

A Place of their own:

The use of art making and creative interventions
with incarcerated survivors

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Statistics

Sexual abuse to prison pipeline

- Incarcerated females –
- 30 – 50% - mental health issues
 - 75% - relationship violence
 - 75% - addiction issues
 - 85% - earlier sexual assault
 - 60% - low income
 - 60% - have a child under the age of 18

Sexual abuse to prison pipeline

Incarcerated males –

- 1 in 6 males report childhood abuse – (physical & sexual)
- Over 50% report physical abuse or violence
- 1 in 5 incarcerated for drug offences

Trauma

- Results from an event, series of events or set of circumstances experienced by an individual as physically or emotionally harmful or life-threatening with lasting adverse effects on the individual's functioning and mental, physical, social, emotional or spiritual well being.

Trauma to incarceration pipeline

Positive correlation between:

- Trauma/ Sexual abuse
- Mental health issues
- Substance abuse

Trauma history issues that can lead to incarceration

- **Low self esteem**

Trauma history issues that can lead to incarceration

- **Historical/ generational trauma**

Trauma history issues that can lead to incarceration

- **Mental health issues**

Trauma history issues that can
lead to incarceration

- **Poor coping/
addictive behaviors**

Trauma history issues that can
lead to incarceration

- **Gender influenced issues**

Trauma history issues that can
lead to incarceration

- **Unhealthy relationships/
poor social skills/
inability to empathize**

Prisoner Post Traumatic Stress

Dynamics of incarceration that
can increase trauma

- **Real or perceived loss of safety/
loss of control**

Dynamics of incarceration that
can increase trauma

- **Boundary Issues**

Dynamics of incarceration that
can increase trauma

- **Relationship issues**

Dynamics of incarceration that
can increase trauma

- **Suppression of affect**

Dynamics of incarceration that
can increase trauma

- **Altered reactivity and
arousal response**

Dynamics of incarceration that
can increase trauma

- **Altered sense of identity/
sense of self**

Treatment Issues

- Gender responsive – Must address issues related to gender experiences and responses
- Trauma informed care –
Safety, choice, collaboration, trust, empowerment
- Re-entry/ future oriented – skill building
- Sense of community

Advantages of Art Therapy

- Imagery
- Decreased defenses
- Objectification
- Permanence
- Spatial Matrix
- Creative and Physical Energy
(Wadeson, 1980)

Goals of creative interventions with incarcerated populations

- Provide space for safe, non-verbal expression of affect
- Decrease sense of isolation and increase social skills through group participation and interaction
- Increase sense of control through choice making
- Increase sense of mastery and competence
- Increase impulse control and practice boundary setting
- Provide a container for emerging traumatic memories and affect
- Increase self esteem and positive sense of identity















