

# Occupational and Art Therapy (OAT) collaborative approach: A case study on integrating clinical interventions in a hospice day care setting

Kim Hau Pang<sup>1</sup>, Yi Ren Sheena Low<sup>1</sup> & Tong Jen Lo<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Assisi Hospice, Singapore

<sup>2</sup> Division of Supportive and Palliative Care, National Cancer Centre, Singapore



## Background

An art therapist's application of "art" is normally to enable an individual to gain insights into themselves. Other applications include focusing on a patient's cognitive improvement or creating legacy work for their loved ones in the wake of the patient's demise. In parallel, an occupational therapist application of "art" focuses on promoting occupational engagement to help patients find meaning in the time they spend within a specific environment.

Discussions surfaced between these two disciplines in their common role in patient's care, as well as the collaborative effort in maximising the support to maintain and amplify patient's personhood through similar yet different theoretical framework.

We describe a case study of an occupational therapist (OT) and an art therapist (AT) integrating our interventions to empower a patient by supporting her dignity and personhood.

## Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement, CMOP-E (Townsend, Polatajko & Craig, 2007)

### Person

A 74-year-old Chinese lady with CKD; episode of septic shock resulted in multiple amputation

- over bilateral forearms
- below right knee
- left forefoot

### Occupation

Dependent on helper for ADL and transfers; spends most of her time lying in bed

### Environment

Competent helper, supportive daughter but was very keen for patient to be able to stand and take a few steps with helper's assistance

### Spirituality

Residing within the person, representing the essence of self which is unharmed by any form of illness/disease patient may have.

- = Wants to be less dependent on helper
- = Want others to learn from her "positivity" and "determination"

**Fig.1:** Collaborative goal setting to focus on patient's strength; OT provided universal cuff with an attached paint brush to facilitate engagement in patient's preferred leisure activity



## Conclusion

With the integration of framework from both disciplines through the Occupational and Art Therapy (OAT) collaborative approach, Mdm T's involvement in the creation of her tote bag shows less dependency on helper (Fig.1) and the creative process provided as a space for her to share about her determination and positivity (Fig.2).

OAT can be potentially applied to future practices or to serve as a reference for other clinicians who choose to use "art" as a means of intervention, while meeting the needs of the patient in a collaborative manner.

## References

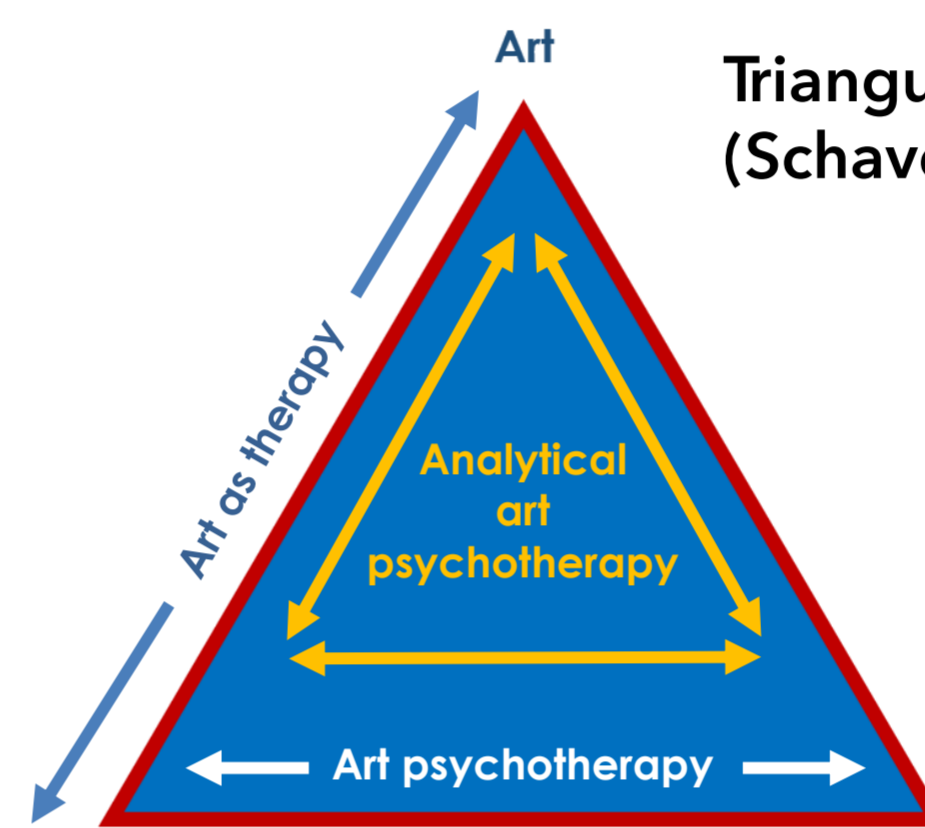
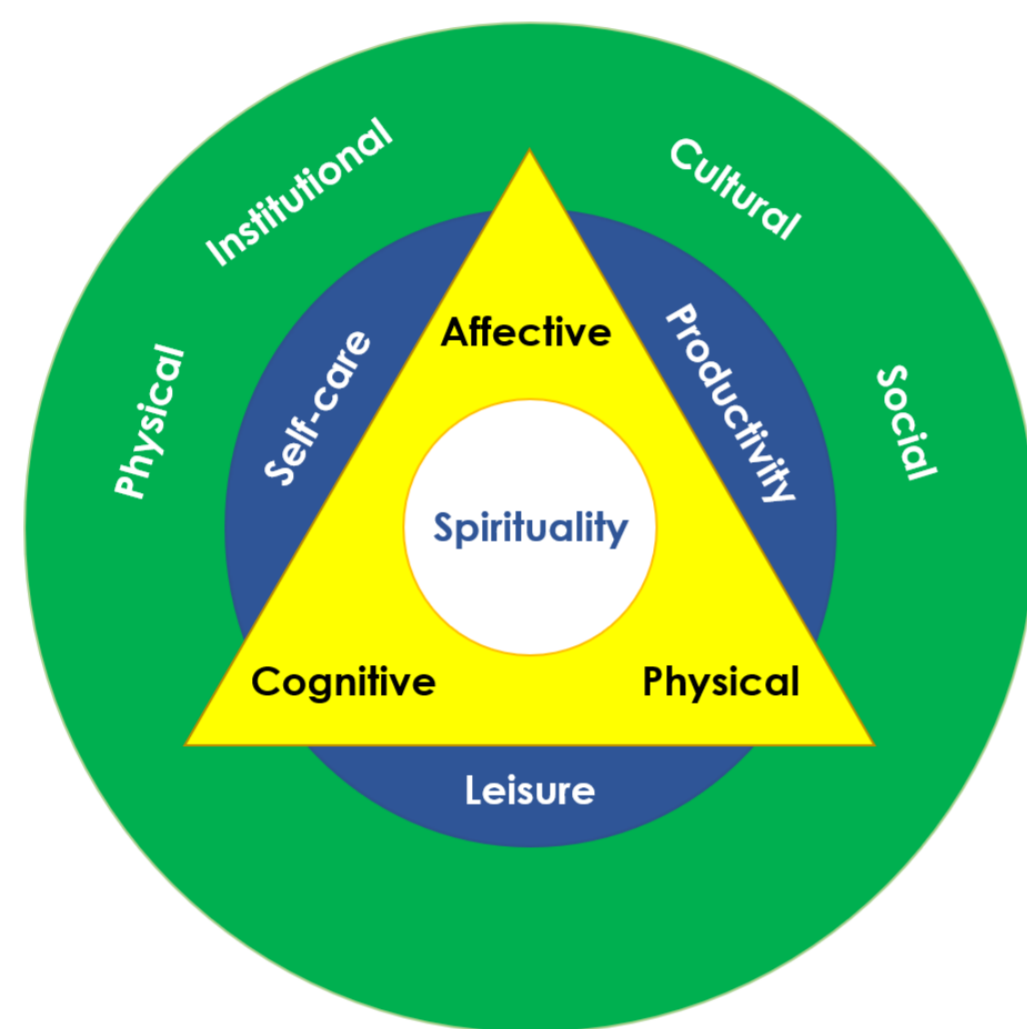
- Ganzon, C., O'Callaghan, C., & Dwyer, J. (2020). "Art on Behalf": Introducing an accessible art therapy approach used in palliative care. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, 67, 101616.
- Hansen, B.W., Erlandsson, L. & Leufstadius, C. (2021). A concept analysis of creative activities as intervention in occupational therapy, *Scandinavian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 28(1), 63-77.
- Kramer, E. (1986). The art therapist's third hand: Reflections on art, art therapy, and society at large. *American Journal of Art Therapy*, 24(3), 71-86.
- Polatajko, H.J., Townsend, E.A. & Craik, J. (2007). Canadian model of occupational performance and engagement (CMOP-E). In *enabling occupation II: Advancing an Occupational Therapy Vision of Health, Well-being, & Justice through Occupation*. Ottawa: CAOT Publications ACE.
- Schaverien, J. (2000). The triangular relationship and the aesthetic countertransferences in analytical art psychotherapy. In Gilroy, A., & McNeilly, G. *The changing shape of art therapy: New developments in theory and practice* (pp. 55-83). London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

## Method

The case study will describe how the therapeutic approaches of art and occupational therapy can be integrated to formulate an intervention for this patient. We describe how each clinician builds on each other's strength to further enable and empower the patient to share the story of her lived experience with "art" through both disciplines.

## Results

Through OAT, the art therapist saw a way for patient's inner world to be seen, and for her to be remembered by others. Looking from a different lens, the occupational therapist identified patient's spirituality needs through the process of art making. Together, both disciplines identified how "art" became a medium to highlight the personhood within the patient.



## Triangular Relationship (Schaverien, 2000)

### During weekly art therapy group,

- Artwork was created based on verbal instructions given by her to her helper and/or the art therapist (AT)
- Although clinical goals focuses on *art as therapy*, Mdm T's participation is still limited to verbal instructions
- Art therapy approaches such as The Third Hand (Kramer, 1986) and Art on Behalf (Ganzon et al., 2020) presented limitations during this phase

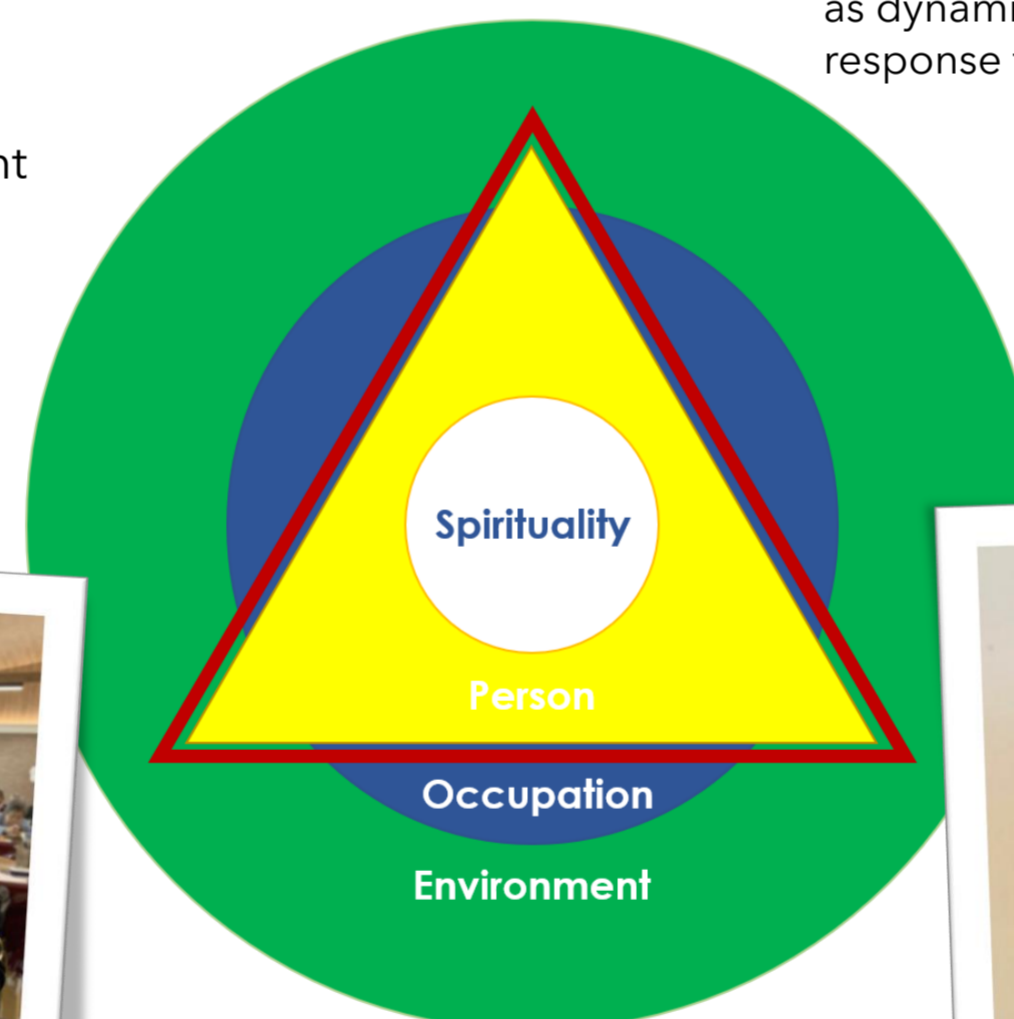
Person Art Therapist

### Explanation of terms used

- *Art as therapy*: art making process as healing agent through sublimation
- *Art psychotherapy*: art materials to illuminate person's unconscious mind
- *Analytical art psychotherapy*: the triangle as dynamic space, including AT's response to artwork produced

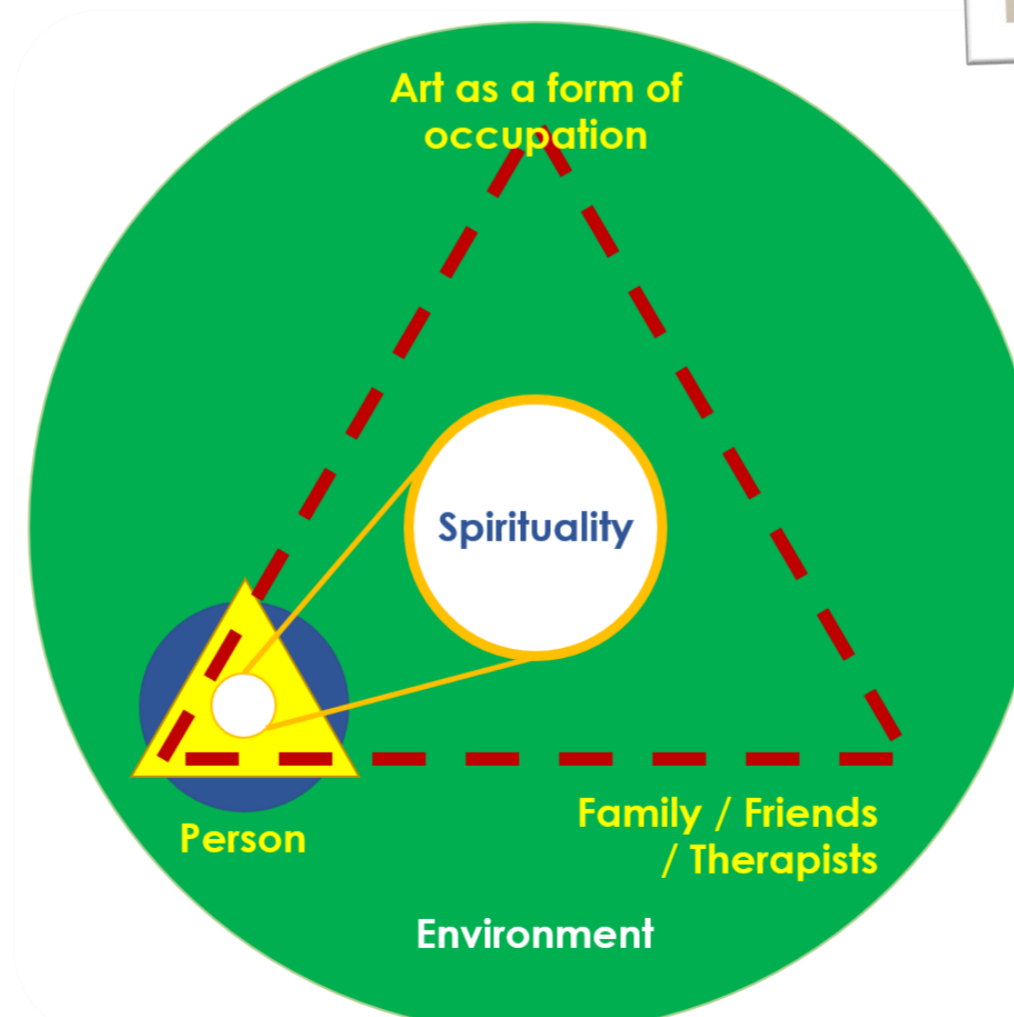
### The best of both worlds

- Intervention by occupational therapist (OT) in the use of adaptive aid during weekly art group allowed for Mdm T's active participation and amplified her personhood through the clinical goals set for art therapy group engagement



**Fig.2:** Tote bags done by Mdm T. This became her way of giving back to Assisi Hospice through fundraising efforts from sale of the bags.

AT applied 'art-on-behalf' (Ganzon et al., 2020) approach where artwork is created based on Mdm T's preferred design and message. Sessions working on tote bag designs were facilitated in-person, with layout done in a digital graphic software.



## Occupational and Art Therapy (OAT) collaborative approach

### Through the OAT approach,

- Spirituality remain as the core
- Art becomes a form of occupation
- Person continues to engage with art making through *art as therapy*
- Role of therapist gets surrogated by family / friends of person; therapist still holding the space
- Environment continues to be container