

Short Reports

ART AND MEDICINE

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What is the meaning of art, what is its true purpose? Artists express their emotional world through art, and a spectator or a reader let "this world" pass through the realm of their sensuality. The specifics of art lie in perceptible and image-bearing nature. Art is a sphere of feelings and sentiments of a person in the form of their direct experience. The carriers of emotions in art are images and symbols, which are organized and visualized in material of certain forms. Art approaches the phenomena and objects, not merely for the purpose of representing them, but for raising emotions to stir up feelings a person's soul. All of its products, that is, works of art, are meant to be perceived by human organs of sense: eye or ear, and it is the senses that also help grasp the meaning and contents of an artistic work.

What art influences directly are feelings, and through the human feelings and soul it makes an impact on the personality itself. [1]

Through feelings, the art reaches the inner world of a human being, inspires him and makes us humane, creates a Personality within a person. Art can bring up and develop a personality and, as a result, solve pedagogical and psychological problems. Moreover, art is a psychotherapeutic remedy for a soul, a means of psychological and psychic relief. It is here that art can assist medicine.

The question of the relationship between art and medicine is not new. Now the science of bioaesthetics has arisen. Bioaesthetics is a synthesis of biology, medicine and philosophy (aesthetics as a philosophy of beauty and art). There was a new paradigm of cognition, and from it we had to reconsider the fundamental categories of aesthetics. Art therapy is a part of bioaesthetics. [2]

The object of art-therapy is human mind, that is, the emotional world of a human being, a human soul. Here one can clearly see the sensual and image-bearing nature of art. Art can purify the sensual world (catharsis), and correct its orientation. Through art-therapy, psychical and psychological disorders can be diagnosed and cured.

The therapeutic influence of visual arts is exercised through colour, lines and volume. The patient reproduces their feelings directly through the colour scale and shapes in their works. The viewing of a well-selected picture collection on a certain subject can raise the patient's spirits, make them optimistic, reduce nervous tension, relieve fatigue. F. Schelling, the German philosopher, asserted that geometrical forms influence a person's emotions. "A straight line can symbolize brutality, a curved line can stand for flexibility, an elliptic horizontal line – for tenderness, a wavy line – for life" [3, P. 230, 248]. But the strongest psychotherapeutic influence is achieved through colour. The colors chosen by the patient, can show the internal emotions. S. Rubinstein, a Russian psychologist, wrote about the in-

fluence of colour upon a person: "Red colour excite, tee are warm, lively, active, cheerful; yellow colour calm, they offer a comfortable feeling; blue is peaceful, sad, quiet" [4, P. 237.]. Art helps decode symbols (colour, forms, perspective) so that one can find hidden meanings, interpret its "subconscious" aspects.

A special place in art-therapy is given to music. It is common-place that music appeals to the human feelings directly. Music therapy activates emotions in interpersonal relations, offers facilities for the patients social activity. B. Karvasarsky, a Russian psychiatrist, suggests a specific programme of music psychotherapy [5, P. 126.].

The success of art-therapy owes to the fact that different kinds of art are connected with different functions of the brain. So, instrumental music activates the right cerebral hemisphere, reciting a poem sets the left hemisphere to work, and singing a song, consequently, is a task for both hemispheres. Knowing that depression attacks the left hemisphere, doctors can apply art-therapy to the patients who need it.

Libro-psychotherapy or "curing by means of reading" was introduced by a Russian physiologist B.M. Bekhterev. The use of specially selected books helps exert a considerable impact over the emotional state of a person while using minimal efforts. In some cases book draws the reader's attention away from bad influences and direct their energies to reaching positive goals, saves from boredom, arouse a thirst for knowledge. In other cases, books make the reader revise the whole life of their, not only change their attitude to certain things, but their behavior in general. For example, psychoasthenics are advised to read Chekhov, L. Tolstoy, and Pushkin, while works by G.Sand, Bunin are best for hysterical psychopaths. [6, P. 189]

To combat the effects of being over-strained, "theater-therapy" is recommended. The use of the "Stanislavsky system" methods in psychotherapy allows expansion of the human mind's domination over emotions and instincts.

Thus, art in art-therapy reforms psychic disorders of a person, without disturbing the individuality "the I" and still allowing indeed facilitating a means of forming a perfect personality. While influencing emotions, art, having a perceptible and image-bearing character, activates the thoughtful feeling, and enriches the emotional world of a person as well as their mind. Art does not solely have a therapeutic impact upon a human being it makes them humane and puts the chaos of their feelings into a system, where they become reasonable emotions.

References

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