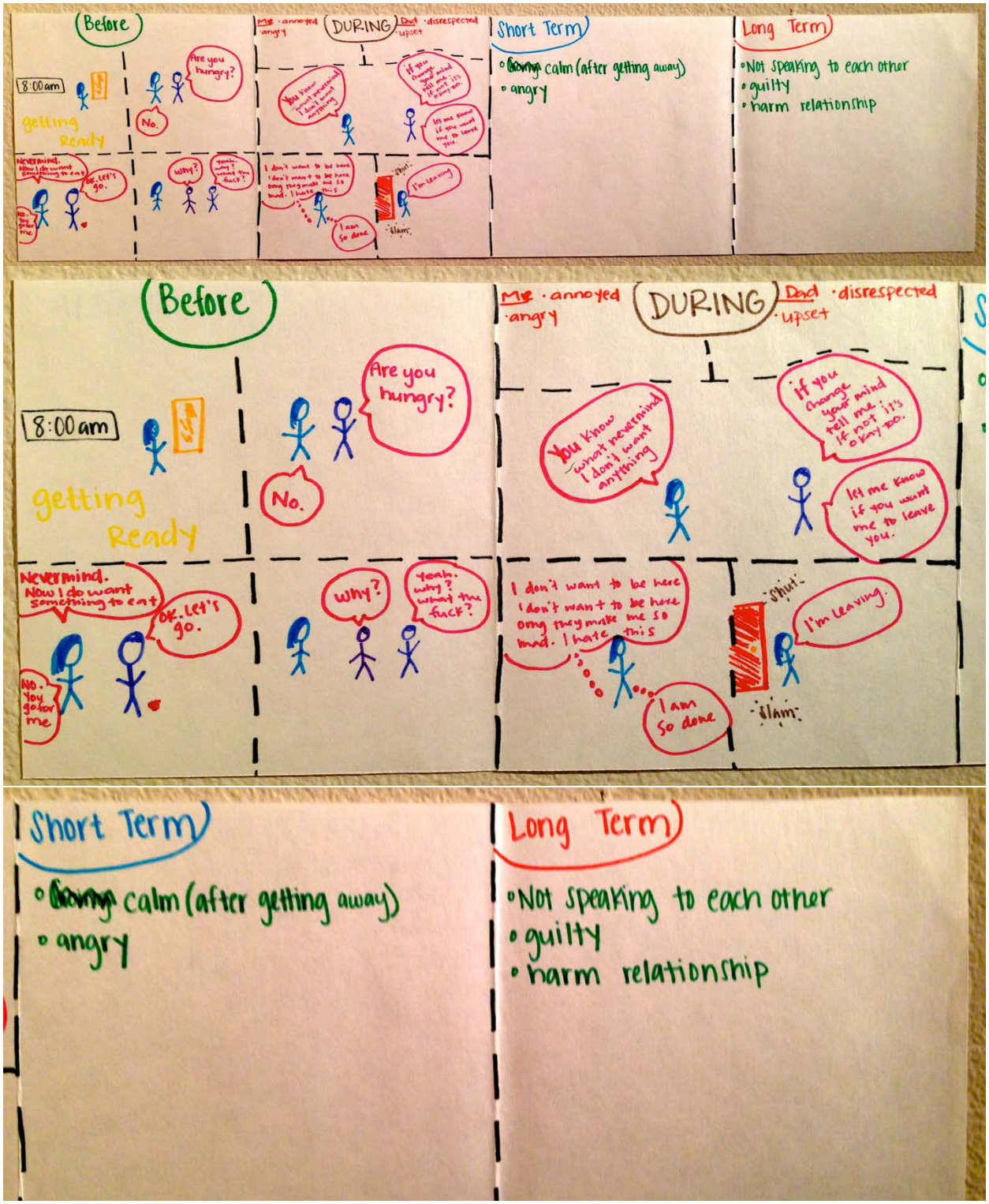

Figure 7. Participant artwork- Session four. This image shows one participant's comic strip created following the directive from session four.

Session five. During the fifth session, seven total group members attended, of which three were research participants. The seven participants present were asked to check in using the same format as in previous sessions (Figure 8). After the check in, participants were introduced to the topic for the week, empathy. Participants engaged in a discussion about empathy, including what it means, how it might be shown, and how it might be received.

After the general discussion about empathy, the four participants that were present for session four were paired into dyads and the three group members that were not present for session four were grouped together. The dyads were asked to take turns sharing their comic strip with their partner. They were asked to attempt to respond empathically to the other person's story. The other group was asked to make a quick version of the comic strip and then share with each other and practice responding empathically.

Both of the dyads finished before the other group. They were given a second task while the third group was still working. They dyads were asked to think about each other's situations and brainstorm alternative ways that they may have handled the situation. Afterwards, the dyads shared their ideas of alternative ways of managing with the group as a whole. Their ideas included talking with or confronting the other person, ignoring, taking time to calm down, and using "relaxed words" with the other person. The group ended with a meditation.

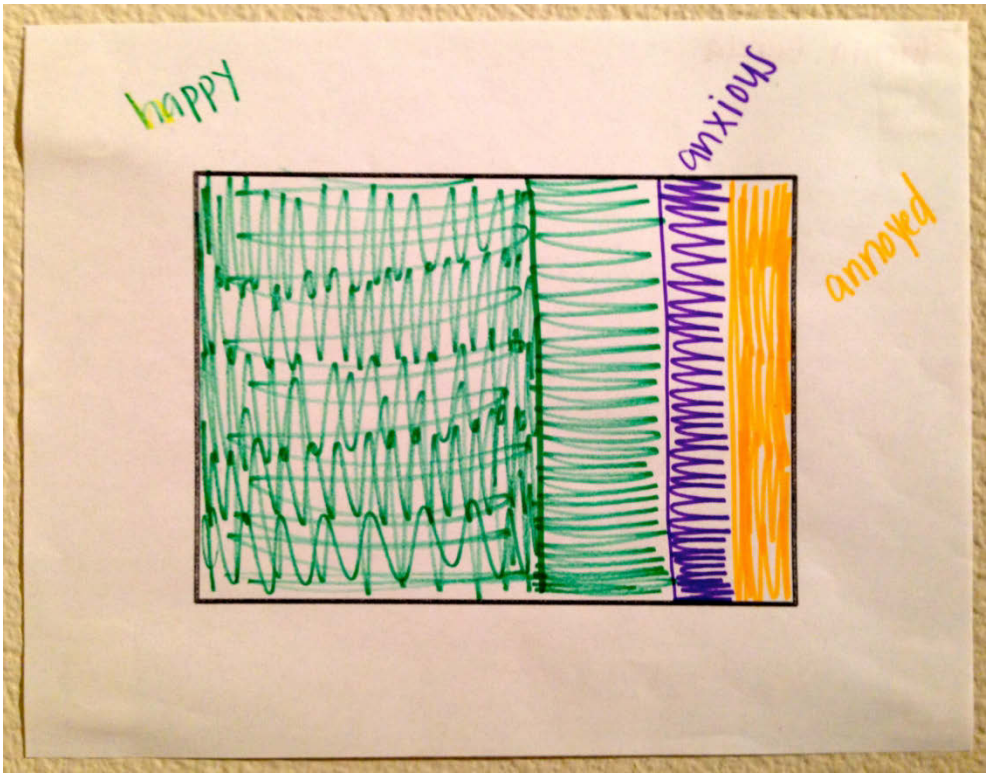

Figure 8. Weekly check-in directive- Session five. This figure shows the weekly check-in from one research participant present in session five.

Session six. During the sixth session, only one group member, who was a research participant, was present. She began with the usual check in regarding her feelings from the previous week (Figure 9). Participant then had an opportunity to look at all of her check ins from the previous session. Afterwards, the participant was introduced to the topic of the week, effects of behavior and the power of choice. The cycle of choice diagram utilized in this research was adapted from an aggression cycle diagram used by Breiner, Tuomisto, Bouyea, Gussak, and Aufderheide in an anger management program (2012, p. 1132).

The participant was introduced to the cycle of choices regarding aggression. The participant was asked to fill in the diagram with examples from her own life using words, symbols, colors, or shapes. As seen in Figure 9, the participant chose to copy the diagram in

blue and did not choose to add her own symbols. The participant left her diagram relatively unfilled and mislabeled or did not include some of the areas of the cycle of choice.

The participant received psychoeducation about choices and subsequent consequences and about the power of taking control of one's own behavior. She was given the opportunity to discuss her usual coping strategies or behaviors used to avoid an aggressive outburst. Client then brainstormed additional strategies that she may be able to choose when working to avoid entering the cycle of aggression. The session ended with meditation.

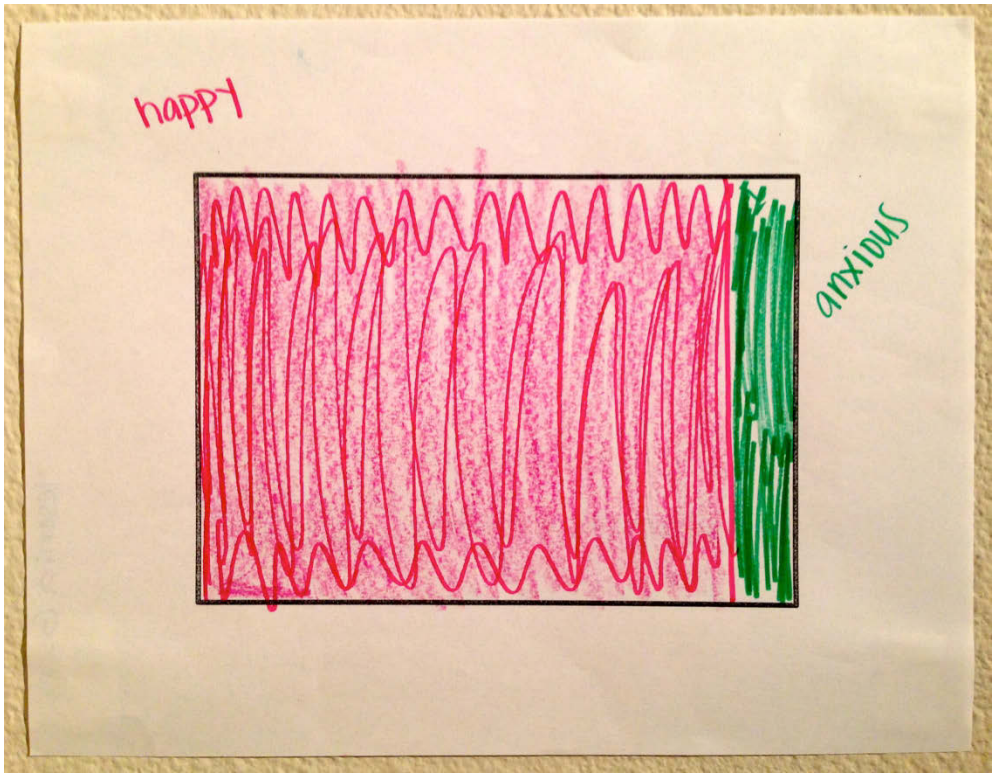

Figure 9. Weekly check-in directive- Session six. This figure shows the weekly check-in from one research participant present in session six.

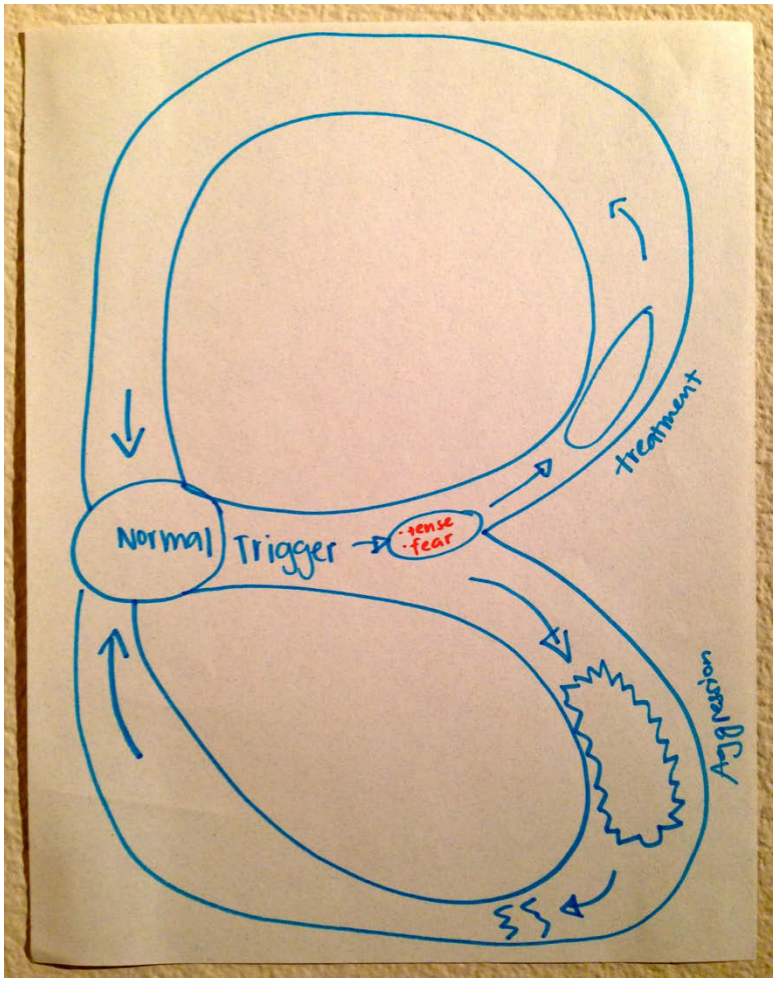

Figure 10. Participant artwork- Session six. This image shows one participant's interpretation of the cycle of choice created following the directive from session six.

Session seven. In session seven, three total group members, of which one was a research participant, were present. Participants checked in using the usual format (Figure 11). Participants engaged in a conversation regarding the similarities in feelings of the week, including anxiety and anger. Participants were then introduced to the topic of the week, taking responsibility for their behavior. Participants received psychoeducation regarding the healing and transformative power of taking responsibility for themselves and the idea that participants can only control their own behavior.

Participants were given the same diagram from the previous week and were asked to fill in each section with examples from their own life. This allowed clients to synthesize and review information from previous weeks and have a visual representation of the choices they have regarding aggressive behaviors. Figure 12 shows one participant's diagram (note that this is the artwork from the single group member the previous week). She was able to identify physical cues, her typical aggressive response, and various coping strategies. Clients then engaged in a discussion about feeling out of control and struggling to find ways that allowed them to express their aggressive energy in other ways. The session ended with meditation.

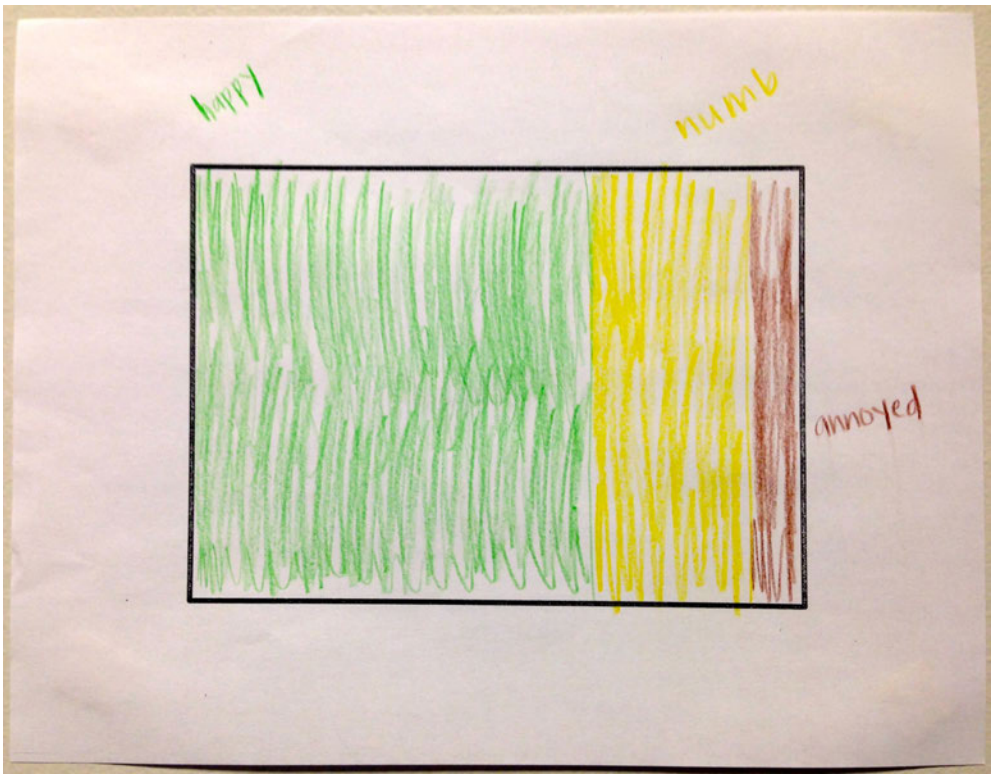

Figure 11. Weekly check-in directive- Session seven. This figure shows the weekly check-in from one research participant present in session seven.

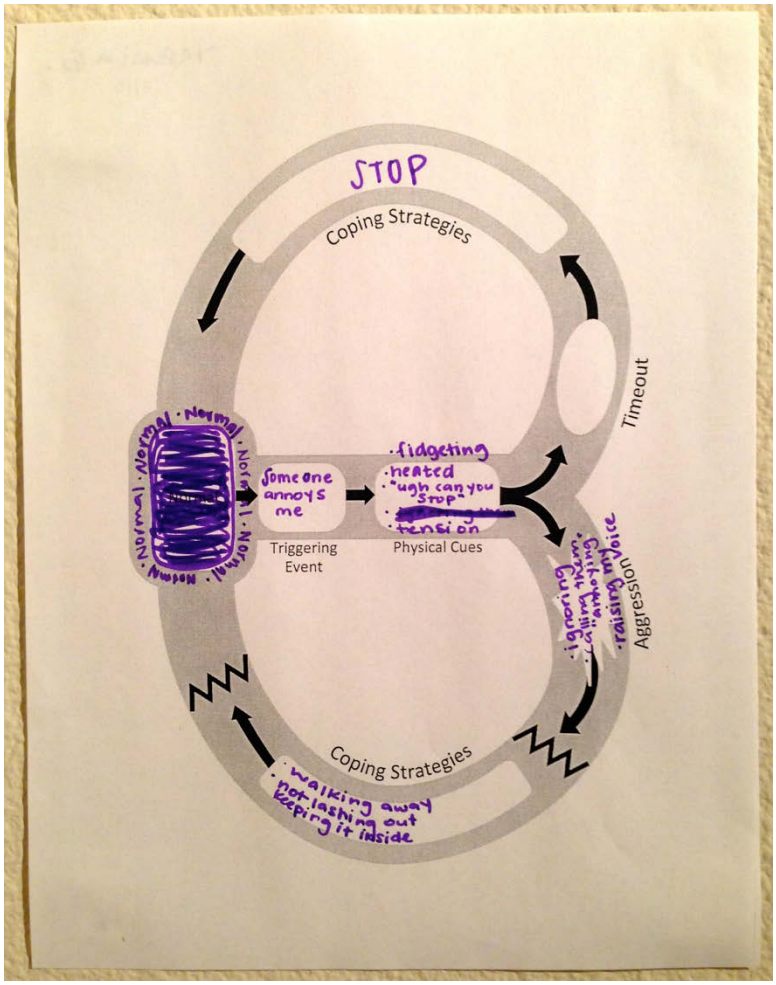

Figure 12. Participant artwork- Session seven. This image shows one participant's interpretation of the cycle of choice created following the directive from session seven.

Session eight. In session eight, five total group members were present, three of which were research participants. Participants were asked to check in using the same method presented previously (Figure 13). Afterwards, participants were introduced to the topic of the week, future behavior. Participants received psychoeducation about making decisions that can lead to preferred outcomes. Participants were encouraged to consider the cycle of choice from the previous week.

Next participants were asked to use their comic strip created in session four. Using flaps of paper, participants were asked to explore alternative behaviors and outcomes of the behavioral choice depicted in their comic strip. As seen in Figure 14, this participant noted that changing his initial reaction could alter the course of each subsequent event. The participant also identified that the outcome may have been the same regardless of his initial reaction. The participant stated that he and the victim may still have "burned the bridge" of their relationship, but it would "not be my fault" had he not become aggressive.

During the discussion of the artwork, participants discussed the importance of taking a step back from the situation. Participants also discussed the difficulty of making a behavioral change. The session ended with meditation. One week after the eighth art therapy group session, participants were asked to complete a post-survey.

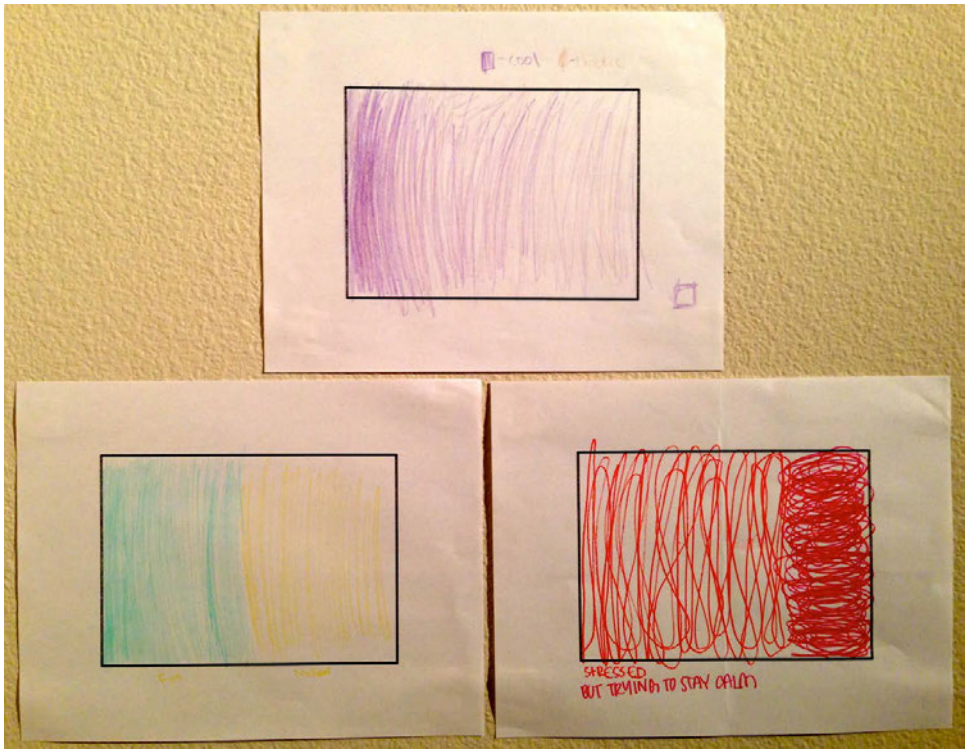

Figure 13. Weekly check-in directive- Session eight. This figure shows the weekly check-ins from three research participant present in session eight.

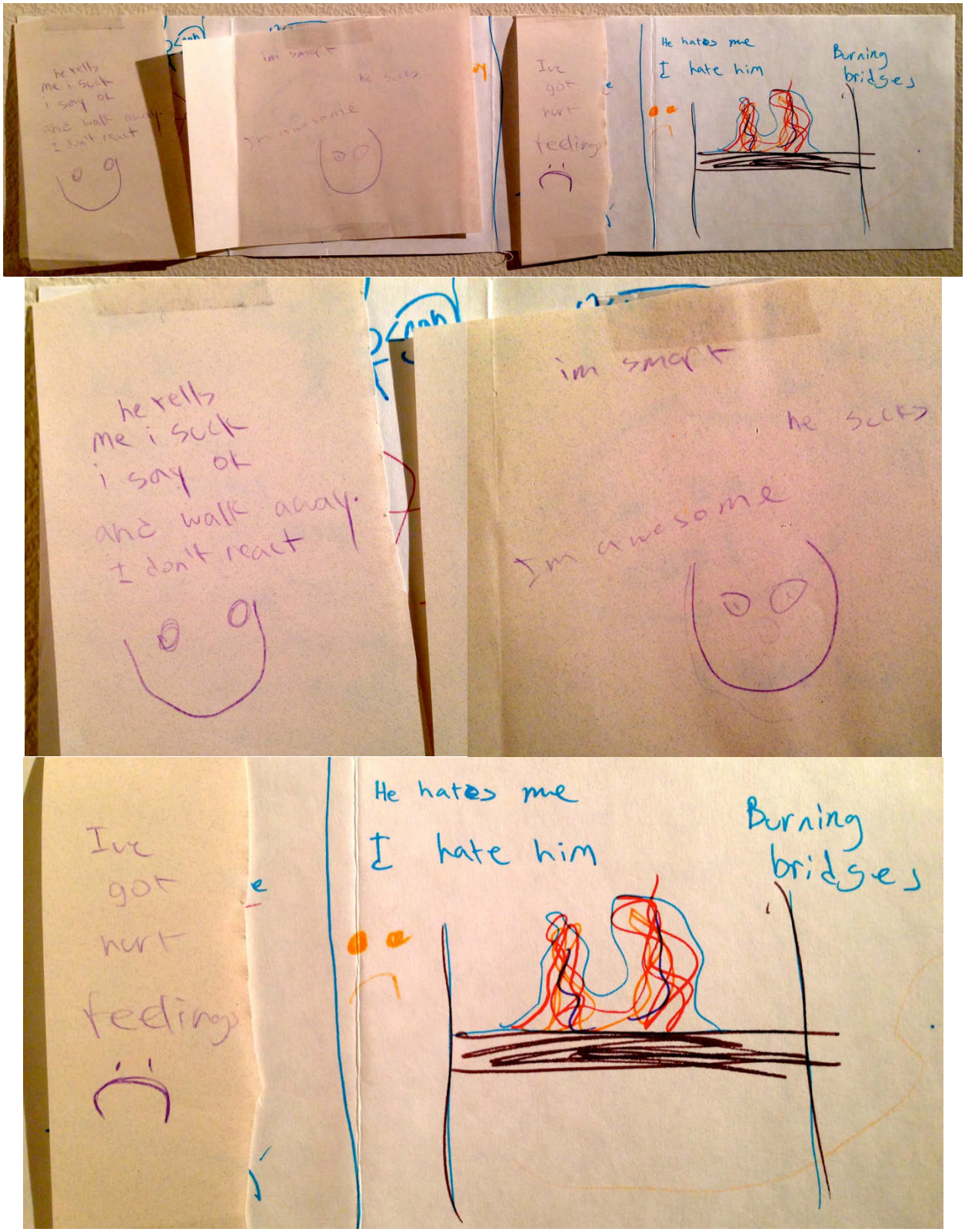

Figure 14. Participant artwork- Session eight. This image shows one participant's re-interpretation of his comic strip (created in session four) following the directive from session eight.

Analysis of Data

Over the course of the eight-session program, the check-in process stayed the same. Each week participants were asked to think about the emotions they felt during the week and represent those feelings with colors, shapes, or symbols within a pre-printed rectangle. In the beginning, participants filled in the entire rectangle with color. Participants included three or more emotions in the first three weeks (Figure 15).

After the third week, the artwork created during the check-in seemed to shift. Participants included fewer emotions and did not fill in the entire rectangle. For example, in the fourth session, 75% of participants only included one emotion in the check-in. In the first three sessions, participants seemed to take their time to complete the check-in. Yet, in sessions four, five, and eight, participants seemed to work more quickly. The urgent quality can be seen in the artwork as well as in the participants' presentation in the room. Some participants colored outside of the rectangle or did not fill it in completely, leaving more whitespace. On the post-survey, one participant commented, stating that "the experience could be awkward, especially if you don't know the other members".

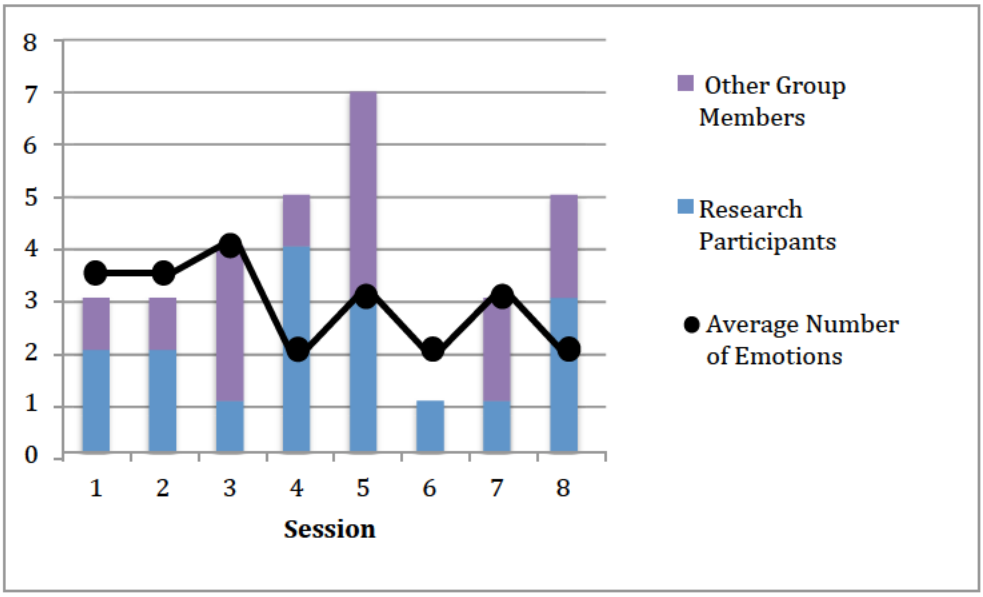

Figure 15. Average number of emotions seen in weekly check-in directive. This figure illustrates the changes in group members, research participants, and corresponding emotional expression across time during the weekly check-in directive.

As seen in the first collage directive during the second session through the final session, there appears to be confusion in the victim and offender relationship. In the original collages, participants had difficulty identifying who was who. One participant indicated that the victim must have done something to provoke the offender, indicating that the victim must have committed the first offense. Another participant stated that the victim was the person who appeared to be the aggressor in the image.

In the comic strips, the images created of offenders and victims often looked similar. In three comic strips, the characters are the same color and have few distinguishing characteristics. Another participant drew two similar sets of facial features (eyes, nose, mouth), though she did not indicate who is who.

When considering reactions during an altercation, participants indicated that the victim and the offender might be thinking similar thoughts and feeling the same emotions.

In some artwork, thought and feeling bubbles appear unclear. It is difficult to determine which character is expressing himself in which way without hearing the participant's explanation. Participants also tended to combine the short and long-term effects that the offender and victim might feel. Again resulting in ambiguity as to who is experiencing which effect.

Participants seemed to have difficulty determining what would constitute a short-term versus a long-term effect. Many of the long-term effects were subtle variations of short-term effects. Participants also included some sort of sense of release as a short-term effect. In their comic strips, two participants articulated relational changes as long-term effects of the aggressive interaction.

When drawing their comic strips in session four, participants seemed to have difficulty drawing what was taking place during the aggressive altercation. With one exception, participants did not draw, but rather wrote about the incident. As mentioned above, it was difficult to determine which character was the offender and which the victim in the comic strips. This made it even more difficult to understand the sequence of events in the altercation.

In the initial collages, participants discussed provocation. They stated that the victim must have provoked the offender. The original comic strips had a similar theme. Participants often mentioned that the victim provoked them in some way, thus the altercation. However, in the final session, participants shifted towards a focus on self-control, indicating that their behavior could make a difference in the outcome of the interaction.

In an analysis comparing pre and post-survey data, participants' self reports regarding the frequency and intensity of their aggressive behaviors remained relatively unchanged. Though participants reported a slight decrease in the intensity of verbal aggression, the change was not significant. When asked about how their aggressive behavior may affect others on the pre-survey, participants were unable to list ways that another person may feel as a result of the participants' behaviors. However, when asked the same question on the post-survey, participants stated both physical and mental effects that their behaviors may have on others.

One survey question asked participants which weekly topic was most helpful. Survey results indicate that participants found the topic of empathy to be most helpful. On a scale from 1 to 10, with 10 being most helpful and 1 being least helpful, participants on average rated the group art therapy experience as a 7.75. On the post-survey, one participant commented on her positive experience in the group, stating, "I liked sharing my feelings/behavior because it has helped me deal with my anger. It takes longer for me to explode". 100% of participants indicated that they would recommend group art therapy to a friend.

Findings

After reviewing the results of the analysis, several implications were discovered. The artwork, surveys, and analysis of group discussion illuminated several themes regarding participants' abilities to consider the effects of their behavior. The analysis of data revealed information regarding participants' views of long versus short term effects, victim and offender relationships, and participants' views of their behavioral choices.

One important finding emerged from the weekly check-in data as it related to group dynamics. With a consistent group the first three weeks, participants were able to articulate three to four emotions each week. However, the following week, session four, with an increase in members, 75% of participants were only able to articulate one emotion. The shift in check-in results may represent the participants' unease or feeling of insecurity with new members entering the group at that time. Likewise, when only one participant was present, she only included two emotions. Inconsistent group dynamics seem to be reflected in the weekly check-in activity.

The participants in this study demonstrated difficulty in acknowledging the difference between short and long-term effects of aggressive behavior. This correlates directly to adolescent development, specifically cognitive processing and the ability to think abstractly. According to Piaget's theory of cognitive development, adolescents are likely progressing into the formal operational stage of development (Piaget, 1964, p. 177). However, participants in the group may still be in the concrete operational stage and may have difficulty thinking abstractly and hypothetically. Participants' difficulty considering the differences in effects over time may indicate their level of cognitive development.

A major result from the analysis of the artwork and discussions revealed that participants had difficulty definitively distinguishing between victim and offender. One explanation of the interchangeability of victim and offender, may be that participants cannot or do not want to take responsibility for their actions during aggressive altercations. When creating their comic strips, asking participants to first draw the situation before adding in words may require participants to take more responsibility for their actions. This way, participants will need to draw the entire situation, acknowledging

each interaction before considering thoughts and feelings. Art therapy plays an integral role in the curriculum, as participants are required to visualize each part of the incident in a concrete way.

In their comic strips, the ambiguity of offender and victim depicted in the altercations may indicate participants' need to distance themselves from the situation. Palermo states that restorative justice can help offenders work through guilt, which may be caused by recognizing that they have caused harm (Palermo, 2013, p. 1052). Distancing themselves may be a form of self-protection used to alleviate the discomfort of the guilt. The art process can offer offenders an opportunity to integrate these emotions (Smeijsters et al., 2011, p. 47). The confusion between victim and offender may indicate participants' inabilities to view themselves solely as offenders, which brings on the feelings of guilt. Further, this finding may indicate participants' abilities to draw on their own experiences as victims as well as offenders.

Perhaps participants do not want to feel like helpless victims so they become offenders, positions of strength and power. However, previous experiences of being powerless victims may allow participants an alternative, and perhaps empathic, viewpoint from which to respond to other group members. Such responses may allow offenders in the group to engage in reparative interactions without specific victims being present in the group art therapy process. As found by Erickson and Young (2011), art therapy can increase empathic responding and promote a safe environment for interpersonal feedback to be exchanged (p. 39). Victim and offender interactions, including gaining understanding and experiencing healing, are main goals of restorative justice programs (Palermo, 2013, p. 1052).

Another goal of restorative justice programs is to reduce recidivism "by addressing underlying issues that may have precipitated the offense" (Bergseth & Bouffard, 2012, p. 1056). During the group, participants were able to integrate their personal experiences as victims in some way, which allowed them to better understand the harm that they have caused as offenders. The therapeutic process, as well as participants' abilities and willingness to draw on personal experience as victim and as offender, aided in addressing underlying issues that make the offender more likely to commit another aggressive act.

The structure of the group intended to focus broadly on aggression in general and shift to personal accounts of aggressive behaviors. As the sessions progressed, participants also shifted their focus from provocation to self-control. In the beginning, participants discussed what others did that made them react in such ways. However, in the final sessions, participants utilized the cycle of choice to consider alternative behaviors. The visual representation of the cycle of choice allowed participants to synthesize the concepts discussed up to that point in group therapy. It also allowed participants to understand their choice in their reaction to others in a more concrete way. According to Piaget's theory, adolescents in this age range may need concrete examples rather than abstract or hypothetical ideas, making the diagram of the cycle of choice an important step in the process (Piaget, 1964, p. 177).

In the final art directive, participants focused on how they might alter their behavior and focused on the aspects of the situation that they could control. As seen in one participant's artwork, he was able to see how his initial response can alter the entire course of a situation. He reflected that he may not have control over the outcome of the experience, but he could control his behavior and his participation in the outcome. This

realization appeared to change the way the participant viewed himself. As evidenced by the thought and feelings he indicated during the altercation. He moved from a more negative to a more positive self-view.

Participants' ratings of this art therapy group indicate their positive experience in the group. Their willingness to refer a friend to the group confirms this assertion. Participants' positive responses indicate their willingness to engage in a group focused on behavioral change. Though the effectiveness of the group is not yet determinable, it seems that restorative justice principles can be incorporated into group art therapy in a way that deepens the meaning participants' derived from group therapy.

Conclusions

This research examined the integration of restorative justice approaches within the structure of group art therapy. Utilizing art therapy to visualize the concepts of restorative justice appears to have contributed to the participants' understanding of their past behavioral experiences and deepened the meaning they derived from group therapy. Participants were able to utilize the art process not only to better understand past experiences, but also to consider alternatives for the future.

The curriculum developed for this study incorporating restorative justice principles in an art therapy group process was successful. The curriculum provided a bridge between the two methods. Based on previous research indicating that both art therapy and restorative justice programs are beneficial to incarcerated populations, the curriculum would benefit incarcerated participants as well. Because the group members were self-selected from an anger management class, the curriculum may be an effective protocol for working with a similar adolescent population. With further study, this curriculum may serve as the basis for a new treatment modality for juvenile offenders and behavioral disordered adolescents that could aid in reducing incarceration and recidivism rates.

Not only would the developed curriculum be beneficial for incarcerated and anger management populations, but it can be beneficial in school-based programs as well. Utilizing this curriculum in a school-based setting can effectively address peer violence issues within school systems. With further research exploring these issues specifically, this curriculum may serve as the basis for a new treatment modality utilized to decrease instances of adolescent bullying.

Overall, the results of this study indicate that restorative justice principles can be incorporated into the structure of group art therapy. However, some limitations were apparent throughout the process. Utilizing an open group format seemed to negatively affect the group dynamics and perceived safety of participants. A closed group format would likely eliminate some of these issues and allow group cohesion to form. Consistency in group members' attendance would allow participants to continuously build rapport with each other, likely increasing the safety felt within the group on a weekly basis. This may allow participants to feel more able to express themselves openly.

In this study, some group members were research participants and some were not. This seemed to limit the analysis of data in several ways. Not having all group members agree to research participation made the data more difficult to gather and analyze. It was important to maintain the confidentiality of non-research participants and due diligence was taken to ensure that none of their information was included in the research study. However, group members and research participants would respond to each other during discussions and would interact in a variety of ways during the group. Though difficult, it was important to remain neutral and not focus on research participants. In future research studies, willingness to participate in the research may need to be a requirement for group membership.

The findings of this research study have warranted additional research questions. Future research may include explorations into the efficacy of the curriculum and may include how the curriculum could function in school-based settings. It may also be important to consider the meaning of the ambiguity of offender and victim. Future research should carefully consider the implications of open versus closed groups and keep the

cognitive and emotional developmental levels of participants in mind. This research has opened the door for several future studies and has provided valuable information to the art therapy field.

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Appendix A

Exploring the Development of a Group Art Therapy Program Focused on Understanding Behavior

1. I understand that this project is about creating art about my behavior, understanding my feelings, making friendships, learning about others, and learning how to make informed decisions about my behavior. I understand that I will make art about these topics.

2. I have been asked to be a part of a project because I am a youth and I have completed the anger management group at The Boys and Girls Club of Venice.

3. I will be making art about my behavior, interacting with others, and talking about what helps me make better behavior choices. I will be making art with my peers and we will talk about what we made.

4. If I am a part of this group, I might feel uncomfortable talking about my artwork with others.

5. If I am a part of this group, I might learn more about my own behaviors and how I can make better behavior choices.

6. If I am a part of this group, my artwork might be photographed to help the art therapist running the group to understand more about me. Jenna has explained that her research will be published and available through search engines on the internet. Any marks on it that tell who I am will be covered or erased.

7. Unless I am over 18, my parents or guardians have to say it is OK for me to be in the group. After they decide, I get to choose if I want to do it too. If I do not want to be in the group, no one will be mad at me. If I want to be in the group now and change my mind later, that is OK. I can stop at any time.

8. If I have questions about this group, I can talk to Paige Asawa at (310) 338-4562.

9. I understand that if I have any further questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may contact David Hardy, Ph.D. Chair, Institutional Review Board, 1 LMU Drive, Suite 3000, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles CA 90045-2659 (310) 258-5465, david.hardy@lmu.edu.

10. By signing this form, I acknowledge that will also get a copy for myself to keep.

Participant's Name:_____

Participant's Signature:_____ Date:_____

Witness's Signature:_____ Date:_____

Informed Consent Form

Exploring the Development of a Group Art Therapy Program Focused on Understanding Behavior

1. I hereby authorize Jenna Walters to include my child in the following research study: Exploring the Development of a Group Art Therapy Program Focused on Understanding Behavior.

2. My child has been asked to participate in an 8 week long research project that is designed to explore the development of an art therapy program focused on understanding behavior.

3. It has been explained to me that the reason for my child's inclusion in this project is because he/she is a youth who would like to understand past behavior.

   I understand that if my child is a participant, he/she will engage in a variety of experiences, including an art therapy group with peers and individual surveys.

   The researchers will facilitate the experiences, direct the art processes, and lead the conversations.

4. These procedures have been explained to me by the researcher, Jenna Walters.

5. I understand that the artwork my child creates will be photographed and copies will possibly be included in reports written about this research. The research report will be published and available through search engines on the internet.

6. I understand that all identifying features of the art will be changed and extensive efforts to maintain confidentiality will be followed.

7. I understand that the study described above may include discussions, art processes, and questions that may stimulate uncomfortable feelings, memories, and issues for my child.

8. I also understand that the possible benefits of the study for my child are an increased understanding of behavior and an increased capacity to make informed decisions.

9. I understand that Dr. Paige Asawa, who can be reached at (310) 338-7646 or Paige.Asawa@lmu.edu, will answer any questions I may have at any time concerning details of the procedures performed as part of this study.

10. If the study design or the use of the information is to be changed, I will be so informed and my consent re-obtained.

11. I understand that my child and I have the right to refuse to participate in, or to withdraw from this research at any time without prejudice to my relationship with Loyola Marymount University, The Boys and Girls Club of Venice, or anyone involved with this research.

12. I understand that circumstances may arise which might cause the investigator to terminate my child's participation before the completion of the study.

13. I understand that no information that identifies me or my child will be released without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.

14. I understand that my child and I have the right to refuse to answer any question that we may not wish to answer.

15. I understand that in the event of research related injury, compensation and medical treatment are not provided by Loyola Marymount University or The Boys and Girls Club of Venice.

16. I understand that if I have any further questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may contact David Hardy, Ph.D. Chair, Institutional Review Board, 1 LMU Drive, Suite 3000, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles CA 90045-2659 (310) 258-5465, david.hardy@lmu.edu.

17. In signing this consent form, I acknowledge receipt of a copy of the form, and a copy of the "Subject's Bill of Rights".

Participant's Name:_____

Participant's Signature:_____ Date:_____

Participant is a minor (age _____), or is unable to sign because _____.

Parent/Guardian Name:_____

Parent/Guardian Signature:_____ Date:_____

Appendix B

Pre-Survey

Please answer each question.

1. How old are you?

☐ 13 ☐ 16
☐ 14 ☐ 17
☐ 15 ☐ 18

2. How do you identify your gender?

☐ Male
☐ Female

3. Have you ever been through the legal system?

☐ Yes
☐ No

4. Have you ever engaged in physically or verbally aggressive behavior?

☐ Yes
☐ No

5. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being least intense and 10 being most intense, how would you rate your aggressive behaviors over the course of the last two months?

_____ Physical Aggression
_____ Verbal Aggression

6. How often do you feel that your behaviors escalate to aggression?

	Never	Less than Once a Month	Once a Month	2-3 Times a Month	Once a Week	2-3 Times a Week	Daily
How often do you feel that your anger escalates to aggression?	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. When you engage in aggressive behaviors, how often is your behavior the result of someone else provoking you?
☐ Always
☐ Most of the Time
☐ Sometimes
☐ Rarely
☐ Never

8. Can you identify at least one specific situation in which your behavior negatively impacted another person?
☐ Yes
☐ No

9. Consider a specific instance in which your behavior negatively impacted another person. In the space below, list the ways, if any, that your behavior may have impacted that person?

10. Have you ever received individual therapy services?
☐ Yes
☐ No

11. If you answered yes to question 10: On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being the least helpful and 10 being the most helpful, how would you rate your experience in individual therapy?
_____ Individual Therapy

12. Have you ever received group therapy services?
☐ Yes
☐ No

13. If you answered yes to question 12: On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being the least helpful and 10 being the most helpful, how would you rate your experience in group therapy?
_____ Group Therapy

14. Have you ever received art therapy services?
☐ Yes
☐ No

15. If you answered yes to question 14: On a scale from 1 to 10, with 1 being the least helpful and 10 being the most helpful, how would you rate your experience in art therapy?
_____ Art Therapy

Post-Survey

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being least intense and 10 being most intense, how would you rate your aggressive behaviors over the course of the last two months?
_____ Physically Aggressive
_____ Verbally Aggressive

2. How often do you feel that your behaviors escalate to aggression?

	Never (1)	Less than Once a Month (2)	Once a Month (3)	2-3 Times a Month (4)	Once a Week (5)	2-3 Times a Week (6)	Daily (7)
How often do you feel that your behaviors escalate to aggression?	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍	❍

3. When you engage in aggressive behaviors, how often is your behavior the result of someone else provoking you?
❍ Always
❍ Most of the Time
❍ Sometimes
❍ Rarely
❍ Never

4. Can you identify at least one situation in which your behavior negatively impacted another person?
❍ Yes
❍ No

5. Consider a specific instance in which your behavior negatively impacted another person. In the space below, list the ways, if any, that your behavior may have impacted that person?

6. On a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being least helpful and 10 being most helpful, how would you rate your group art therapy experience?
_____ Helpfulness of Group Art Therapy

7. Which topic did you find most helpful?
- ❍ Self-Monitoring
- ❍ Exploring previous behavior
- ❍ Empathy
- ❍ Effect of behavior on self and others
- ❍ Taking responsibility
- ❍ Coping mechanisms/future behavior

8. Which topic did you find the least helpful?
- ❍ Self-Monitoring
- ❍ Exploring previous behavior
- ❍ Empathy
- ❍ Effect of behavior on self and others
- ❍ Taking responsibility
- ❍ Coping mechanisms/future behavior

9. Would you recommend group art therapy to your friends?
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

10. Use the space below to add any comments or thoughts about your experience in group art therapy and about the material discussed.

Appendix C

Restorative Justice Group Art Therapy Curriculum

Session 1

- **Topic:** Introductions and Self-Regulating: Knowing when to take a time out
- **Psychoeducation:** Teach relaxation, self-soothing, breathing, and self-regulation techniques.
- **Art Task:** Participants are asked to write their name on a piece of paper and embellish the letters with things that represent them. (Name tags)

Session 2

- **Topic:** Exploring behavior – What is behavior? Have you ever experienced someone acting hostile, verbally or physically, towards you?
- **Psychoeducation:** Discuss cognitive triangle of thoughts/underlying beliefs/behavior. Discuss behavior in a general sense and educate participants about de-escalating and self-monitoring techniques from previous session.
- **Art Task:** Participants are asked to look through a collage box of images to find one that depicts an act of aggression. They are instructed to include thought bubbles and feeling bubbles to explain how they think the offender and the victim in the picture are thinking and feeling.

Session 3

- **Topic:** Effects of behavior – How can behavior affect others emotionally? Physically?
- **Psychoeducation:** Educate participants about the effects of behavior and aggression, both long term and short term.
- **Art Task:** Participants are asked to create the "next scene" showing a short term effect and then another scene with the long term effect of the interaction depicted in their previous collage. Participants are asked to use thought and feeling bubbles to explain how they think the offender and the victim in the scenes are thinking and feeling.

Session 4

- **Topic:** Exploring previous behavior – Has your behavior ever negatively impacted another person?
- **Psychoeducation:** Educate participants about the James-Lange theory of emotion. Often it is one's interpretation of physical arousal that leads to emotion.
- **Art Task:** Participants are asked to create a comic strip depicting a situation in which they acted aggressively or in which their behavior negatively impacted another person. Participants are asked to depict what happened before and what happened during the incident. Participants are asked to create the "next scene" showing a short term effect and then another scene with the long term effect of the interaction. Participants are instructed to include thought and feeling bubbles to explain how they were and how they think the victim of their behavior was thinking and feeling during the incident.

Session 5

- **Topic:** Sharing narratives – Empathy
- **Psychoeducation:** Teach techniques related to empathic responding.
- **Art Task:** Participants are asked to share their comic strips created in the previous week. Participants are then asked to respond to another person's story by creating an art piece based on their own immediate reaction and based on empathy (what it might be like "to be in the other person's shoes").

Session 6

- **Topic:** Effects of behavior – Can making a choice to respond differently change the effects of your behavior?
- **Psychoeducation:** Educate participants about choices and subsequent consequences and about the power of taking control of one's own behavior. Discuss the choice and aggression cycle.
- **Art Task:** Participants are asked to draw their own version of the aggression cycle. Participants are asked to use a previous experience (perhaps the one depicted in their comic strip) to inform their image of the aggression cycle.

Session 7

- **Topic:** Taking Responsibility – What does it mean to take responsibility for your actions?
- **Psychoeducation:** Educate clients on the healing and transformative power of taking responsibility for themselves and the idea that participants can only control their own behavior. Review the choice and aggression cycle.
- **Art Task:** Participants are asked to review their own version of the aggression cycle. Participants are asked to focus on the choices and alternative coping strategies that they may employ using a previous experience (perhaps the one depicted in their comic strip) to inform their image of the coping mechanisms.

Session 8

- **Topic:** Closing and future behavior – How can this process or things that you have learned here inform your future behavior?
- **Psychoeducation:** Educate clients on decision-making and the importance of making better behavioral choices.
- **Art Task:** Participants are asked to use their comic strip created in session four. Using flaps of paper, participants are asked to explore alternative behaviors and outcomes of the behavioral choice depicted in their comic strip.

Appendix D

Cycle of Choice