

## Benefits of Film Making in Therapy

LePage, P., & Courey, S. (2011). Filmmaking: a video-based intervention for developing social skills in children with autism spectrum disorder. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Teaching and Learning*, Vol. 1 (2). Retrieved from: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1055563.pdf>

**San Francisco State University** conducted a study on *video-based intervention for developing social skills for children with autism* by using video production in an inclusion program that uses reverse inclusion strategy to help teach these students social skills. This study explored how film-making can be used to help children who have struggles with social interactions and learning social skills in an artistic ways to help make students feel included and help create social skills. For this study, video modeling was used as an effective teaching method for specific targeted social skills by having students watch social situations and reflect on those behaviors before then reenacting what they feel those social situations should look like in the context of a movie. This study followed the steps of targeting behaviors, identifying target skills to be learned, the video production which included script and filming, and implementing the video modeling into the intervention.

Findings from this study showed that using video making in a controlled environment with instructors allowed children with autism to learn communication, collaboration and interactions with peers, and how to deal with the anger and frustration that can arise from group work. Findings also showed that students with autism were able to build confidence in their strengths and skills, and helped their non-autistic peers also learn how to better understand themselves.

Haraldsdottir, E. (2017). Enhancing openness around death and dying through documentary film-making in a hospice. *European Journal of Palliative Care*, Vol. 24 (6). Retrieved from: <http://eds.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.memphis.edu/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=67e4e8af-df36-4384-ae4c-9f37c8ac955e%40sessionmgr4010>

**St. Columbia's Hospice** conducted an observational study on styles of nurse-patient engagements in hospice settings and highlighted *how to enhance openness around death and dying through documentary film-making*. This article highlighted a creative method to using film in therapy by creating a documentary in a hospice center to help residents be able to express their stories in a creative method to help support and create an authentic and humanistic experience to death and dying. Individuals involved in the documentary were excited to be able to share their stories in a positive light and be able to tell their hopes, dreams, and insight on how they live their lives even with the weight of their diseases.

Results from the study showed that individuals were able to use the film-making process to help bring positive experiences into the death and dying experience, and help foster deeper human connections and positive achievements in the last stage of life. Screening the film also fostered community and support for the families and individuals in the film, and were able to honor those in the film who had already died in a positive and healthy way.

Capstick, A., & Ludwin, K. (2015). Place memory and dementia: findings from participatory film-making in long-term social care. *Health & Place*, Vol. 34, 157-163. Retrieved from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com.ezproxy.memphis.edu/science/article/pii/S1353829215000787?>

**The University of Bradford** conducted a study on film-making as a therapeutic intervention in relation to *place memory and dementia*. Recent studies on dementia have shifted to focus on environments that individuals with dementia are able to better understand where they are and to

draw on aspects of their past in order to help them process where they are. Many of the themes that were explored in the films individuals created centered around the individual's early life and resulted in form of video autobiographies that drew on content from participant observations, fieldnotes, and recordings of conversations had with the participants. The resulting films showed that the film-making process helped individuals to be able to identify a particular place which was the starting point of their narratives, and were able to reflect on places with positive memories and work through difficult memories often associated with individual who grew up in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Findings from the study showed that individuals were able to use the place memory strategy during the film-making process to help work through memories that were difficult in order to learn to cope with their current situation. The film-making process helped individuals to work through feelings of their current situation by taking a whole life approach that put events they experienced into perspective.

Johnson, J., & Alderson, K. (2008). Therapeutic filmmaking: an exploratory pilot study. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, Vol. 35, 11-19. Retrieved from:

[https://ac.els-cdn.com/S0197455607000718/1-s2.0-S0197455607000718-main.pdf?\\_tid=c82b22b8-0de4-11e8-ae620000aacb35f&acdnat=1518213878\\_aecf83b0e4853455a74465916ae1369a](https://ac.els-cdn.com/S0197455607000718/1-s2.0-S0197455607000718-main.pdf?_tid=c82b22b8-0de4-11e8-ae620000aacb35f&acdnat=1518213878_aecf83b0e4853455a74465916ae1369a)

**The University of Calgary** conducted a study on *exploring a new type of therapy known as therapeutic filmmaking* and its affect on individuals from a psychological perspective. This study aimed to look at the effect that therapeutic filmmaking had on participant's experiences and to understand how therapeutic filmmaking works and what their experiences were to help make improvements for future clients. Participants were recruited from a post-secondary counseling center, and the study allowed participants to have access to cameras and recording equipment to use to create video projects related to their reasons seeking therapy while also partaking in therapy sessions weekly.

Findings from this study showed that participants were able to grow during the filmmaking process and learned more about themselves and the decisions they wanted to make surrounding relationships and things they wanted in life. Results also helped participants gain a feeling of mastery and accomplishment in learning a new skill and participants expressed they had a positive and enjoyable time making their personal films. Filmmaking also gave participants the opportunity to see themselves in a different light, and to better understand their places in their families and relationships by being able to understand themselves better. This study helped to show the positive effects that filmmaking can have especially when combined with existing psychotherapy, and how filmmaking can be used as its own type of therapeutic intervention as well as be combined with more traditional forms of psychotherapy.