

Application of Expressive Origami Therapy for Children

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Expressive Origami Therapy (EOT: former Enrichment Origami Art Therapy) was formulated by Toshiko Kobayashi in early 2000 while she was studying art therapy. The conceptualization of origami as a powerful tool of therapy was through her life experience of living abroad with her children. Visiting refugee camps in Palestine, Township in South Africa, Orphanages in Morocco, Peru, and Algeria to facilitate origami workshops made Toshiko firmly believed in therapeutic efficacies of origami.

Origami has several advantages as a safe and accessible in terms of materials. It only requires a piece of paper and fingertips to manipulate. In origami activities, primary senses are used to make your brain active, while it serves well beyond vision, physical, mental, and psychological disadvantages.

One of the main focuses of Toshiko's presentation is a potential of creative processes of new approach to origami as a therapeutic tool in educational, communal, and family settings. Next is to examine its possibility as an expressive activity does not limited under cultural confinement due to its geometric nature. At the end several practical ideas and applications of therapeutic use of origami will be introduced alongside the group and individual case samples. These origami projects are easily adapted to the children of different developmental stages and their individual needs. As well as children at risk, origami will be used as a safe and non-threatening modality.

Toshiko has been applied EOT to wide variety of population in needs regardless of gender and cultural background and its unique potentials have been tested through out the area where she has visited.

Biography

Toshiko Kobayashi, MA, ATR-BC, ATCS, LCAT, is a graduate of the New York University Art Therapy Program. Having experienced the aftermath of the tragic events of 9/11 as a crisis

counselor, her work focuses on the application of art therapy in trauma care. Early artistic influences from her native Japan inspired her highly original fusion of origami and art therapy she calls "Expressive Origami Therapy (EOT)" garnering worldwide interest for its clinically effectiveness in trauma treatment. One of the areas was to explore the application of EOT for the children in needs. In 2003, Toshiko established the Community of Japanese Creative Arts Therapists (CJCAT) which enjoys an expanding membership both in the US and Japan. In 2007 she founded Origami Therapy Association (OTA) in response to the increased interests in her EOT. Based

in Manhattan, from where she directs OTA and CJCAT organizational activities, Toshiko, actively contributes to scholarly publications, orchestrates workshops, and supervises the continuing education of art therapists and art therapy students internationally. She is the former Staff Coordinator of the Trauma Program at Bronx Psychiatric Center where she demonstrated her expertise of Origami Trauma care for in and out patients as well as staff.