



What is Expressive Arts?

Visual art, movement, writing, music, drama, and other creative processes combine and interact to bring about growth, healing, and wellness.

- Expressive Arts is for everyone. You were born with an innate human capacity to be creative.
- Expressive Arts does not require art training or “talent” in art.
- Expressive Arts is about working with your creative process and following it where it leads you.
- Expressive Arts consciously invites the power of creativity to change lives, both individually and in community.
- Expressive Arts is not limited to one art modality, just as our creativity does not limit itself to a single art form.
- Expressive Arts is about being mindful, entering a state of relaxation and flow, bringing balance to your life.
- Expressive Arts is more about the process of being creative than the product that results.

Benefits of Expressive Arts:

- Self-Awareness
- Relaxation
- Self-Esteem
- Mindfulness
- Presence
- Connection
- Balance
- Personal Growth
- Joy
- Authenticity
- Healing
- And more!

“Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time.”

~Thomas Merton



Expressive Arts Florida Institute and Guiding Principles

We are a collaborative team of three women. We provide workshops, classes, consulting, and a certificate training program in Intermodal Expressive Arts. We are honored to share this exciting work with you. We do this by holding these beliefs:

- We believe in the positive power of creativity in every person.
- We believe that creative practice serves health and wellness.
- We believe in the holistic nature of Expressive Arts, as it engages the whole person - body/mind/spirit.
- We embrace the practice of an Intermodal or Integrative Arts approach.
- We believe that the creative process and art-making itself is healing and transformational.
- Our approach to interpersonal Expressive Arts work is that of “bearing witness”, so that the person, group, or community may see him/her/itself more clearly and discover new possibilities for healing.
- Our focus is on the health-giving nature of Expressive Arts.
- We believe that Expressive Arts can be practiced ethically and effectively in a wide variety of settings by a wide variety of trained practitioners.
- We believe in, and practice, an experiential learning approach, supplemented by readings, presentations, and written and arts-based assignments.
- We believe that it is essential for the practitioner of Expressive Arts to be engaged in their own personal Expressive Arts practice.
- We believe in collaborative and community art making as a path to building relationships, community wellness, and social change and planetary healing.
- Our work is grounded in the cycles and lessons of the natural world.
- Our goal is to practice our work within an environmentally sound model that fosters sustainability.



Expressive Arts Guidelines and Ground Rules

- **Confidentiality** (Please share your experience, but not others' experiences.)
- **Acceptance of the imagery** that comes (your own or others). Trust the process and avoid critiquing or interpreting the work. You don't have to be an artist to express yourself creatively. Just be yourself.
- **Ask don't tell** – this means do not interpret anyone's art for them. "Can you tell me about your image?" Also allow your own images to speak for themselves – they will teach you.
- **Be a witness, not an interpreter.** Bearing witness is a powerful way to be present, both for yourself and for others. It means just pay attention to what you notice. You do not have to fix anything,
- **Respect boundaries**, both others' and your own. Sharing should be related to the art process. Check yourself for the appropriate level of sharing, and don't push others to share more than is right for them.
- **Art can take us to deep places.** Be aware of this, for yourself, and for others. As a general rule, don't ask anyone else to engage in a process if you haven't first tried it yourself.
- Be aware of **"simmering" time**. It may take a while for the images you create to make themselves known to you. Keep them around, look at them, let their messages unfold.
- **Trust the process.** Approaching art-making from an inner place leads to authentic, and sometimes very powerful, imagery. Sometimes you will "like it"; sometimes you won't. This is not about creating "pleasing" or "pretty" art. Whatever comes is right. Understanding will follow.
- **Relax.** If you find yourself getting tense while making art (clenched jaw, overactive inner critic, etc), take a few breaths, stand up, move around a bit, close your eyes, focus on your heart, switch to your non-dominant hand.

Step1: In This Moment



Time: 10 -25 minutes

Materials: sketchbook, pastels, pen or pencil

Purpose: tuning in, becoming present

Either listen to the audio provided, or simply read these instructions to yourself a couple of times first, and then proceed.

Sit comfortably and let your eyes close or soften. Simply notice your breath for a minute or two. Allow your attention to move inside and be aware of your inner experience in this moment. Notice the qualities of the moment – notice emotions and sensations. Just breathe and notice for a minute or so.

Open your eyes and let them come to rest on your paper and materials. Without pausing or thinking, let your hand choose the first color that attracts you. Make a mark of any kind on your page. No need to think about it. Let one mark, one color, lead to another. Continue mark-making for 8-10 minutes not worrying about what it looks like. Keep going until you feel complete.

Sit back and look at your image. Notice what you see and feel.

Write down the first word or phrase that comes into your mind.

Optional explorations:

- ≈ Look at your image from different orientations - upside down, sideways, etc. Do you see anything you did not see before?
- ≈ Stand up and gaze at your image. Allow your body to respond to its lines, shapes, and colors. Move in response to what you see and feel. Continue until you feel complete.
- ≈ Write in response

Journal: Make a note of anything you learned.

This is an excerpt from “Ten Steps to a Personal Expressive Arts Practice” which is available on Kindle. We offer this to you as a gift called “Step In” on our website. It is a mindfulness practice for you that also helps when working with others.



Template for adapting to other curriculum areas using Expressive Arts:

1. What is your goal or objective?
2. Is this objective best served using the whole group, dyad or individual process? Is your goal Intra-personal exploration, interpersonal (relationship) exploration of group dynamics, community building, or?
3. What modalities would be best used to reach your goal or teach your objective?
4. Availability and types of materials. What materials do you have for this process?
5. Time – how much do you have?
6. Age of your students/participants
7. Physical Ability of your students
8. Cognitive Ability of your students
9. Social ability/emotional stability of students
10. Physical properties of space e.g. tables, type of floor, space for movement, proximity of sink, proximity to restrooms, degree of privacy, etc.

Other considerations:

1. It is helpful to introduce a concept or objective in the whole group
2. Allow individuals time to process the idea, interpret and analyze information on their own
3. Use words – in poetry form or creative writing to synthesize experience for the individual
4. Bring it back to the group to share, respond, and process – this allows for each person to expand his or her understanding as well as express his or her unique perspective and be witnessed/heard. It also allows you a chance to assess what was learned and where clarification is still needed.

Florida State Standards

Arts integration is an approach to teaching that integrates the fine and performing arts as primary pathways to learning. Arts integration differs from traditional education by its inclusion of both the arts discipline and a traditional subject as part of learning (e.g. using improvisational drama skills to learn about conflict in writing.) The goal of arts integration is to increase knowledge of a general subject area while concurrently fostering a greater understanding and appreciation of the fine and performing arts. The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts defines arts integration as "an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject and meets evolving objectives."

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arts_integration

1. Science - Water cycle – Grades 9-12 or States of Matter Grade 2
 - a. SC.912.E.7.1: Analyze the movement of matter and energy through the different biogeochemical cycles, including water and carbon.
 - b. SC.2.P.8.4: Observe and describe water in its solid, liquid, and gaseous states.
 - c. VA.912.H.3
 - i. [VA.912.H.3.1](#): Synthesize knowledge and skills learned from non-art content areas to support the processes of creation, interpretation, and analysis.
 - ii. [VA.912.H.3.2](#): Apply the critical-thinking and problem-solving skills used in art to develop creative solutions for real-life issues.
 - iii. [VA.912.H.3.3](#): Use materials, ideas, and/or equipment related to other content areas to generate ideas and processes for the creation of works of art.
 - d. TH.912.S.2
 - i. [TH.912.C.1.1](#) Devise an original work based on a global issue that explores various solutions to a problem.
2. Reading comprehension - Story structure (cause/effect) Grade 4
 - a. LAFS.4.RI.2.5: Describe the overall structure (e.g., chronology, comparison, **cause/effect**, problem/solution) of events, ideas, concepts, or information in a text or part of a text.
 - b. VA.4.S.1.2 Explore and use media, technology, and other art resources to express ideas visually.
 - c. DA.4.H.3.1 Create a dance with student-selected components from other content areas and/or personal interests.
 - d. DA.4.H.3.2 Use improvisation and movement studies to explore concepts from other content areas.
3. Mathematics – Fractions Grade 1
 - a. MAFS.1.G.1.3: Partition circles and rectangles into two and four equal shares, describe the shares using the words halves, fourths, and quarters, and use the phrases half of, fourth of, and quarter of. Describe the whole as two of, or four of the shares. Understand for these examples that decomposing into more equal shares creates smaller shares.



- b. MU.1.S.3.4 Match simple aural rhythm patterns in duple meter with written patterns.
- c. DA.1.H.3.1 Perform movement that infuses music, language, and numbers.
- d. DA.1.O.3.1 Create movement phrases to express a feeling, idea, or story.
- e. VA.1.H.3.1 Identify connections between visual art and other content areas.

4. Social studies – Grade 7 Civics First Amendment Rights

- a. SS.7.C.2.5: Distinguish how the Constitution safeguards and limits individual rights.
Belongs to: *Evaluate the roles, rights, and responsibilities of United States citizens*, and determine methods of active participation in society, government, and the political system.
- b. SS.7.C.2.4: Evaluate rights contained in the Bill of Rights and other amendments to the Constitution.
- c. VA.68.H.3.3 Create imaginative works to include background knowledge or information from other subjects.
- d. VA.68.H.3.1 Discuss how knowledge and skills learned through the art-making and analysis processes are used to solve problems in non-art contexts.
- e. TH.68.C.1.5 Describe how a theatrical activity can entertain or instruct an audience.
- f. DA.68.H.3.1 Demonstrate response and reaction, through movement sequences, to various sources of inspiration.
- g. LAFS.7.SL.1.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 7 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.



Resources

For more information regarding Expressive Arts, please feel free to contact me at tamara@expressiveartsflorida.com

Expressive Arts Florida Institute – Offering a Certificate Training Program in Expressive Arts
<http://www.expressiveartsflorida.com/>

Florida State Standards: <http://www.cpalms.org/Public/search/Standard#0>
<http://www.floridastudents.org/>

Kennedy Center “ArtsEdge”: resource for arts integration with different arts modalities
<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/how-to/series/arts-integration/arts-integration>