USING ART TO FACILITATE SPIRITUAL EXPLORATION

Kirstin M. Springmeyer, M.Div, BCC

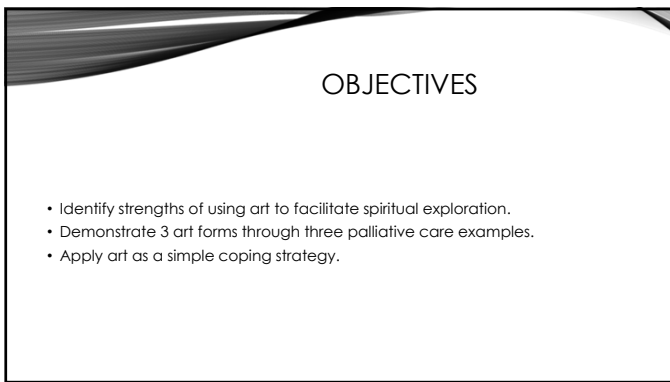## OBJECTIVES

- Identify strengths of using art to facilitate spiritual exploration.
- Demonstrate 3 art forms through three palliative care examples.
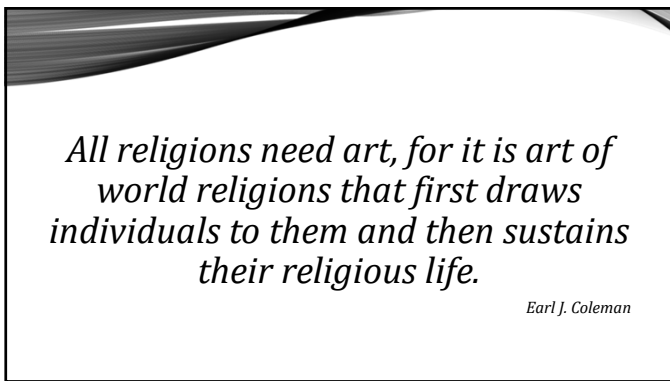- Apply art as a simple coping strategy.

All religions need art, for it is art of world religions that first draws individuals to them and then sustains their religious life.

Earl J. Coleman

WIGIAT???

Where is God in all This?

Meaning Making
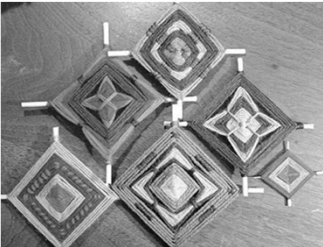

GOD'S EYE

NORAH

Met in the Clinic for weekly visits.

20 yr. old

Multiple relapses of ALL
(Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia)

Began cancer journey at age 9
Currently Palliative Chemo

Photo courtesy of shorthairlooks.com

Faith and Belief

Norah is spiritual and religious
    Religious:
        Attends church, participates in youth group when able.
        Prays twice a day and at meal time.
           Youtube meditation videos.

    Spiritual: meaning of different animals.
        Panther: Strong and can go without food for days.
        Owl: Good luck.

Importance
What is Heaven Like?

Drew a picture:
    Golden Yellow: With God, Jesus, angels
    Pink, yellow, and white flowers
    animals and gold mansions
    a happy place
    a new Jerusalem—I want to go there
    March 2018 "I am scared to die."

Community

Not a lot of friends except for one in youth group.

Calls pastor and sometimes returns calls.

Not in school/ home constantly/ alone.

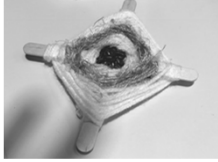Close with mom- enmeshed relationship.

Younger sibling "in trouble" at school.

ADDRESS IN CARE

- **Red:** Blood of Christ.
- **Pink:** Fight for something, beauty, strength, fight for cancer, love through healing, healthy organs.
- **Blue/Green:** health, book of Genesis and the second day of creation. Parting of the sea and land.
- **Gray:** Strong. God is my rock. Build a house on rock not sand.
- **Yellow:** Light.
- **White:** God Almighty and pure.

ARNIE
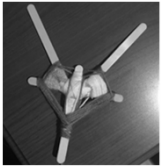
16 yr old
Ewings Sarcoma

Met in outpatient clinic

Houston Hospice

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TRANSFORMING PAIN INTO BEAUTY

Art Empowers Patients:

To fulfill the basic human drive to create to give them a sense of possibility.

Provides a renewed sense of meaning, spiritual reorientation, that can be discovered within the reality of illness.

Enables the heart to speak.

Ettun, Rachel 2014

MORRIS

4 month old

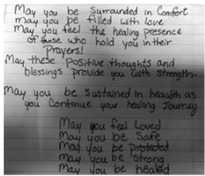Seizure

Hypoxic-Ischemic Encephalopathy

Cerebral Palsy

God's Eye Prayer

May you be Surrounded in Comfort
May you be filled with love
May you feel the healing presence
of those who hold you in their
Prayers!
May these positive thoughts and
blessings provide you with strength.

May you be Sustained in health as
you Continue your healing Journey

May you feel Loved
May you be Safe
May you be Protected
May You be Strong
May You be healed

SACRED SYMBOLS

ENDURANCE

**The sacred symbols
passed to us
in the wisdom traditions of our
ancestors
have given form to our sense
of divine mysteries
that shape the universe.**

Lydia Hess 2015

RYAN

15 yr. old

CP due to anoxic brain injury

Developmental Delay

Seizure disorder

Reason for Admission: pneumonia

5 hospitalizations in the past year
without return to baseline

RYAN'S MOM, ANNA

Initial Meeting

Ryan's likes and dislikes.

Challenges in the past year with his declining health.

Feelings of Isolation after moving from Brazil.

Recent separation from husband.

Faith helps her make meaning of challenges.

Difficulty finding healthy ways to cope.

Photo courtesy of yesmagazine.org

FAITH AND BELIEF

Currently identifies with Baptist Religion and not active.
Raised Catholic until a teenager.
Confirmed in the Methodist church at age 15.

Getting her strength from God.
"God is watching over me during this hospitalization.
Especially since younger siblings are home alone.
I rely on God to lean on when times are hard."

Importance

Relies on God to lean on when times are hard.
isolation, hospitalizations, relationships, adjustment to living in U.S.

Feels guilty because she's not actively praying.
Ryan's "limits my relationship with God."
No time to sit quiet.

Community

Alone (low self-worth)
> Dad travels internationally/currently separated.
> Mom primary caregiver for Ryan and two younger siblings.
>> Ryan attends school.
> Two younger siblings.
> Adjustment from South America to U.S.
> Very successful owner of a salon.
> Housekeepers to help care for Ryan.

Address in Care

Identify expression of spirituality
> means: sacred symbols coloring book

Baptism
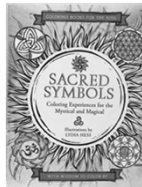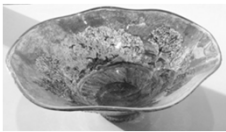
JOURNEY WITH RYAN AND THE UNKNOWN

- Creation
- Cycles
- Harmony
- Union
- Shield
- Ascend
- Dimensions
- Cosmos
- Strength

- Protection
- Awakening
- Endurance
- Interconnection
  - Unity
  - Love
  - Rise
- Life The End

What gives a work its artistic quality and strength is not its obvious subject or message, but rather its power to induce an experience of meaningfulness—its power to make us think and feel.

Danielle Boutet 2008

POETRY

Poetry is one way the soul reveals itself beyond the boundaries of reason and logic.

Poetry slows us down and moves us into a different way of knowing.

Poems express ideas in compact images but also invite us to slow down with those images.

Poetry attends to the "words under the words."

Christine Valters Paintner and Betsey Beckman 2010

CINQUAIN POEMS

A French word for the number 5.

Line 1 (noun)
Line 2 (add two adjectives)
Line 3 (add three verbs)
Line 4 (add a four word phrase that sums up lines 1-3)
Line 5 (one word that refers back to the title of the poem)

Water
Soft Fluid
Running, flowing, swishing
Warm, blessed, alive, new
Baptism

Paula McCutcheon

BABY BOYD

Born premature
Life-limiting
Genetic CACNATa Mutation
          Hypotonia—muscle
weakness
Seizures
Apnea
Feeding difficulties
 Intubated

Photo courtesy of Columbia.com

Faith And Beliefs

Strong Faith in God.
        "I love the Lord with all my heart. I trust him. I get angry at him"

Psalm 7:17
        "I will give to the Lord thanks due to his righteousness. And sing praise to the
                Lord, the Most High."

Story of Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead.

Importance

Her "go to" Bible Verse: Jeremiah 33:3
> "Call to me I and I will answer you, and tell you great and hidden things you have not known."

Wonder what the "great and hidden things" are.
- Boyd, diagnosis, Genetic disorder
- Love for great grandchild
  - making decisions on behalf of granddaughter.
- Pay it forward
- Encounters with other families.

Community

Currently not involved in religious community.
- Feels guilty she has "not gotten into the Word."
- 20+ years ago involved in church and "witnessed to the shelters."
  - misses pastor but stays in contact with his wife.

Support from husband, not biological great grandfather.

She is the support for everyone else in the family.
- grandson's, granddaughter

Feels support from the hospital staff community.

Address

Regular visits introducing her to three art forms to explore faith and spirituality

God's Eye
Sacred Symbols
Cinquain poetry

1 Ocean
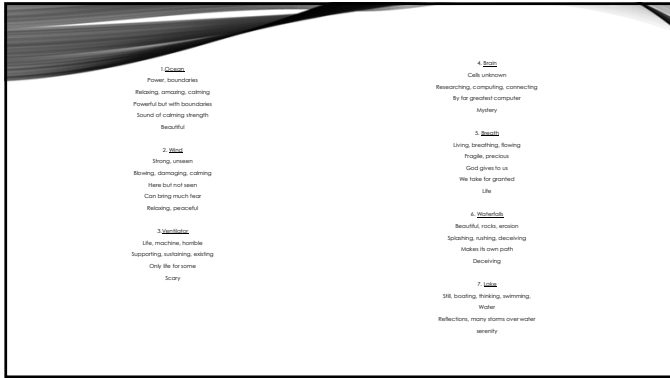Power, boundaries
Relaxing, amazing, calming
Powerful but with boundaries
Sound of calming strength
Beautiful

2. Wind
Strong, unseen
Blowing, damaging, calming
Here but not seen
Can bring much fear
Relaxing, peaceful

3 Ventilator
Life, machine, horrible
Supporting, sustaining, existing
Only life for some
Scary

4. Brain
Cells unknown
Researching, computing, connecting
By far greatest computer
Mystery

5. Breath
Living, breathing, flowing
Fragile, precious
God gives to us
We take for granted
Life

6. Waterfall
Beautiful, rocks, erosion
Splashing, rushing, deceiving
Makes its own path
Deceiving

7. Lake
Still, boating, thinking, swimming,
Water
Reflections, many storms over water
serenity

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