

ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ALTERED BOOKS

by

Marie Anne Muggeridge

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of St. Stephen's College
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF PSYCHOTHERAPY AND SPIRITUALITY
(ART THERAPY SPECIALIZATION)

© Marie Anne Muggeridge
Fall 2016
Edmonton, Alberta

Permission is hereby granted to St. Stephen's College to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific research purposes only. Where the thesis is converted to, or otherwise made available in digital form, St. Stephen's College will advise potential users of the thesis of these terms.

The author reserves all other publication and other rights in association with the copyright in the thesis and, except as herein before provided, neither the thesis nor any substantial portion thereof may be printed or otherwise reproduced in any material form whatsoever without the author's prior written permission.

I dedicate this thesis to those who to courageously seek to embrace their authentic voice.

ABSTRACT

The following is an Arts Based and Collaborative Inquiry research thesis, in which four female adolescent co-researchers engaged in group sessions to make altered books. The objective of this thesis is to explore the experience of empowerment of young women through creating altered books. The research question is, what happens when young women are given an opportunity to express themselves through the art practice of altered bookmaking? Four sessions of artmaking were held with the co-researchers as a group; subsequently, individuals met privately with the researcher to develop their chapters. The researcher used wit(h)nessed-art making to further investigate the empowerment of female adolescent voice. The findings included several themes: trusting the Spirit and therapeutic relationship, claiming authentic voice and wit(h)nessing spiritual connection.

Key words: altered books, Arts Based Research, art making, Collaborative Inquiry, female adolescents, meaning making, spiritual connection, witnessing

Table of Contents

OPENING	1
CHAPTER 1: RATIONAL, METHODS AND METHODOLOGIES	2
General Statement of the Problem Area	2
The Research Question and Identification of Methodology	2
Researcher’s Personal Interest in the Subject	3
Paradigm, Ontology	6
Research Methodology	8
Research Method Overview	14
Investigational Methods and Procedures	15
Ethical Concerns	19
Definition of Terms	20
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	22
Being Without a Voice	22
Hearing Their Voice	24
Female Adolescents’ Mental Health Issues	30
Expression through Art Making	35
Conclusion	39
FOREWORD TO CO-RESEARCHERS’ CHAPTERS	40
CHAPTER 3: AMANDA	41
CHAPTER 4: ERIN JAEGER	48
CHAPTER 5: LUCY HARTFILIA	55
CHAPTER 6: MIDNIGHT	59

CHAPTER 7: WIT(H)NESSING	70
Session One – <i>The Art Animal</i>	72
Session Two – <i>The Nebulous</i>	75
Session Three – <i>The Protecting Woman</i>	77
Session Four – <i>The Eerie Peace Sign</i>	80
Subsequent Artwork	82
Artwork – <i>The Praying Woman, The Animal and The Self Portrait</i>	83
Artwork – <i>Focusing IN</i>	89
Artwork – <i>Chameleon Eye</i>	94
Artwork – <i>Wit(h)ness</i>	97
Artwork – <i>Light Filled Egg</i>	100
Creative Synthesis	103
CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION	108
Revisiting the Literature	108
Further Topics of Inquiry	112
Areas of Further Application	112
The Affirming Voice	113
Personal Statement	114
REFERENCES	115
APPENDIX A	120
Altered Book Poster	
APPENDIX B	121
Consent Letter for Altered Books Workshop Session	
APPENDIX C	123
Information Handout for St. Mark’s School Staff	

OPENING

The following thesis developed into a personal journey of discovery. I have spent many years in search of a personal means of connecting with the Spirit. It is through my thesis process that I have come to embrace my way of connecting to the Spirit, through art making. Throughout the following thesis, you will witness the transformative power of collaboration, listening and trusting myself and the Spirit that became the focus of my research.

The first chapter outlines the inspiration and motivation for this thesis. Arts Based and a form of Collaborative Inquiry research will be defined as relevant to this research. A full explanation of methods used in the research gathering will also be elaborated. The end of the chapter explains the unique data presentation pertaining to the methodologies employed.

In the second chapter the literature reviewed relates to three major areas of study: being without a voice, female adolescents' knowing and articulating their own voices and mental health issues. Each of these areas studied aided me in developing a deeper understanding of the potential issues the co-researchers may be facing.

The next four chapters were collaboratively created with each co-researcher. Honouring the authenticity of each female's experience, the co-researchers were able to express themselves through their own chapters. I maintained their voices as the predominant feature of the research data, as it is only the co-researchers who can speak their truth.

The seventh chapter is my personal witnessing to the experience of the sessions with the co-researchers. This chapter has deep personal insights which were possible

through the making of authentic art. Through creating this chapter, I have been able to more fully embrace my unique connection to the Spirit which guides me.

CHAPTER 1: RATIONAL, METHODS AND METHODOLOGIES

General Statement of the Problem Area

Researchers have shown that the second leading cause of death for young Canadians is suicide, seen more commonly in female adolescents (Cheung & Dewa, 2007, p. 228). To address this mental health need, therapists can help clients *find their voice* through creative expression. “Artworks tend to potently express feelings” encouraging the voice of the adolescent to be articulated (Moon, 2012, p. 21). Since the adolescent voice is one that can be difficult for adults to hear, and adolescence is a developmental stage that can be very challenging, it is important to provide a creative way to express the adolescent’s inner voice as this is valuable for their mental health. Through expressing one’s voice, suicide can be addressed by encouraging adolescents to freely speak of their needs.

The Research Question and Identification of Methodology

The purpose of this arts-based study is to explore the experience of empowerment of young women through creating altered books. The research question is, what happens when young women are given an opportunity to express themselves through the art practice of altered bookmaking? Sub questions include: How will these young women engage in the opportunity to make altered books? What, if any, stories will be told? How will the voice of the young women be expressed? I recognized that it is very difficult to determine that someone has been empowered because it is personal growth and discovery.

Researcher's Personal Interest in the Subject

During the spring of my BFA third year, I took a drawing class to improve what my professor proclaimed 'poor drawing skills.' The final project for this course was to create an altered book. I was very intrigued by the destruction of a published book in order to breathe new life into a hardback that had been forgotten. I spent hours creating my book, *Child of Fortune* (see Figures 1 & 2).



Figure 1. *Child of Fortune* (details), by M. Muggeridge, 2009



Figure 2. *Child of Fortune* (details), by M. Muggeridge, 2009

This art form called on my patience to create something intricate that required careful planning. The pages, title and cover of the book created a unique and original canvas through which to work. In my final BFA year, I became infatuated with altered books. I would spend my leisure hours perusing the internet looking at images, and I would continually talk about the wonders of this art-making process. A friend sent me a link to a paper and book artist in London, England, Su Blackwell. I was mesmerized by her unique ability to create these wonderful books. I took a chance and emailed her, thinking she was some sort of celebrity whose assistant would write me back, if at all. To my surprise, Su herself, emailed me back and responded to my offer to be an assistant for her in the future. Su suggested September 2010, and so I went. For three months I worked for her creating her visions through paper and books. While in London, I created my second altered book, *London is Invincible*. (See Figures 3 & 4)

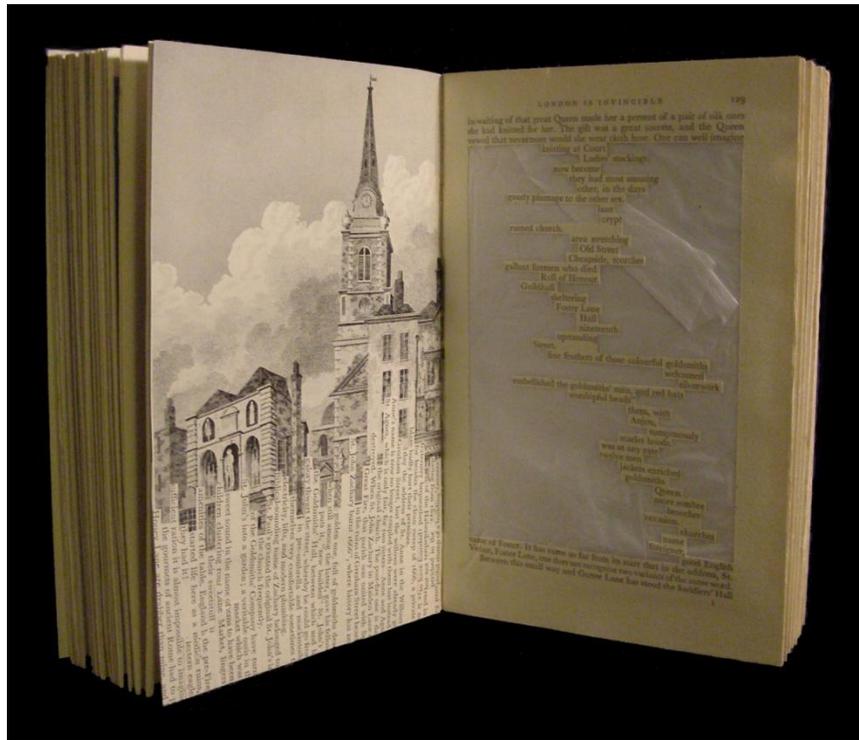


Figure 3. *London is Invincible* (detail) by M. Muggeridge, 2010

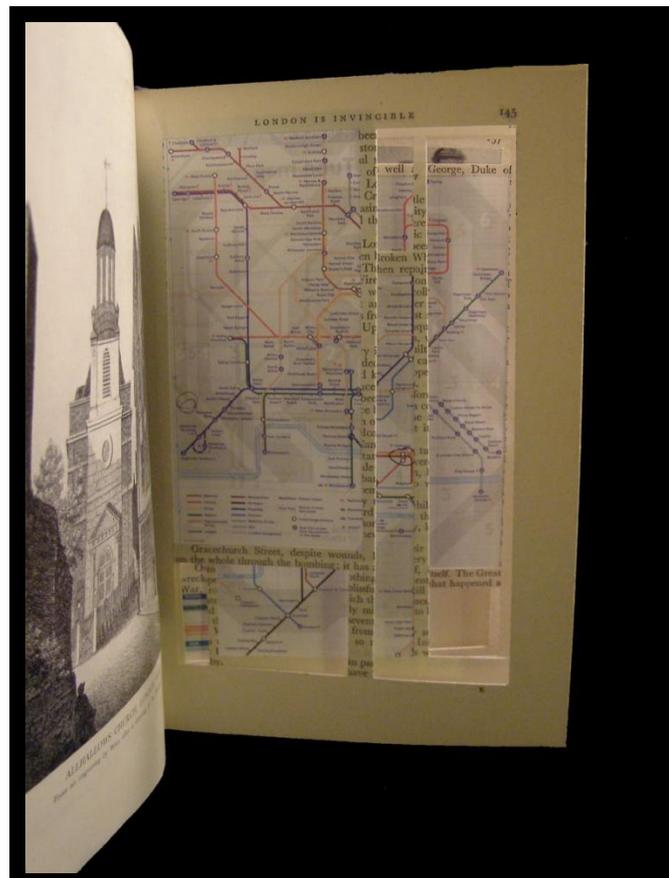


Figure 4. *London is Invincible* (detail) by M. Muggeridge, 2010

Once I came home to Canada, I returned to my old employment in an office, which mass produced medical supplies in China. This juxtaposition of original works versus mass production weighed heavily on my heart. By August 2011, I was diagnosed with depression and my personal power was gone. Later, this sparked my interest in empowerment as I had lost mine at this time. My artistry had stopped, and I was no longer fueling my spirit and soul with art-making. Through aid of medication and therapy, I was able to beat the strong holds of depression to a manageable size. Once on my healing journey, I was able to find St. Stephen's College where I was introduced to the genuine ability that art-making has to positively develop people. This taught me that art-making is an essential form of unique expression.

Paradigm, Ontology

I position myself in the Constructivist Paradigm because I live in an open and ever changing world, where I can make meaning of the Spirit which permeates all that is around me. The unique experience of individuals is subjective for each of us. Acknowledging that each experience emerges for a reason through the gift of a higher power, we humans can come to deeper understandings. This openness to the spirit and art making solidified my thesis research (see Figure 5, 6 & 7). Creating the altered book *MPS-AT Thesis* happened spontaneously within the week of intense thesis learning. The process of creating this book took precision and patience as I cut away the windows in the glued pages. The completed book has a soft, feminine and delicate nature to it, which comes through the colours and textures of the paper used. There is an added softness to the angled cut off the top of the pages. The intricate detail work, not completely visible through photographs, is that the book fully closes even with the relief of the applied beads and buttons. Having my altered books close back into their 'original' state is a

feature I strive for because containing the art between the two covers keeps the art work safe as well as offers a whimsical surprise. The juxtaposition of the hard beads and buttons versus the soft muted colours adds more depth to the artwork. These layers of art materials demonstrate the many layers of the research I was about to embark upon. The thematic layers of feminine qualities, self-expression and deep reflection began with the *MPS-AT Thesis* and were later revealed in the completed thesis work.

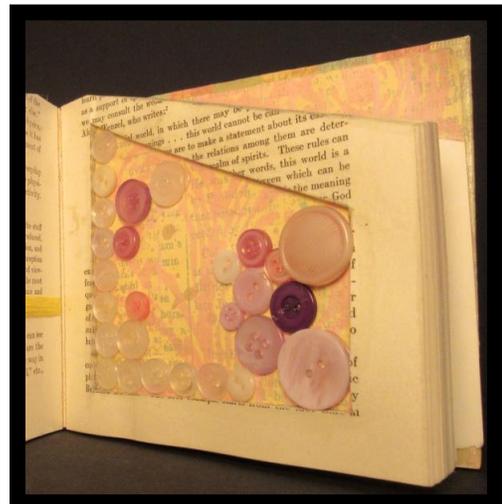
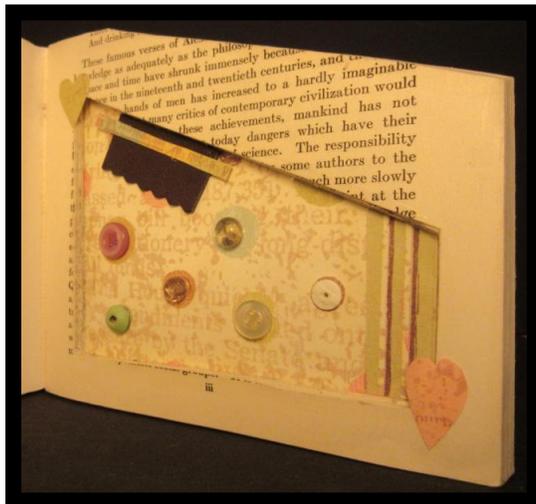
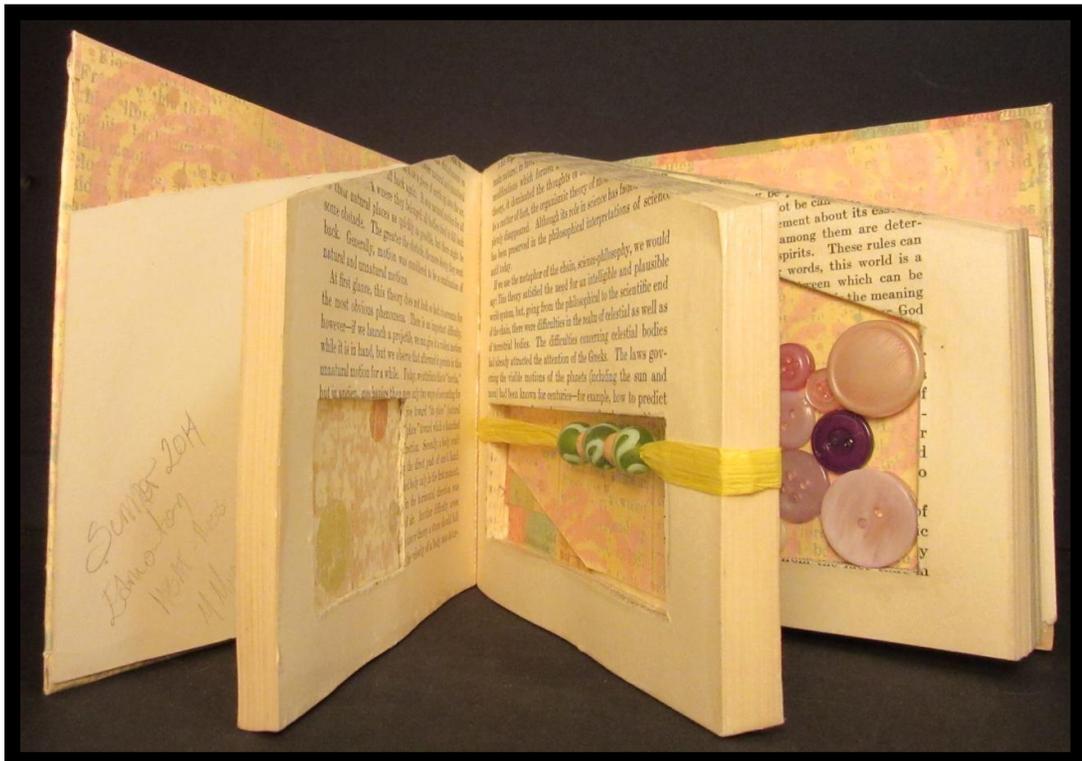


Figure 5, 6 & 7. *MPS-AT Thesis* (details) by M. Muggeridge, 2010

I subscribe to Relativism wherein individuals make their own connections to events that happen. Creating an atmosphere of unique voice and empowerment for my co-researchers was at the heart of my research approach. I encouraged each female adolescent co-researcher to fully express her voice in the presented 'data' which was achieved through each co-researcher's chapter. My goal was for the co-researchers to feel the power they deserve when they express their stories themselves. By engaging in art making as a form of unique expression, I utilized Arts Based Research. In addition, by displaying the data with the emphasis on the co-researcher's preferences, a form of Collaborative Inquiry was employed which is further discussed below. I attempted to use the emerging information from my co-researchers to find ways in which voice can be further expressed.

Research Methodology

For this study I used Collaborative Inquiry and Arts Based Research Methodologies. The use of Collaborative Inquiry created an opportunity for empowerment of the young women with whom I co-researched. The stories of the co-researchers are at the centre of the research, as it is *their* experience which they own. Arts Based Research Methodology was used because art allows further depth of insight for the clients. As well, this methodology allowed the co-researchers to create and embody their experiences through art making.

Collaborative Inquiry. Collaborative Inquiry exemplifies the need for the co-researchers to be fully valued in their participation. Patton's (2002) explanation of Collaborative Inquiry suggests that there is a continuum on which a researcher can place herself. At one end of Patton's (2002) continuum "researchers completely control the inquiry. At the other end are collaborations with people in the setting being studied (...)

along the middle of the continuum are various degrees of partial and periodic collaboration” (p. 269). I situate myself in the middle of the continuum because of the school division’s limitations when working with adolescents. In order to gain access to working with this population, I had to present a detailed plan with regards to the research work which limited the fluidity of the Collaborative Inquiry. One of Patton’s (2002) main principles described in, *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*, is that “participants are coequal” (p. 185). My interest in creating an opportunity to experience empowerment for the co-researchers required that each felt safe and equal when sharing her story. The importance of creating an egalitarian relationship with the co-researcher was a central theme of my thesis work. In a society in which power inequalities are at an astonishing high, I wished to keep this monster at bay in my own pursuit of education. As an art therapist I struggled with the question of whether to collect the stories of others for my own gain. I believe that each individual’s story is uniquely theirs, and it is theirs to keep or to share. As a researcher, my goal was to encourage the co-researchers to share their story with me because they wanted to, and to share what they wished, without any coercion, attempting to promote a “coequal” relationship. Collaborative approaches necessitate “power sharing” and “involve working *with* people” (Patton, 2002, p. 183). This unique way to research allows for building of a community between the co-researchers and the primary researcher. This symbiotic relationship was essential to creating opportunity for ‘voice’ to be expressed, in this research project. With reference to the literature in which young female’s voices are not being heard, I was eager to create an environment in the research setting where each voice was attended to and valued. I believed that these actions would aid the co-researchers in finding power for themselves, their voice and their unique artistic expression.

A second principle of Patton's (2002) is that "participants in the process *own* the inquiry" (p.185). In my analysis of the data, I made every attempt to keep the female's stories authentic, enabling them to feel the ownership of stories within the data. Patton (2002) states "people who participate in creating something tend to feel more ownership of what they have created and make more use of it. Active participants in research and evaluation are more likely to feel ownership not only of *their* findings but also of the inquiry process itself" (Patton, 2002, p.184). The intention to keep the inquiry owned by the participants was an important principle to maintaining the authenticity of the stories being gathered. In the design of the research protocol maintaining this principle was illustrated specifically in two major elements. The first directive was the authentic gathering of stories in a verbatim transcription of the co-researcher's own words. This was enacted through researcher transcribing and presenting the authentic stories in their raw form, unique to each co-researcher. The second major element of keeping the ownership of the stories central was the follow-up sessions, Digging Deeper, in which the co-researchers were invited to give their spoken voice a creative identity, by editing the stories as they saw fit and altering the font to uniquely represent their story.

This leads to Patton's (2002) third principle which is "status and power differences between the inquiry facilitator and participants are minimized, as much as possible" (p.185). In my effort to keep the group dynamic safe and egalitarian, I anticipated having created an environment where un-coerced empowerment could be explored. Methods by which this issue can be addressed are in the words and actions presented by the inquiry facilitator. Some of these methods were naturally employed by my own sense of equality in relationships with others. For example, some of these natural actions were to present myself using my first name, just as the co-researchers would with

one another, and when in sessions, sit at the table in community with the co-researchers. Being attentive to the dynamics of the group, encouraging mutually respectful words and comments amongst the group were additional methods I employed.

Arts Based Research. Arts Based Research “is the conscious pursuit of expressive form in the service of understanding” (Barone & Eisner, 2012, p. 7). At the heart of my inquiry is the un-coerced artistic expression of the co-researchers by creating altered books. Barone and Eisner (2012) further state that Arts Based Research is “a method designed to enlarge human understanding” (p.8). Those in the helping and healing professions encourage their clients to understand their human experience more fully. Arts Based researchers employ this type of discovery. In this study I also employed the same pursuit, by inquiring more fully about the process through my own art making. The discoveries that are made will be with the aid of my own artistic process and deeper connection to the art created. By using art making as the primary meaning making tool in the thesis, both the process of art making and the art itself were sources of knowledge. In the process of researching for the final chapter, I connected with the art created in response to the four group sessions held in creating the altered books.

Patricia Leavy (2009) states that “the arts have the capability to evoke emotions, promote reflection and transform the way that people think” which is an important aspect of my research regarding the empowerment of adolescents who are searching to share their voice (p.55). Pat Allen (2012) affirms that “a critical part of our art-based enquiry must be the physical enactment of the stories our images tell, bringing them to life before an audience, performatively and emotively transmitting the truth of the images so that they enter bodies as well as minds” (p.19). Allen’s words reflect my belief that art making, such as altered book creations, can become turning points for the co-researchers,

empowering them to more fully express themselves authentically through making art and by sharing their stories verbally with each other.

Lynn Kapitan (2004) describes a “method of collaborative witness” in which she would listen without a pre-conceived idea to her collaborators (p.1). In Kapitan’s (2004) data analysis “the researcher prepares for the illumination of insight while actively engaged and seemingly held captive by a preoccupation” of the researcher’s imagination (p.2). In Kapitan’s (2004) Collaborative Witness Project, the researcher would reflect on the images, read and re-read “the transcripts from the interview in order to ‘soak-up’ the words each of (her) collaborators had used to describe her experience” (p. 5). In my Wit(h)nessing, I followed a similar process for data analysis by immersing myself in the transcripts and art images created by the co-researchers. Then I allowed my creative self along with my imagination to create art. Just as Ortega y Gasset (1943/1985) says I had to decide “how to act, what to hold on to, and what (was) important to pay attention to” (as cited by Kapitan, 2010, p. xix). These three decisions have always been important to “artists (... and) therapists (... who) have always participated in this deeply human quest” (Kapitan, 2010, p. xix).

Meaning Making / Theological Reflections. As a human being, I have a unique ability to create meaning out of every moment of my life. This meaning is personal to my understanding of the world and my purpose in it. Without this purpose in life, I would simply be another organism living on a planet; fortunately, this is not how I was created. Clark and Olson (2000) state that theology is “a *reflection and celebration around experiences of being in relationship*” (p. 91). I believe in the presence of God, who has created me for a greater purpose which I will spend my lifetime trying to fulfill. It is through my relationship with God that I can begin to explore and expand my own

purpose. There have been moments in my life that have made perfect sense, and there are others that have taken trust, faith and prayer to understand more fully. It is in the latter of these life moments that I am called to question my existence and purpose in the greater world and to create my own life's meaning. Within this research, I anticipated that there would be moments and images that were perfectly understood, and there would be others which would take more resources to fully understand the meaning they have in my life, the co-researcher's life, the thesis process and the world. As a person of faith in a God who gives me purpose, I took my experiences in this process as opportunities to grow into a more whole person. It was in the moments of confusion and insecurity where I made meaning from God's desire for me to live my life more fully. In the final chapter I explored meaning making in the context of my witnessed art. What meaning can I make from the experience of the session and what was created in the art? What can I find from the art that gives meaning to my research question? What is the relationship to the art, the session and the experience of the process?

Another meaning making method employed comes from Stone and Duke (2006), in their book, *How to Think Theologically*, where they discuss the idea of "correlating" (p. 30). Stone and Duke (2006) state that correlation "is the process of bringing two or more discrete entities into mutual relation with each other" (p. 30). In writing the Wit(h)nessing chapter of this thesis, I brought the art work I created into perspective for me and the research at hand. The art work may have seemed to be very isolated from the common world and even from the spiritual world, but I employed Stone and Duke's (2006) understanding to create meaning for myself. "Layering theological views on top of non-theological views" is another essential element to uncover meaning from the witnessed artwork (p. 31). When creating the witnessing art, I took notice of the symbols

and feelings that arose in me while in the creative process. By applying Stone and Duke's (2006) definition of theology: "the whole point of theology is to *understand the meaning of God's message to the world today*" (p.34), I was able to interpret the art as understanding for meaning making. Using this principle with my artwork, I could be open and willing to see that which the art was telling me, even when the image did not fully make sense. "Being, knowing, and not knowing commingle, distinctions dissolve, boundaries form and reform in moments of awareness, heightened perception" (Walsh, Bickel, and Leggo, 2015, p. 12) summarizes the art work I was attempting to create through my witnessing.

Research Method Overview

According to Clandinin & Huber (2010), "an attitude of empathic listening" is critical to show the co-researchers the power they have in this experience. I was able to bear witness to and honour their stories, by empathically listening to the stories that the co-researchers shared with me. The empowerment to share their stories is something the co-researchers may be lacking in their everyday lives, as per the literature on the topic of voice. I value the emergence of stories which are often told in a "non linear" fashion (Clandinin & Huber, 2010, p. 11). I trusted in the spirit to guide my co-researchers to share what it is they needed to share for their own benefit. I intended to listen authentically and openly to their important stories.

I approached the data with the intention of providing an open opportunity for each co-researcher through co-creating a chapter with them and highlighting their unique experience. Each of the individual stories belongs to the co-researchers; these stories and artworks are uniquely theirs. When possible, verbatim quotes gathered from the transcripts were written in the chapter. I was open to collaborating with them.

Description of the Participants and Recruitment. For the recruiting of co-researchers I advertised in the school announcements and placed posters at St. Mark's School (see Appendix A for image). Participants had to be female and between the ages of 13 and 21, attending St. Mark's School. The co-researchers who participated were fourteen and fifteen years old. They were two sets of friends from differing grades. Over the sessions, their interest in creating and sharing their art grew by using more diverse materials and more spoken dialogue.

Investigational Methods and Procedures

Data Generation / Collection. Art Making Sessions were held in a two hour block of time for a total of four sessions with a group of four co-researchers. The structure of the two hours was an hour and half of art-making followed by thirty minutes of Story Sharing about anything the co-researchers wished to share. Only the thirty minute Story Sharing portions of the session were audio recorded. The session opened with a candle lighting ritual to foster readiness to begin working. The primary researcher kept personal field notes as needed while in the sessions. Co-researchers were encouraged to take photographs of the progress they had made. Following each of the four Art Making Sessions, the researcher created art, witnessing the story telling of each co-researcher. This art was used in further exploration for the final chapter. An individual, Digging Deeper Session was held for an hour with each individual where co-researchers were encouraged to make any edits to their chapters, including style and colour of font and image positions. The co-researchers are the most knowledgeable experts of their stories; therefore, they were the most authentic representational artists of their stories.

Research Protocol.

Place invitation posters and announcement in St. Mark's School. Inform staff of workshop through handout (see Appendix C for handout).
Receive email or phone call or introductions from interested co-researcher
Confirm with potential co-researchers on time and date availability
Meet briefly (10 -15 mins) with each co-researcher to go over consent form and to send home for parental signature. Be available for parental concerns and inquiries.

Art Making Session 1 (2hrs Group)	
0:00	Welcoming to research group, introduce ourselves to each other with art directive – “draw a line that represents how you feel today”
0:05	Giving each co-researcher a candle to light and place in a collective form, while reminding them to allow for their creative spirit to enter them and the room
0:10	Explain the format of the session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Books will stay here until sessions are complete - Story sharing time available at the end (audio recorded). - Their Stories will be written down with their images included in their own Chapter in the final thesis. A copy of this chapter will be printed and placed into a created pocket in their book, in Session 3.
0:15	Introduction to the various supplies available for the project
0:20	Allow for the selection of a book to use
0:25	Explain possible art making techniques, found poetry, collage, drawing, painting
0:30	Begin art making spontaneously <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Researcher will be attentively listening to discussion and observing interactions, while co-researchers create, to gather any topic possibilities for Story Sharing
0:90	Story sharing time, “What would you like to share with us about your art making today?” “Please take a digital photo of your work today.”
0:120	Gather around the candles, to thank everyone for the participation and to take their candles to blow out. Co-researchers leave.
0:180	Researcher witnesses art and stories shared by creating art of her own.

Art Making Session 2 (2hrs Group)	
0:00	Welcoming to research group, re-introducing ourselves to each other with art directive – “draw a line that represents how you feel today”
0:05	Giving each co-researcher a candle to light and place in a collective form, while reminding them to allow for their creative spirit to enter them and the room

0:10	Begin art making time - “allow the pages of the book to inspire you to create” - Researcher will be attentively listening to discussion and observing interactions, while co-researchers create, to gather any topic possibilities for Story Sharing
0:90	Story sharing time, “What would you like to share with us about your art making today?” Please take a digital photo of your work today.
0:120	Gather around the candles, to thank everyone for the participation and to take their candles to blow out. Co-researchers leave.
0:180	Researcher witnesses art and stories shared by creating art of her own.

Art Making Session 3 (2hrs Group)	
0:00	Welcoming to research group, further introduce ourselves to each other with art directive – “draw a line that represents how you feel today”
0:05	Giving each co-researcher a candle to light and place in a collective form, while reminding them to allow for their creative spirit to enter them and the room
0:10	Introduce pocket to be inserted in book for Printed Chapter
0:25	Begin art making time- “allow the pages of the book to inspire you to create” - Researcher will be attentively listening to discussion and observing interactions, while co-researchers create, to gather any topic possibilities for Story Sharing
0:90	Story sharing time, “What would you like to share with us about your art making today?” Please take a digital photo of your work today.
0:120	Gather around the candles, to thank everyone for the participation and to take their candles to blow out. Co-researchers leave.
0:180	Researcher witnesses art and stories shared by creating art of her own.

Art Making Session 4 (2hrs Group)	
0:00	Welcoming to research group, introduce ourselves to each other with art directive – “draw a line that represents how you feel today”
0:05	Giving each co-researcher a candle to light and place in a collective form, while reminding them to allow for their creative spirit to enter them and the room
0:10	Begin art making time- “allow the pages of the book to inspire you to create” - Researcher will be attentively listening to discussion and observing interactions, while co-researchers create, to gather any topic possibilities for Story Sharing
0:90	Story sharing time, “What would you like to share with us about your art making today?” Please take a digital photo of your work today.

0:120	Gather around the candles, to thank everyone for the participation and to take their candles to blow out. Co-researchers leave.
0:180	Researcher witnesses art and stories shared by creating art of her own.

Digging Deeper Session (1hr Individual) (Member Checking)	
0:00	Welcome co-researcher back to the studio
0:05	Giving the co-researcher a candle while reminding her to allow for her creative spirit to enter them and the room
0:10	Read through, the chronological transcripts of only that co-researcher's Story Sharing audio recording. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asking if any parts of the stories would like to be removed - Where the images are to be located in the text, including their size - What colour they would like their font - What size and font style they want
0:50	Colour print out of chapter will be given to the co-researcher
0:55	Place printed chapter in the Altered Book, and give to the co-researcher

A selection of published books was provided for the co-researchers. A variety of materials including paint, pre-cut magazine images, string, beads, glue, scissors, glitter, buttons, hot glue, modge-podge were provided for their use. The goal was to provide materials that would increase creative expression. The overall objective was to provide co-researchers with a platform to help create their chapter. Co-researchers were encouraged to take their own photos of their art-work and encouraged to provide titles and descriptions of art-work. As the stories were gathered, additional opportunities arose for the direct input of the co-researchers. Some ideas I had for creating empowerment opportunities of the co-researcher were allowing each female to choose her own pseudonym, create a sub-title for her chapter, to choose the photographs used in her chapter, and to choose which font she would like to represent her chapter. As the collaboration emerged, ways to generate a unique voice were included to develop empowerment within the telling of each of their stories.

Data Analysis. The data from the Story Sharing section of each of the four sessions was transcribed and inserted in chronological order into each co-researcher's respective chapter. Photographs taken by co-researchers were inserted into the corresponding co-researcher's story. Hillary Kaufman (2011) highlights the individuality of each co-researcher "to include their voices, personal meaning and experiences with their art that only they can know" (p.56). The true depiction of the co-researcher's shared stories was the primary data for the thesis. In keeping with the Arts Based Research Methodology, the final thesis chapter acts as the analysis through the witnessing artwork created by the researcher. In witnessing the co-researcher's art, the researcher made art of her own, enabling the power of art to permeate the knowledge gleaned. These discoveries from the artwork are the primary writing in the final chapter entitled Witnessing.

Ethical Concerns.

Due to the population of the co-researchers, a two step alternative process was needed for the ethical approval of the research. To adhere to the Catholic School Board regulations, I was required to obtain approval through the University of Alberta, in Research Ethics Office. Once approved, a secondary approval was needed from the Cooperative Activities Program (CAP). The co-researchers were minors; therefore, consent from the parents or guardians were needed for participation (see Appendix B for consent letter). Some parents might not have given consent to the participation in the research; therefore, those potential co-research candidates would have been thanked and withdrawn from the pool of potential participants. In addition, if a participant would have withdrawn from the study and taken her material with her; I would have viewed that as voice and empowerment if the withdrawal was of her own accord. When facilitating the art making and story sharing, I provided an opening and closing ritual attempting to keep

the group sacred. It was important to keep the space safe and I encouraged an open and non-judgemental atmosphere since we were using our creative selves. I also reminded the co-researchers of their opportunity in the post-art-making Digging Deeper Session to provide additional information they did not feel comfortable sharing with the others.

My major ethical concern was the potential for my appropriation of co-researcher's stories and artwork which I hope my methods have addressed. My main goal as the researcher was to provide an environment inviting creativity for the co-researchers to express themselves in ways they might struggle to otherwise. I strove to authentically tell the stories that these co-researchers entrusted to me.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as they pertain to this study:

Altered Book: Published book which has been changed through art materials into a new original piece of art.

Arts-based Research: “Artistic process as a primary mode of inquiry creating various forms of art as a way to collect data, conduct analysis, and/or represent research (Leavy, 2009).

Collaborative Inquiry: “Involves the people in the setting as co-inquirers” and exemplifies the need for the co-researchers to be fully valued in their participation (Patton, 2002, p. 185).

Empowerment: “A process in which individuals learn to see a closer correspondence between their goals and a sense of how to achieve them and a relationship between their efforts and life outcomes” (Mechanic, 1991, p.641).

Expression: A means by which to tell one's story. Including but not limited to creation of visual art, dance, poetry, acting, song, narrative, facial muscle movements, vocalizations, or gestures.

Female adolescent: Biological female between the ages of thirteen and twenty-one.

Feminist Theory: Valentich states "the revision of existing ideological frameworks to reflect the diversity of women's experience: incorporation of relevant thought systems; formulation of new theories about women; and the critique of concepts and traditional theories about women" (Turner, 1996, p. 285).

Holding Space: Maintaining a safe therapeutic environment, while calling on the presence of the Spirit.

Member Checking: The act of conferring with co-researchers to see if they have been represented as they wished.

Spirit: God, Creator, Divine

Symbols: "An idea or object such as a visual image that represents other ideas which may be condensed or unconscious" (Hinz, 2009).

Voice: The expression of one's opinions and ideas.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This thesis researches female adolescent's experience of empowerment through creating altered books. The literature review covers several linked areas of focus including the voice of the adolescent, the mental health of adolescents and the experience of art making. Female adolescent empowerment is the main focus of my research, but selected adolescent developmental literature is included to place this content within a larger context. The first part of the literature review focuses on the adolescent's desire to feel 'heard.' In response to this desire, a major focus of this review searches for ways to empower my co-researchers when working with their stories. One of the main goals with my research is empowering the co-researchers, which will enable me to document their unique stories.

Being Without a Voice

My goal for this first section of the literature review is to identify the experiences of other health care professionals who have reportedly been able to reach adolescents at their level. By looking at examples of different methods to interact and form connections with adolescents, I hoped to gain a deeper insight into how to reach adolescents, moving forward with my research. Adolescents may feel they are without a voice for a variety of reasons, either from being shy, having low-self esteem or struggling with complexities of adolescence. Shy adolescents find it increasingly difficult to stand up to bullying. Lund, Ertesvag, and Roland (2009) studied the severe shyness of students in relation to being bullied. The qualitative study "examined bullying related to adolescents" and was "based on in-depth interviews with 15 shy girls between ages of 14 and 18 years" (Lund et al., 2009, p. 206). Being bullied left victims feeling "lonely, persecuted, anxious and depressed" which resulted in low self esteem (Lund et al., 2009, p. 208). The rejection

experienced by being bullied can easily cause a lack of voice when speaking up for themselves. In the conclusion of the article, it states that “extensive, school-wide efforts” will aid in the reduction of bullying, but “it is not clear such programs empower shy adolescent victims or enable them to cope with the effect of peer abuse” (Lund et al., 2009, p. 219). Bringing awareness to the bullying that is occurring is a positive step, but it does not provide true relief for the victim. In a way, this is making it harder for the student to express herself because others around her are ‘shouting’ at the bullies for her.

In comparison to males, female adolescents’ challenging influences on self-esteem are highly correlated to their “relations, self and school” (Khanlou, 2004, p. 409). The adolescent female is struggling to grasp these aspects to create a healthy self esteem and self-actualization. Personal environment can affect the self esteem of an adolescent. According to Holland and Andre (1994), the female adolescent who lives in a traditional view of gender roles and attends a small rural school, actually exhibits a stronger self esteem and a dominant female viewpoint. This is due the increased participation in extracurricular activities in a small school where this is required.

The voice of the female adolescent is very complex. Wren (1997) quotes Gilligan’s research about the female adolescent’s “decision-making which uses an interdependent thinking style consisting of complex, self-reflective, inductive reasoning processes that unite thoughts and feelings” (p.1). A female adolescent’s decision making style can render much confusion at this critical time and she requires strength to seek space to be self reflective. The complex nature of uniting thoughts and feelings is another major obstacle the female adolescent must overcome using her limited life experience (Wren, 1997). In using art-making as a tool to create this connection between thoughts and feelings, there is potential for the adolescent to resolve these issues (Moon, 2012).

Wren (1997) also brings to light “that females who display too great a degree of selflessness may risk the loss of their self-esteem, while those who show too much concern about themselves could be considered selfish and face a possible loss of their femininity” (p. 3). This speaks to the complexity of the female voice; it is not surprising that some girls may be constantly searching for the correct words to say. By giving an opportunity to my co-researchers to have a voice with their own story being told through research, I hoped to give them a place where they feel their voice has been heard.

Hearing Their Voice

Correspondingly, the ability to show adolescents that they are truly being heard is a challenge. The need to listen ‘differently’ to allow for the empowerment of female adolescents is evident in Silber’s (2012) case study below.

Silber (2012) brings forward the importance of finding and supporting the voice of the female adolescent. Through a case study, she describes the experience of Allison, a runaway fifteen-year old who is rebelling against her mother and father, with drugs, lies and sneaking out. Allison’s home life was in constant strain, her relationship to her brother was antagonistic and she could feel the tension in her parent’s marriage (Silber, 2012). Allison was also diagnosed with and pharmaceutically treated for attention deficit disorder (Silber, 2012). Silber was Allison’s personal and family therapist. From their sessions Silber provides anecdotes of situations which helped the teen to find her voice and control of her life. The main aspects that contributed to Allison’s healing were the therapist seeking honesty and encouragement. In one session Allison ran away from the therapist and her own family. The therapist recognized and claimed the importance of Allison’s presence in the sessions and would therefore seek until she found her hiding place. Silber’s honesty about Allison’s value was also expressed by saying that she had

been thinking about Allison during the summer holidays. Claiming Allison's importance in her (the therapist's) mind gave Allison a greater sense of self worth. The third action that Silber accomplished when working with Allison was giving her voice power. For example, Silber (2012) "suggested that she not be afraid of knowing what she knows" and that "she could name what she felt" (p. 127). By encouraging Allison to claim the implicit knowledge she had, this therapeutic action gave rise to many life-changing decisions. Nearing the end of the two year treatment, Allison broke up with her abusive boyfriend, and started to see her girlfriend "way more clearly" (Silber, 2012 pp. 127-128) and immerse herself in the enjoyment of art making. Allison's statement makes reference to her new found control: "I would get too caught up in what was on another person's mind and not be able to step back from it and find out what was on my own mind" (Silber, 2012, p. 128). This article gave me encouragement that female teens are struggling to find their voice amongst the many they hear around them. I anticipated that my attentiveness to giving the co-researchers the most power in the collaboration of sharing their voice would be much appreciated as illustrated through Allison's story.

Sharaf, Thompson, and Walsh (2009) discuss a quantitative study of adolescent's at risk of suicide. The article is layered with many assumptions about the research participants including that low academics result in suicidal ideation and that substantial information can be gained from an adolescent in a one hour interview. While I do not agree that a one hour interview is comprehensive enough as a method of the study, I noted two points. The first of these findings is that for girls, but not boys, "family connectedness was the *only* protective factor that influenced the relationship between social isolation and suicide attempts" (Sharaf et al., 2009, p.165). This conclusion reinforced my interest in looking at how supportive connections may aid in empowering

the voice of the adolescent. The secondary related topic in Sharaf et al.'s (2009) article is "connections with a parent or another caring adult are almost universally central to positive mental health outcomes" (p.166). This caring adult could be manifest in a therapist, with whom the young person is able to connect. This demonstrates that an authority figure or adult can help with the integration of positive self-voice which can also translate into potential empowerment when used to create connections with adolescents.

Rindner's (2004) article introduced me to Freire's Empowerment method of education. Freire's Empowerment Education Model focuses on social justice principles to liberate the oppressed through education (Rinder, 2004). Rindner (2004) states that empowering patients seeking treatment can provide greater learning opportunities. The method is to allow the patients or students to explore topics at their own pace with the guidance and facilitation of a nurse. The main goal is "to help the adolescent shift his or her perception from being an 'oppressed student' to that of being an 'empowered student'" (Rindner, 2004, p.78). Rindner's writing regarding empowering the adolescent inspired my research method with the adolescents. Some of the key aspects the nurse facilitator would accomplish would be to be a co-learner alongside the patients. As well the nurse was not to intervene directly with the group discussions even when asked a specific question the nurse facilitator's "contribution is only as a guide, not as an expert" (Rindner, 2004, p.79). This process of working is similar to that of a therapist and client, where the client is encouraged to search for his or her own answers and direction. This process fit well with my method of connecting with adolescents because it gives them the opportunity to express themselves and feel heard, in creating an altered book.

Jolly, Weiss, and Liehr's (2007) research demonstrates the major action that is needed for the adolescent to succeed when in a crisis. Jolly et al. (2007) determined from their research that "teens want to be heard during this crucial period in their lives" (p.8). The ability to be heard can be facilitated by nurses when caring for adolescents. "Adolescent voice is the power to express self through dialogue with a nonjudgmental listener who gives and receives feedback" (Jolly et al., 2007, p. 11). The nonjudgmental listener could be a therapist, nurse or other adult. Giving adolescents opportunities to authentically express themselves is critical for them to continue to develop themselves. Art-making is a 'non-judgmental listener' that can hold whatever emotions an adolescent has to tell it. In creating an altered-book there is an ability to mould and reshape the conventional published book into something that holds an uninterrupted story. The co-researcher's were given freedom to express what came to mind while artmaking and encouraged to dialogue with the group expressing such things as which image of their own they liked or found funny.

Adolescents want to be respected by those in authority. Ginsburg, Menapaca, and Slap's (1997) interviewed focus groups of adolescents regarding their view of medical professionals. The results of the study offer key actions a researcher should take when working with co-researchers. These key actions are empathy, honest language, privacy and care. All of the key actions ask that the person of authority be relatable to the adolescent by using respectful non-jargon language, sincere interactions and trust building. Throughout most of the dialogue in Ginsburg et al.'s (1997) interview, there was a theme of weariness and paranoia from the adolescents about the ethics of the health care professionals. The adolescents were aware that there was no way to assure them completely but their suggestions were to use language teens could understand but to treat

them like adults. This is an important factor for the adolescents to feel that they have a voice. By speaking in 'plain English' there is more potential for interactions between the co-researchers and myself. In order to hear and document the stories of my co-researchers, I needed to speak on a level they can understand. This opportunity for the co-researchers provided the most authentic representation of the story. By speaking in a language understood by my co-researchers, I hoped to allow them to 'correct' me if I have misquoted or misunderstood their documented experience. The adolescents in Ginsburg et al.'s (1997) focus group emphasised the misunderstanding of 'confidentiality' and wished that it was explained as 'privacy.' The intimate details that they were willing to share with one individual were sometimes held back because they were fearful of ridicule and their information being shared inappropriately. Assurance and safety was at the forefront of my research in order to allow my co-researchers to express themselves authentically.

Golan, Hgay, and Tamir (2014) consider the benefits of a school wide program "In Favor of Myself" in which body image and self esteem are discussed in a positive way. The program provided "education about adolescence, media literacy, cognitive dissonance, and incorporation of a wellness approach" (Golan et al., 2014, p1). The new knowledge provided to the adolescents was geared toward helping them see themselves as healthy and not concerned about their weight. At the end of the study "the gap between perceptions of current figure and healthy figure decreased" (Golan et al., 2014, p.1). Teaching adolescents more about what truly is a healthy body versus what the media portrays gives teens the power to see themselves as unique. In my own research giving the co-researchers the information that all parts of themselves were welcome at the art studio hopefully encouraged the creative relationship with the altered book. This form of

expression was encouraged through the story sharing dialogue when open-ended questions were asked. Respect for each other was moulded by the primary researcher by maintaining that each person's words were welcome and that one's ideas should not be disrespected.

The struggle some young women have with appreciating and sharing their own unique voice was a key reason for this research. I anticipated that this research can further develop opportunities for empowerment through creating art. The approach of working with female adolescents who make altered books in a search for an outlet for their voices may provide new research on art making. A great need for some young females today is the positive self-esteem that may be created by working to 're-write' the story of their lives.

My research is important at this time for the development of stronger females and to help provide a healthy equality between male and female ability to be confident. Advertisement campaigns for females to love themselves more are similar to the work of Lund et al. (2009) whose in-school campaigns against bullying did not address the deeper issues. The fundamental issue of not listening to youth today will cause greater personal confusion when they are older.

In conclusion, there is a strong need for adolescents to find ways to express themselves, especially female adolescents. This is a critical time in the world where adolescence is starting earlier yet prolonging even further into mid- to late twenties (Arnett, 2007, p 68). This shift in society has created a frustration with young people acting still as young children longer into their later years. This complicates the adult development of the individual which is critical for self-esteem and self-actualization.

Female Adolescents' Mental Health Issues

In Canada, there are adolescents who struggle with depression and end up committing suicide. In 2011, 227 Canadian youth between the ages of 10 to 19 committed suicide (Statistics Canada, 2014). Cheung and Dewa (2007) have found that “completed suicide remains the second leading cause of death for young Canadians” (p. 228). These statistics led Cheung and Dewa (2007) to research which Mental Health Services are being accessed by Canadian adolescents. The researchers preliminary conclusions were that “further research is needed to understand the quality of care received by these young Canadians and the factors influencing service use” (Cheung and Dewa, 2007, p. 228). Therefore Cheung and Dewa’s research is aiding the discovery of what types of services are beneficial for adolescents to express themselves. It is possible that the increased expression through art making could allow for verbal expression to healthcare providers when the adolescents are in need of services. My own interest in the mental health of adolescents was solidified by Cheung and Dewa’s (2007) research which provided a key element that “female adolescents and young adults with depression were more likely to access services from social workers and (or) counsellors” (p. 231). Another aspect to the research is that “female adolescents and young adults are more likely to endorse suicidality” which leads to “the ratio of suicidality between male and female adolescents and young adults to (be) 1:2” (Cheung and Dewa, 2007, p. 231). In summary, female adolescents are more vocal about their ideations of suicide, but do not take as lethal actions in order to be heard. Cheung and Dewa’s (2007) study informs my understanding that some female adolescents are trying to share their voice about suicide and depression, but are not being fully heard when they express themselves since they access counselling, but persist in having suicidal thoughts. Female adolescents have

access to social workers and counsellors but they still have not been able to resolve their suicidal thoughts. An alternative means to resolve these types of issues is through art making interventions which allow for an unexpressed part of herself to come forward. In this way the female adolescent can learn to trust the art making process and allow the art to express her authentic self (McNiff, 2004).

Gilligan and Machoian (2002) write that female adolescents are conditioned to think that they can only have a voice that will be heard by others by committing actions of self-harm. The mental health of these girls is being disregarded by healthcare providers. If these females were able to be heard with the voice they already have, there may be an opportunity to prevent the ‘voice’ of self-harm ever presenting. Gilligan and Machoian (2002) write of Machoian’s experience with a female adolescent client. Machoian was faced with the current system of health care which made her unable to help her client, Abby. Even with Machoian “speaking on her (client’s) behalf, multiple clinical recommendations from various agencies, (and) Abby’s speaking plain language,” Abby’s wishes could not be heard or acted on appropriately (p. 331). Abby resorted to a common language, that of self-harm, which gave her voice enough authority to be heard. This provides information that the mental health of adolescents is not being fully addressed and taken seriously by those with whom adolescents are not connecting. In researching personal expression through altered books, I explored how art therapists can help female adolescents to find their voice.

The findings of the *Health of Canada’s Young People: A Mental Health Focus* study outlines the four major areas they determined young people’s mental health namely: “the home, the school, their peers and the neighbourhood” (Freeman, 2010, p 1). In this 2010 national survey of “26,078 young Canadians from 436 schools” the results

showed a significant difference between female and male mental health (Freeman, 2010, p 1). The results for females were that “they had higher levels of emotional problems and lower levels of emotional well-being and life satisfaction than boys” (Freeman, 2010, p 1). A related Canadian government website by Freeman and Luu (2012) indicates that adolescent females have a decreased self confidence on average as they grow through adolescence. The direct statistics to the heading “Students who strongly agree they have confidence in themselves” state that in grade six 40% of females strongly agreed, and by grade ten 18% of females strongly agreed they had confidence in themselves (Freeman & Luu, 2010). This means that 82% of females decrease in confidence over 5 years, and this finding from the study is important to note as a change in the mental health of young female Canadians. These results point to the need for intervention which may improve self-esteem of adolescents. In another part of the study, evidence uncovered that on average 31% of the female students ranging from grade six to ten “agree(ed) or strongly agree(ed) they often wish(ed) they were someone else” (Freeman & Luu, 2012). These results support the need to look at self-expression and positive self-identity sharing that which is uniquely their own in a safe and supportive environment. My hesitation to agree fully with these results for adolescents in 2015 is that adolescents are increasingly able to be connected via social media which may make it more difficult for them to shelter themselves from other's opinions and more difficult to be authentically themselves and not worry about the lens of a camera or public postings. According to a 2015 study by Khan, Gangé, Yang and Shpaka (2015),

“the highest levels of self-concept for adolescent participants emerged in the presence of high reports of online socialization and high levels of face-to-face peer support. In contrast, adolescents who reported spending a lot of time socializing online, but who did not have school-based peer support, reported the lowest levels of self-concept. The relationship suggests that the benefits of having

an online social life is contingent upon also having a supportive face-to-face peer network, which is consistent with the Rich-get-Richer hypotheses” (p. 943).

These levels of self concept indicate adolescents rely heavily on the way others perceive them online as an indication of who they are. With this in mind, I would conclude that there are currently more factors acting on self confidence and positive mental health of adolescents than previously without such emphasis on new forms of social media.

In looking at different models for health care providers to interact with and support adolescent mental health, Jurewicz’s (2015) article considers the holistic approach to treating this population. In Jurewicz’s (2015) United-Kingdom based research, the system of support changed. In the past there were only two populations children and adults, but now the system has a third population, young people. The change in the system was from supporting two separate populations of children and adults to now include a third, young people. This is significant because young people have unique needs. This change has created a more dynamic team approach where those who specialized in child or adult needs now collaborate to treat young people (Jurewicz, 2015). This new setup of the team could allow for richer knowledge of the variety of serious mental health disorders, by determining their presence at an earlier time, than before.

To further the scope of treatment the team approach also includes “holistic models of care focused on the needs of young people (which) could be used by medical services as the cost benefits (which) include improving treatment adherence, while supporting education and employment (which) are likely to provide similar benefits” (Jurewicz, 2015, p. 152). The increased awareness of what is successful when interacting with adolescents and the healthcare system can have long term benefits to the healthcare

system and the adolescents themselves. The unique holistic approach encourages creative thinking and interaction with the treated adolescents. By helping to establish employment and education, a routine and purpose is also established allowing for greater success of the goals in mind. In relating this to my research it is the creative connections to the adolescents and the building of healthy habits such as expression through art making which is another approach which could have been used in this UK example. Through creating a purpose and goal for the adolescent there is potential for this to expand into other avenues of their lives.

According to the Mental Health Commission of Canada (2013), in school-based research, one of the major findings is that “in general, programs are more effective when skills are taught systemically, in a class-wide manner, involve the whole school, and are implemented over more than one year” (p.5). The major element which instigated this programming was “the opportunity to promote positive mental health of all students, rather than focusing solely on those identified as having mental health problems” (Mental Health Commission of Canada, 2013, p.5). The effort to normalize mental health is an essential step to push back against the stigma of asking for support. This community learning can create a more accepting atmosphere in schools and peer groups, encouraging more adolescents to be more aware of mental health in themselves and their peers. Related to the research at hand, the community aspect of the Mental Health Commission of Canada’s research is an essential element to my research expressed through the co-researchers sharing of their stories with each other. In the research session there were four co-researchers who had the opportunity to share the space and their work with the others in the groups. The structural element was the book itself, which allowed for the co-researcher to have the safety and stability of the bound pages when creating an expression

of themselves. Much like the Mental Health Commission of Canada's community and systematic based approach which normalizes mental health, I approached my research with a community of female adolescents who were all treated similarly by working with the structure of a book in a step by step way which they had the opportunity to share with others.

Expression through Art Making

The following section outlines three aspects of expressing oneself through art making. Each of these aspects is important to fully understand one's voice expressed in a creative process. The first aspect is the therapist's conviction which highlights the imperative nature that an art therapist firmly and whole heartedly believes that art making can be a healing journey. The second section on self expression describes organizations which facilitate and promote self expression through artistic means. The third piece demonstrates the transformative power released by creating an altered book.

Therapist's conviction. The art therapist's conviction in her method of sessions is essential to the transformation experienced by the client. Bruce Moon states (1999) "artist-therapists who work with suffering adolescents should have a profound belief in the power and goodness of art making" (p. 78). Moon emphasize that the therapist's belief is critical when connecting with a client. An art therapist is therefore encouraged to have her own art practice in which she develops her trust in the artistic process in order to instill the transformative power into her client sessions. Moon, in a manner, is pleading with the art therapists of the world to take their practice of artistry and therapy seriously in order to develop a richer and deeper method of working. Existential psychiatrist Irvin Yalom (1983) reiterates the importance of effective psychotherapy: "if therapists, at the beginning of therapy, have a strong belief the therapeutic process will help the patient,

success is significantly more likely” (p. 26). Although Moon and Yalom are from different parts of the psychotherapy field, their conviction that a therapist believe in the work that she does is aligned, suggesting that this belief is common when in session with clients. This relates well to working with adolescents who can sense when someone is being inauthentic with them. When the therapist authentically trusts in the process of art making, the adolescent will feel this connection too, soliciting a deeper relationship with the art and the therapist.

This idea of connecting with the client is furthered by Filip (1994) who stated her belief that much can be accomplished even in a single 50-minute session and that a client’s “experience of safety and structure may ultimately be more therapeutic than the content of the session” (p. 2). When working with clients, the art therapist's ability to ‘hold space’ during the session is essential to the therapeutic relationship. The safety which is provided through the art therapist is a unique experience in a person’s life. The experience of having all of the attention and support from a therapist for even just 50-mintutes can alter how clients view their own abilities.

Self expression. The American Incentive Program (AIP) “is a clinically informed, arts-based, youth and community development program. In AIP, young people engage in community building within the program and become agents of positive community change. In revitalizing their communities, they rebuild a sense of self as essential, valued and creative” (Fliegel, 2005, p. 49). “In addition, the organization creates bridges between social service agencies and artist, thus providing a unique understanding of health and hope for positive future” (Fliegel, 2005, p. 55). This agency is critical in connecting young people with their potential and creating avenues to empower their unique selves. In working with altered books, I followed a similar belief in working with

the female adolescents by creating an opportunity through art making to remind them that they are unique, important and have a voice to be shared.

“The transformative power of the arts can give voice to those who have been silenced by their circumstances. And by venturing outside the consulting room into the community, we are able to join with these young people in transcendent moments of creating art, community and hope for a positive future” (Fliegel, 2005, p. 60).

The belief and passion that AIP has for the power of creativity was the aspect of my research I was eager to employ in working with female adolescents. In setting my research inside a school setting, I was able to make my own footprint in the city by bringing myself and the studio out into the community. In this way AIP’s philosophy worked well in enhancing my drive to create new connections of self expression for the females participating in the research. I anticipated that the opportunity to speak and create as they wished alongside peers and in a community where they already identified with the females enabled them to harness the transcendent moments in their own journey.

Following the idea of self expression in a community, Potash (2009) references Moon’s statement: “Given that adolescents have the capacity for abstract thought and are actively developing their identities, art making may provide an outlet for expression and opportunity to view situations from a unique perspective” (p. 53). This statement from Potash is referenced in his case study article about adolescents transforming pop culture images into their own works of art. The mention of Moon’s work with adolescents and creating art for expression fits well with the ideas of creating altered books with females giving them a creative and artistic means to develop their identity. In addition Cobb and Negash (2010) state that “a significant benefit of art therapy is that it offers people a voice outside of the language with which they typically use to communicate” (p.57). Adolescents’ use of verbal language to communicate is still developing; therefore, when

they are introduced to alternative and possibly more natural way of self expression, there are significant benefits to working with an art therapist. Creativity through the body, such as art making, which relies heavily on the body to move and make materials move as needed, allows for an alternative way of communicating, without much conscious thought. On the theme of self expression, my research was designed to provide opportunities where the co-researchers were able to incorporate their bodies' creation of art, alongside their opportunity to return to cognitive and verbal communication. As Cobb and Negash (2010) state "by performing before an audience, whether it is before a therapist, friends, or family, the client is given the opportunity to practice their new way of life" (p. 58). The performance aspect of the research project came to life in the art making sessions, where each co-researcher was invited to share the stories they had about the art they made in the session. The blending of art making and 'performing' encouraged the incorporation of the art back into cognitive processing.

Transformative power. Connected to the previous ideas about verbal expression and art making expression, Vick (2011) states "by creating and providing pre-structured art elements as the stimulus for art making, the art therapist can deemphasize more overtly directive verbal tasks in favor of an approach that allows the art material itself to create a structural framework" (p.75). As this emphasises the true intention of using published books as art canvas, the framework of the book has this variety of possibilities. Another aspect of art making is "employing 'externalizing conversation' (which) allows for the re-examination of dominant stories in ways that allow people to reconstruct new stories" through the art (Cobb & Negash, 2010, p. 55). The reconstruction of one's story is similar to that of reconstructing the book. Transformation of materials into a creation has great power. In this research the primary material was that of a published book,

waiting to be altered by the co-researcher. “The exercise of re-authoring a book that already exists symbolizes the parallel possibilities that clients have to reauthor their own lives” (Cobb & Negash, 2010, p. 54). It is in this method of creating art that the transformation of the pages of a book were being re-written by the co-researchers hands. The re-authoring is symbolic of the transformation that can occur when one’s life is changing and the person needs to take back the control of her life. Taking control of the written text parallels the artist's ability to take control of her life.

Conclusion

Throughout this literature review the topics of the voice of the adolescent, the mental health of adolescents and the experience of art making were explored in relation to the thesis research. The voice of the female adolescent was reviewed in the investigation of a selection of case studies in which mental health professionals explored means to aid adolescent empowerment. The mental health of adolescents was covered in part by the diligent data collection of the Canadian Mental Health Association. Their research efforts help us to understand more fully the wide-ranging mental health challenges facing adolescents. In the final section, expression through art making was described, which included literature elucidating the complexity of using art therapy with clients. These topics provide background for the goal of this research, giving space and time to young women in order to promote empowerment and self-expression through art making.

There are currently few art therapy or expressive arts based articles which deal particularly with adolescents and self expression through a creative outlet. The lack of expressive arts based articles is a limitation found in this type of research. Additional limitations of this thesis will be discussed in the final chapter.

FOREWORD TO CO-RESEARCHERS' CHAPTERS

The following chapters answer the primary research questions: what happens when young women are given an opportunity to express themselves through the art practice of altered bookmaking? Sub questions included: How will these young women engage in the opportunity to make altered books? What, if any, stories will be told? How will the voice of the young women be expressed? Since no one can provide empowerment to others, I created an open and safe atmosphere in which the co-researcher might be able to claim their power and voice, through their artistic expression and story sharing.

In keeping with the Arts Based and a form of Collaborative Inquiry methodologies, the chapters presented are the unique expressions of the work of the co-researchers. Throughout their sessions of art making, the co-researchers were given the opportunity to verbally express themselves using words, which I then transcribed for their review. In the reviewing process, held in the Digging Deeper sessions, the co-researcher were free to express themselves through the means of creating a chapter. The chapters are presented just as they were once the co-researcher deemed them approved for print.

CHAPTER 3: AMANDA

Session One

Marie Muggerridge: Can anyone maybe tell me why they picked their book?

Amanda: I liked the title. Jumping through Fires.

...

MM: Anybody feeling brave for just a step by step on what they did.

A: I made contrasting colours and started making shapes. Then I did a kind of ombre kinda thing.

MM: What type of materials did you use?

A: Oil pastels.

MM: Do you want to show us the second page?

A: I am not finished.

...

MM: Thank-you everyone for story sharing today.



Session Two

MM: What do you want to share with us first? And what can you tell us about this?

A: I saw that this said that "the whole world was on fire." So I did a background image of a fire.

MM: Okay, and what kind of paint did you use? Or did you just use paint, right? Is the reason you chose fire, was it because of the words?

A: (nodding)

MM: Can you tell me more about the image of fire?

A: (shaking head "no")

MM: No. Is there any reference to the title of the book?

A: Ya.

MM: did you have another image to share if it is ready? And what image do we have here? Just anything spontaneous that comes to mind.

A: not really.

MM: Can you tell us what you did.

A: I put that there because it looks like she is looking into a sea of words.

MM: Did you make a poem on this side?

A: Sort of.

MM: You just selected words.

A: And drew pictures of them.

...

MM: Thank-you so much, is there anything else you want to share?

A: No

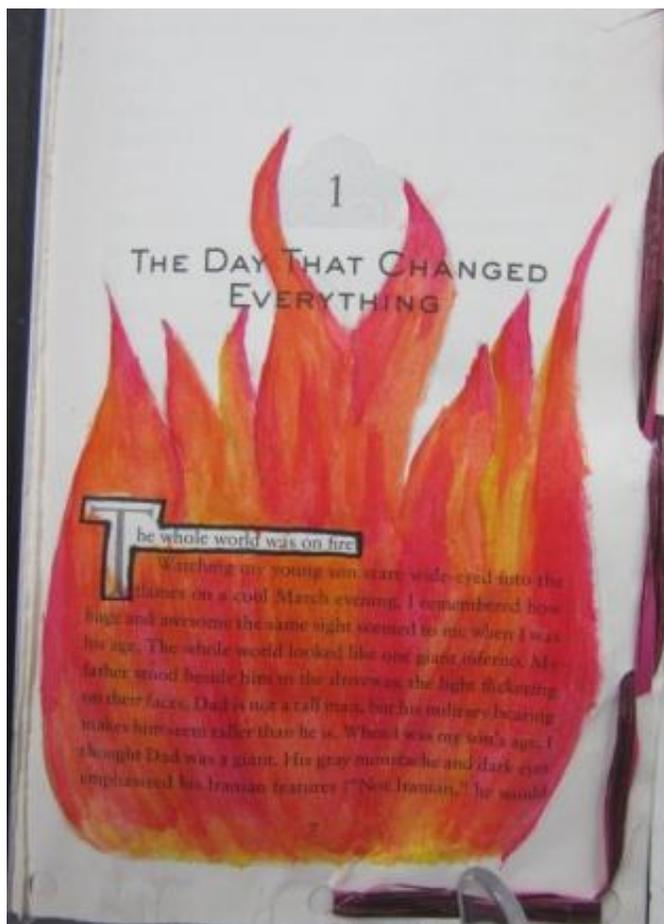
MM: Is there any questions I should have asked?

A: No

MM: And do you have any idea where you might go next with you art?

A: No

MM: Okay. Thank-you for sharing.



1
THE DAY THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

The whole world was on fire. Watching my young son stare wide-eyed into the flames on a cold March evening, I remembered how huge and awesome the same sight seemed to me when I was his age. The whole world looked like one giant inferno. My father stood beside him in the darkness, the light flickering on their faces. Dad is not a tall man, but his military bearing makes him seem taller than he is. When I was my son's age, I thought Dad was a giant. His gray mustache and dark eyes emphasized his Iranian features. ("Not Iranian," he would

THE DAY THAT CHANGED EVERYTHING

to be out of class. I hoped that whatever we were attending would take as long as it could because the longer the assembly, the less schoolwork we would have to do. So there we stood, the whole student body in uniform, elementary through senior high.

It became apparent this was no ordinary break from class when, as we filed into the assembly area, we saw armed soldiers standing in front of the large auditorium. As soon as we were all in place, one of them yelled "Attention!" He reached into his pocket, pulled out a sheet of paper, and read three names aloud. My sister and I were on the list. I knew the other name as well. He was the child of the most influential military officer on our base. His father was a pilot like mine. I hoped our fathers had not been killed in a helicopter accident as we walked to the front.

The soldier who read our names pulled the piece of paper to his pocket, and with a flick of his hand pulled his pistol out of the holster. He took a step forward and leveled the gun at my forehead. All I could do was stare at the side of his mouth as he marched three steps to my left. The pistol lowered inches from my forehead. I saw a puddle of machine oil and gunpowder. After a moment, the barrel started to shake. I lifted my head and saw the soldier's face. He was

Session Three

MM: Any other pages, you want to share today?

A: I just have this one, I wanted to do something with the colours and like how the rainbow looks.

MM: Is there anything about the rainbow, that was drawn today specifically? Were you reminded of something?

A: Not really.

MM: Not really. Okay.

A: And the last one I just I have is my pocket right here.

MM: Oh cool, that's gonna look great.

A: I like way it kinda blends in.

MM: Blends in... cool. ... It's kind of cool like camouflage.

...

MM: Any other pages you did today that you want to share? Or are you still working on them?

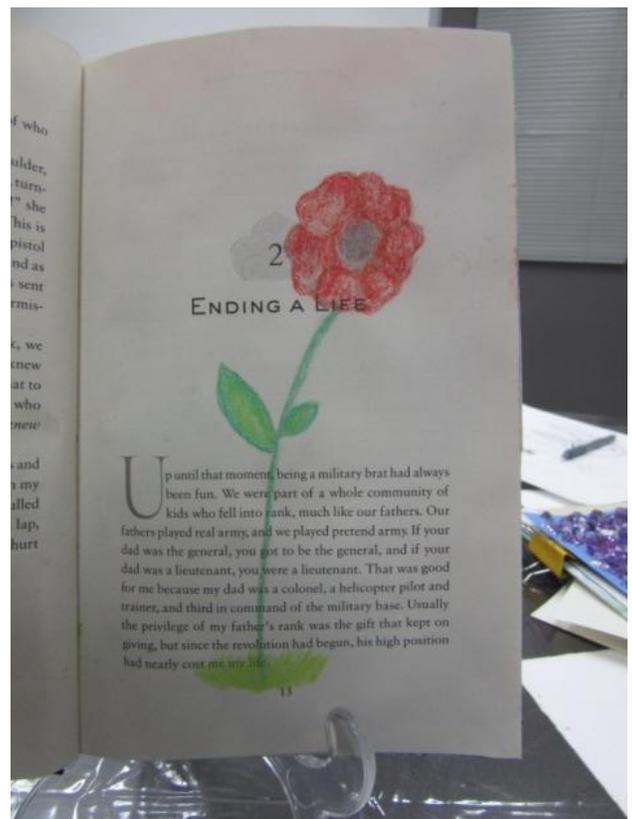
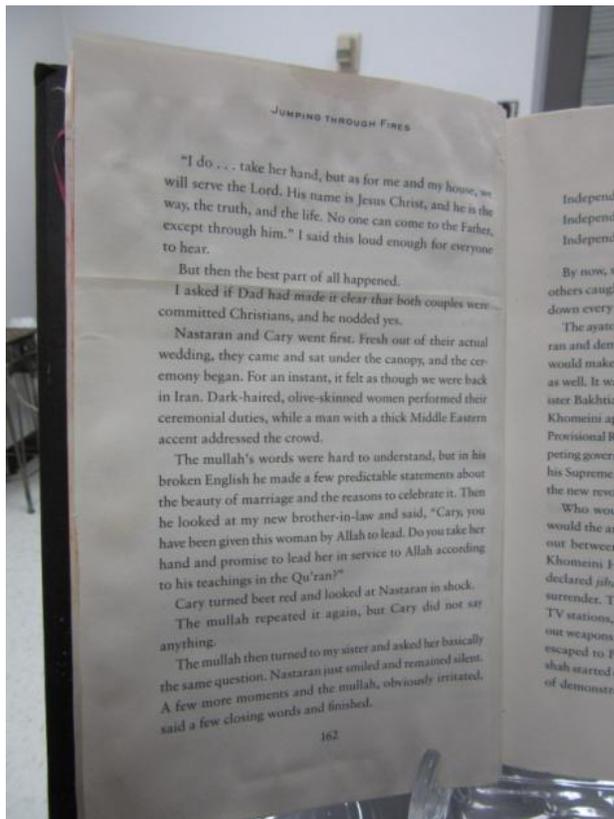
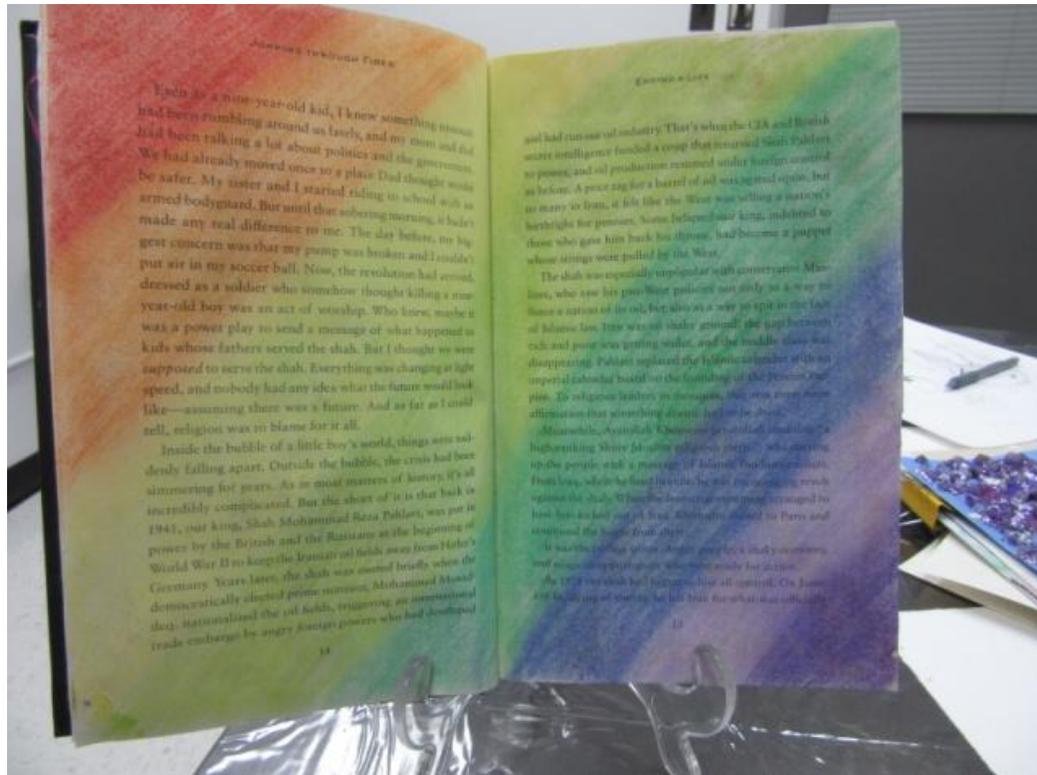
A: Still working on them.

MM: Thank-you so much.

...

Digging Deeper Revision:

A: I drew the flower because the chapter was called *Ending A Life*. And the flower reminded me of Remembrance Day.



Session Four

MM: Do you want to go next? So what do you have there to show us?

A: I have these two pages.

MM: Okay.

A: On this one, this one's just a symbol, it's called The Operator symbol. And on this page it says "The sun sees the body, the moon sees your soul." I just liked the way it sounded.

MM: Ya, Did you write that yourself? Or was it from the book?

A: I don't remember where I saw it, but I saw it somewhere. I just remembered it.

MM: Nice. And the operator symbol, what is that about?

A: It's part of Slender Man. It's one of his symbols. And then this one I was reading a book today, about like scary stories, and it kinda resembled one of the stories.

MM: Okay. Which story was it that you were reading?

A: I don't know what it was called but it was, when someone was a child, they woke up in the middle of the night, and saw two eyes in the corner of their room.

MM: So those are the two red eyes.

A: Mhmm.

MM: Great, Anything else you want to share about your book making time today.

A: I just painted the outside black and put purple over it, because it had some stains I wanted to cover up.

MM: Cool.

A: On the back I put the operator symbol.

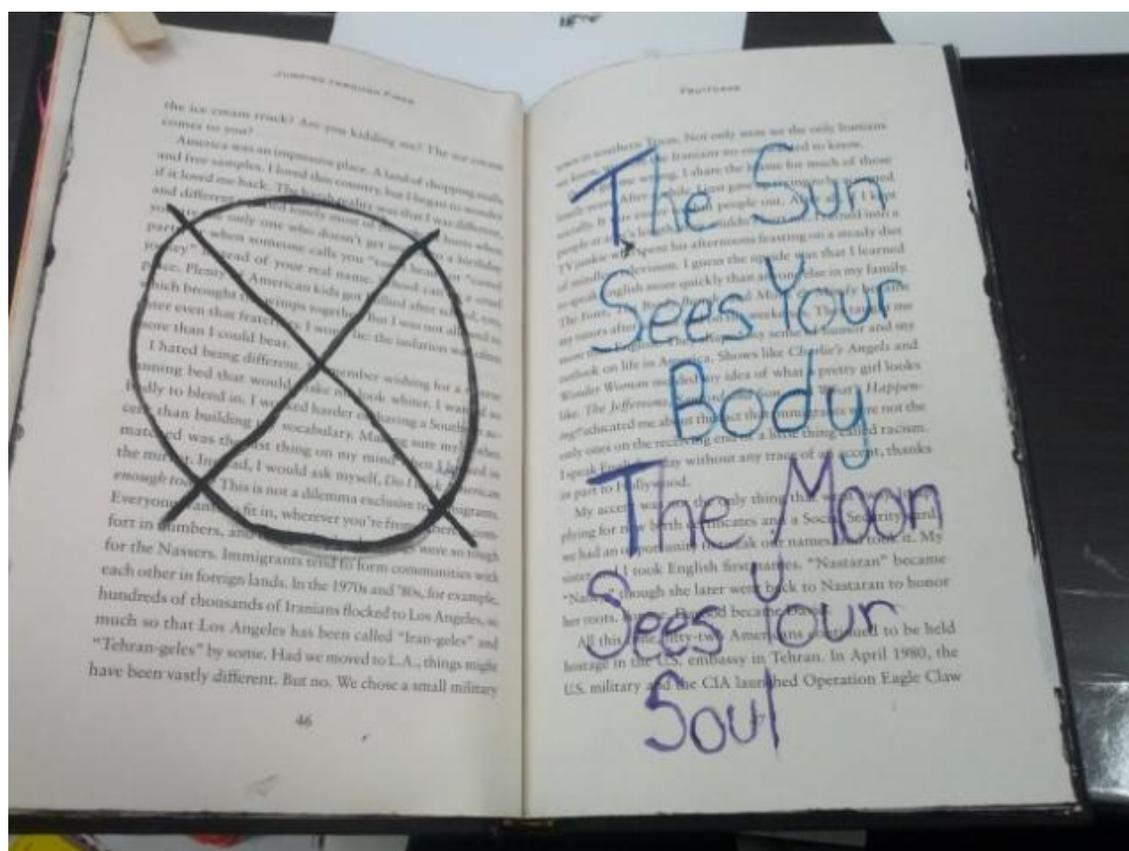
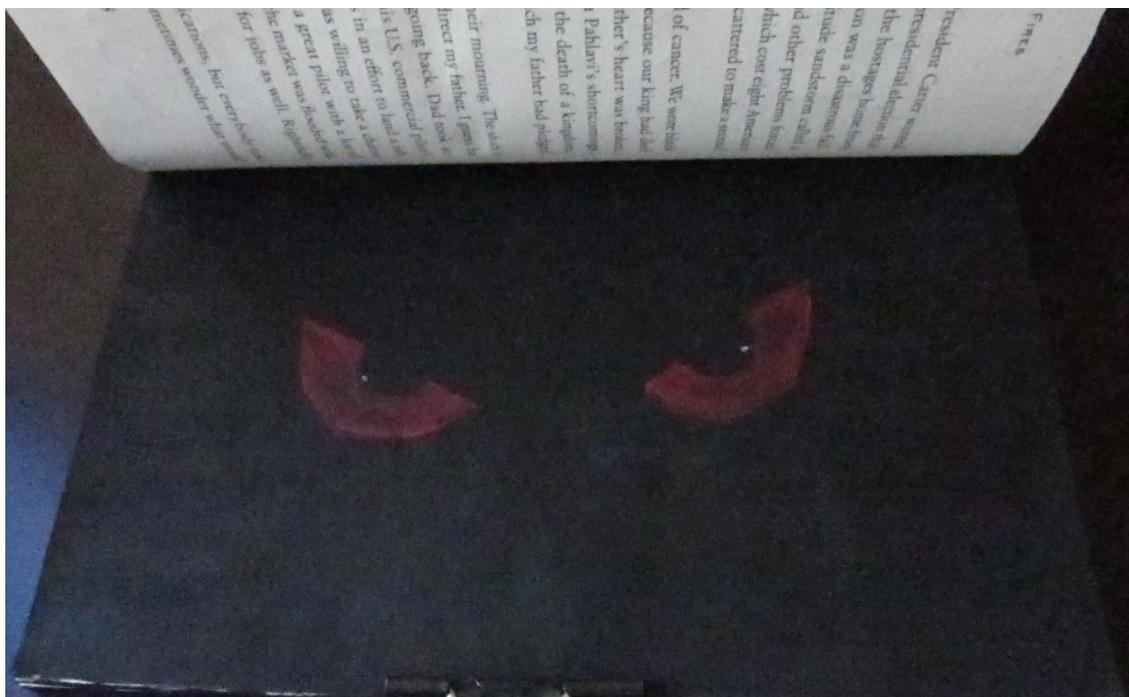
MM: Great. Is there any meaning behind the operator's symbol? Like what does it do, or what does have to do with?

A: I don't really know how to explain it, but it's suppose to summon The Operator.

MM: Okay, is The Operator good or bad or helpful?

A: Kinda bad. (Digging Deeper Revision) He is kinda helpful too, there some times where if you draw it enough it will sometimes come as help for the person who drew it.

MM: Kinda bad. Okay. Cool. Well thanks for sharing.



CHAPTER 4: ERIN JAEGER**SESSION ONE**

MARIE MUGGERIDGE: CAN ANYONE MAYBE TELL ME WHY THEY PICKED THEIR BOOK?

ERIN JAEGER: THE THICKNESS OF THE PAPER. IT WAS A GOOD SIZE. I JUST PICKED IT FOR THE PAGES.

...

MM: DO YOU WANT TO TELL US WHAT YOU DID?

EJ: I DID THIS BECAUSE I WAS BORED. (GIGGLING) AND, I DID THIS BECAUSE I WAS ALSO BORED. AND I USED PAINT AND OIL PASTELS.

MM: YOUR FRONT PAGE IS VERY COLOURFUL. IS THAT SOMETHING YOU USUALLY LIKE TO DO IN YOUR ART MAKING, IS COLOUR?

EJ: YEP.

MM: DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER PLANS FOR THE REST OF THE BOOK?

EJ: DRAWING IN IT.

MM: AND WHAT IS YOUR BOOK CALLED? OR DO YOU WANT TO CALL IT SOMETHING DIFFERENT LATER?

EJ: IT'S CALLED "IN CLOVER" I THINK.

...

MM: THANK-YOU EVERYONE FOR STORY SHARING TODAY.



SESSION TWO

MM: AND YOU DID QUITE A BIT OF WORK TODAY, I THINK, DIDN'T YOU. WHICH ONE DO YOU WANT TO START WITH?

EJ: I WANT TO START WITH THIS.

MM: SO WHAT'S THIS? THIS IS THE UM...

EJ: MOGEKO.

MM: MOGEKO.

EJ: MHHMM

MM: MHHMM. AND YOU WERE TELLING US ABOUT THIS EARLIER. CAN YOU TELL ME AGAIN, SOME OF THE STUFF ABOUT MOGEKO, THAT MAYBE YOU CONNECT WITH OR YOU LIKE ABOUT HER.

EJ: MOGEKO IS BASICALLY THE QUEEN OF MOGEKO, SHE LIKES NAPS AND TORTURE. SO DO I. (GIGGLE). THAT'S ABOUT IT.

MM: AND THAT'S AN IMAGE YOU DREW FROM AN IMAGE YOU HAD, RIGHT?

EJ: MHHM.

MM: AND IS MOGEKO A PARTICULAR ... UM... A BREED OF ANYTHING? OR MOGEKO IS AN ANIMAL?

EJ: I THINK SHE WOULD BE LIKE A MOGEKO. (GIGGLE). BECAUSE HER NAME IS MOGEKO AND SHE HAS THE EARS FROM THE MOGEKO. BUT SHE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE A MOGEKO, BECAUSE THE MOGEKOS LOOK LIKE A MESSED UP PIKACHU.

MM: OH OKAY. AND YOU WROTE. MOGEKO...

EJ: ... CASTLE.

MM: AND YOU THE GLITTER, DID YOU JUST ADD THAT...

EJ: RANDOMLY, YA.

MM: COOL, IS THERE ANOTHER IMAGE YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH US TODAY?

EJ: THERE'S THIS ONE, BUT I'M NOT DONE YET.

MM: OKAY, AND DOES IT GO THAT WAY? OR THE OTHER WAY?

EJ: IT'S SUPPOSE TO BE LIKE THIS WAY...

MM: OKAY, WELL YOU CAN HOLD IT THAT WAY IF YOU WANT.

EJ: OKAY.

MM: AND WHAT'S THAT YOU ARE DRAWING?

EJ: IT'S FROM AN ANIME CALLED TOKYO GHOUL, SO IT'S BASICALLY, LIKE ONE OF THE PEOPLE CRYING.

MM: AND IS THERE IS A NAME FOR THIS?

EJ: NOT REALLY.

MM: IS THERE ANY OTHER IMAGES YOU WANT TO SHARE?

EJ: NO.

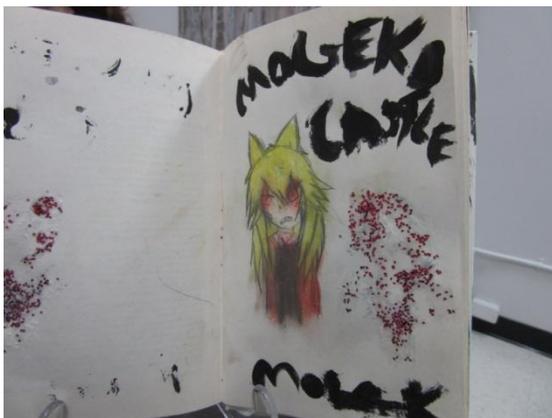
...

MM: I KNOW WE DIDN'T GET TO HEAR ABOUT THE FRONT OF YOURS? BUT IF YOU DON'T WANT TO SHARE THAT IS OKAY.

EJ: I JUST GLUED THE PAGES TOGETHER.

MM: YOU GLUED THE PAGES TOGETHER?

EJ: YES.



SESSION THREE

MM: ARE YOU READY THERE MY FRIEND? DO YOU WANT TO SHOW US YOUR BOOK OR THAT FIRST?

EJ: I'LL SHOW THIS FIRST.

MM: OKAY LET'S SEE.

EJ: WELL THIS IS THE CHARACTER I MADE UP, SHE DOESN'T EVEN HAVE A NAME YET. BUT I DREW IT FOR MY FRIEND, KIND OF FRIEND. AND YESTERDAY I MESSED IT UP, SO I RE-DREW IT AND NOW IT LOOKS BETTER.

MM: AWESOME, DO YOU WANT IT PART OF THE RESEARCH AND BE IN THE BOOK?

EJ: SURE.

...

MM: AND WHAT DID YOU MAKE IN YOUR BOOK TODAY?

...

MM: SO THAT'S UM, WHAT DID YOU USE THERE?

EJ: UM... I FOUND ROCKS IN THE BIN THING. AND I LIKED THEM SO I WANTED TO THEM ON SOMETHING, AND I ALSO WANTED TO USE GLITTER, SO I DID THAT.

MM: THAT'S AWESOME, THANK-YOU FOR SHARING.

EJ: I ALSO DID THESE BECAUSE I LIKE THEM, I ALSO UM, LIKE PAINT.

MM: YES, I NOTICED THAT.

...

EJ: AND THEN I DID THIS, BECAUSE I REALLY LIKE ZODIACS.

MM: WHAT ZODIACS?

EJ: IT'S THE LIBRA AND THE SCORPIO.

...

EJ: I ALSO DID THIS WITH UM... I CAN'T REMEMBER WHAT THEY ARE CALLED...

MM: CHALK PASTELS?

EJ: YEP, BECAUSE I LIKE THEM AND THEY ARE NICE. I ALSO DID A BUNCH OF RAINBOWS. I FINISHED THIS.

MM: COOL, WHAT'S IT'S NAME, HER NAME?

EJ: AYATO.



SESSION FOUR

MM: YOU CAN GO AHEAD.

EJ: I GLUED THE ROCKS ON THE PAPER, THAT I DID LAST TIME, INTO THIS PAGE BECAUSE I LIKE THE ROCKS.

MM: OKAY.

EJ: AND THEN I DID THE OPERATOR SIGN, AS DID AMANDA TOO, BECAUSE WE BOTH LIKE THE OPERATOR, I GUESS. AND THEN I GLUED THE PAGES WITH PAINTS ON THEM, BECAUSE I LIKED THEM TOO. THEN I GLUED THE PAGES TOGETHER, BECAUSE I SAID WHY NOT, AND I DID IT. AND THEN I DID SONG LYRICS, FROM THE SONG WE WERE LISTENING TO EARLIER. AND IT SAYS RAIN DROPS, SO I DREW A CLOUD AND RAIN. AND ON ROSES, WHICH IT'S NOT A ROSE, BUT IT'S A FLOWER BUT THAT COUNTS. AND GIRLS IN WHITE DRESSES, BECAUSE I DREW A GIRL IN A WHITE DRESS. AND SLEEPING WITH ROACHES, SO I DREW ROACHES. I DIDN'T KNOW HOW TO DRAW SOMEONE SLEEPING. AND THEN TAKING BEST GUESSES. SO YA. THAT'S ABOUT IT.

MM: THAT'S GREAT. THANKS FOR SHARING, THAT'S GREAT.

EJ: I ALSO DID MOGEKO.

MM: MOGEKO AGAIN. BIGGER WITH COLOUR?

EJ: YEP.



CHAPTER 5: LUCY HARTFILIA

Session One

Marie Muggeridge: Can anyone maybe tell me why they picked their book?

Lucy Hartfilia: I liked the colour and the title. "The Love Letters."

...

MM: Do you want to share something about your book, what you did.

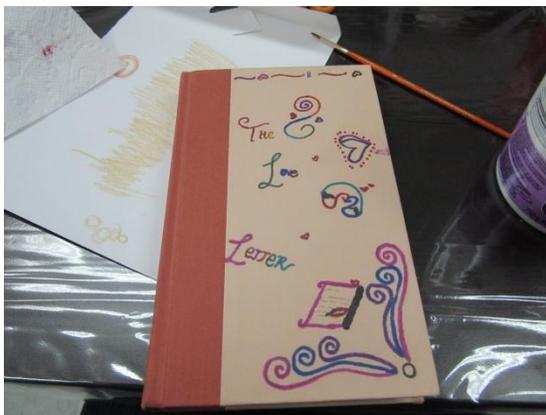
LH: The first thing I did was write the title "The love Letter" and then colour them like a rainbow. Using the Sharpies, and on the back I used the paint and I draw a heart of the Love Letters and the wings.

MM: Is there anything else you want to do in your book? Do you have any ideas?

LH: I have an idea, but I am going to need to draw it.

...

MM: Thank-you everyone for story sharing today.



Session Two

MM: What did you make today, that you want to share with us?

LH: I finished the back page. And also I painted a heart over here. That title is page is “Love Letters” by Cathleen King. And I’m still finish it.

MM: Okay, Is there one page you finished today you want to take a photo of?

LH: Ya.

MM: Okay, which one is it? Do you want to put it in here? I don’t know if everyone got to see the picture or your images. Do you want me to help you? There do you want to take a photo?

LH: Ya.

MM: And is there a title for that page.

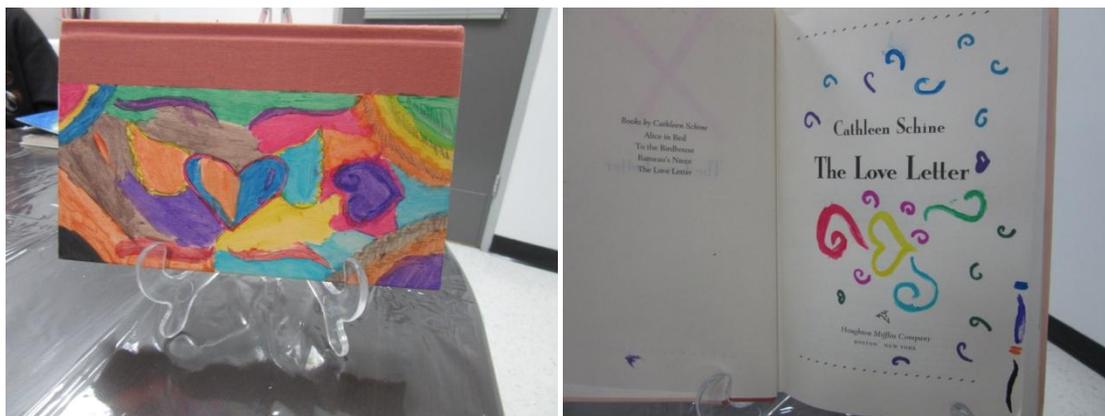
LH: It is the Love Letter.

MM: The Love Letter. And did you do any other pages that you want to share? Do you want to take a picture of the back one too maybe?

LH: Yes.

MM: Awesome, thanks. Is there anything else you want to say?

LH: Nope.



Session Three

MM: And my friend here. What do you have to show us today? What did you start with?

LH: I started with a picture, then I coloured it using paint and marker. I also did a pocket. And it's still not finished.



Session Four

Lucy Hartfilia: The first thing I did I cut the picture, then I draw a rainbow, because rainbow is my favorite colour, also near pink. And then, I painted the picture pink and I draw a letter here, it start with the letter 'L' so I put that 'O,' 'V,' and 'E,' so it will form the word, LOVE. And here I painted the purple and pink, cause pink and purple are my favorite colours, before. And that's all.

MM: That's all. Anything else you did to the book today that you want to share?

LH: No.



CHAPTER 6: MIDNIGHT

SESSION ONE

MARIE MUGGERIDGE: HOW DID THAT GO?

MIDNIGHT SKY: IT WAS GOOD.

...

MM: CAN ANYONE MAYBE TELL ME WHY THEY PICKED THEIR BOOK?

MS: IT WAS SMALL. THE PAGES WERE EASY TO RIP, THEY WERE ALREADY COMING OUT. AND THE PAGES.

...

MM: DOES ANYBODY WANT TO TALK ABOUT THE ART THEY MADE AND SHOW US? WHO WANTS TO SHARE ABOUT ART THEY MADE TODAY, MAYBE ABOUT THE COLOURS OR JUST THE PROCESS. SO BASICALLY, YOU CAN JUST TELL ME I USED THIS TYPE OF MATERIAL, I DID THIS TO IT, I DID IT BECAUSE THIS INSPIRED ME OR NOT. SO JUST...

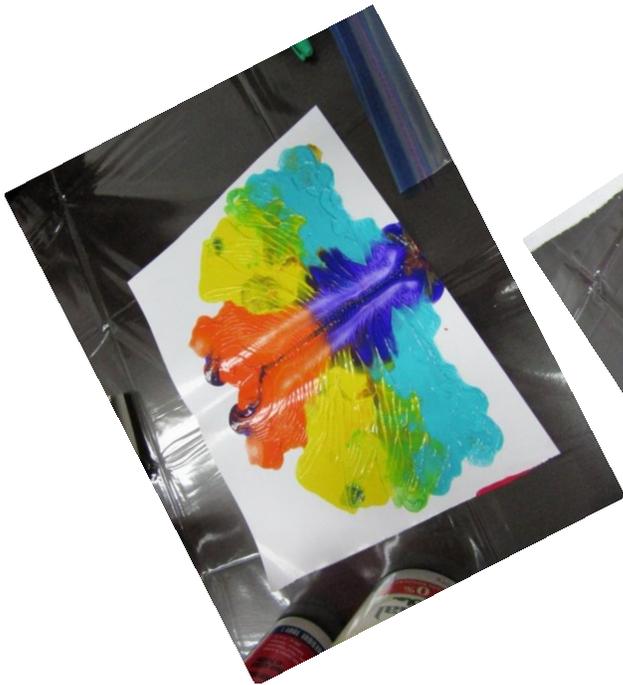
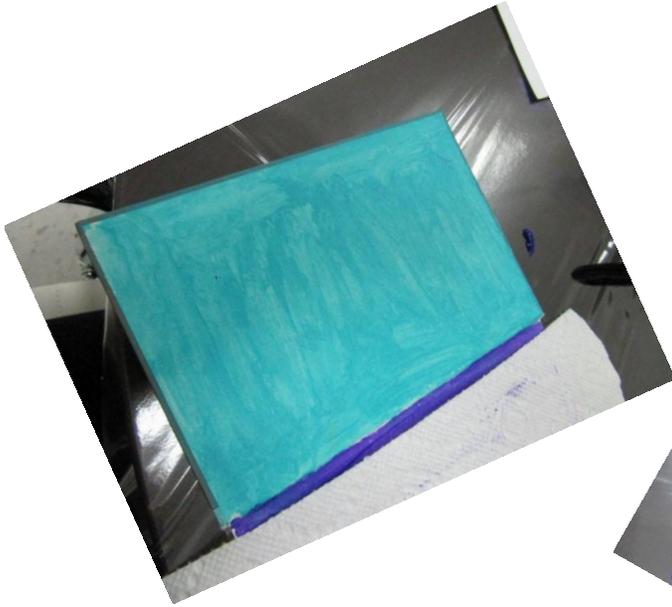
MS: I USED THIS MATERIAL, CAUSE IT'S NOT EASY TO SEE THROUGH UNLESS YOU GET PAINT ON THE FRONT. AND I DID THIS PICTURE, THE SUN, CAUSE SOMETIMES WHEN YOU ARE DOING A MYSTERY, IT'S ALWAYS SUNNY OUT, SO, I DID A SUN. I HAD FINGERPRINTS, LIKE SOMEONE STOLE OR SOMETHING, I JUST DREW ON THE PAGES, I AM NOT DONE YET. AND I ADDED A COUPLE OF PICTURES ON IT. NOW I JUST HAVE TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO ON THE LAST PAGES.

MM: CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT RIPPING OUT THE PAGES? HOW WAS THAT? WHAT HAPPENED?

MS: IT WAS FUN. (SMILING) I RIPPED THEM OUT BECAUSE I WANTED PEOPLE TO BE LIKE THERE IS A MYSTERY IN HERE. AND THEN THEY WOULD OPEN IT UP AND SAY "OH! THERE ARE PICTURES THERE. AND OH THERE'S JUST ONE PAGE." SO WHEN THEY TRY TO FLIP TO THE NEXT PAGE. OH! IT'S STUCK. THE REST OF THE BOOK IS STUCK.

...

MM: THANK-YOU EVERYONE FOR STORY SHARING TODAY.



SESSION TWO

MARIE MUGGERIDGE: FIRST OF ALL, IF YOU WERE TO GIVE THIS IMAGE A TITLE. WOULD YOU HAVE A TITLE FOR IT?

MIDNIGHT SKY: WELL, FOR THE STARS, IT'S LIKE, THE BLUE IS THE SKY, THE GREEN IS THE GRASS. THE GOLD STAR REPRESENTS LIKE GOOD BEHAVIOR. THE SKY HAS BEEN REALLY GOOD FOR US, FOR A LITTLE WHILE. SO I PUT A GOLD STAR ON IT. AND THEN I PUT A GOLD STAR ON GRASS BECAUSE WITHOUT THE GRASS WE WOULDN'T HAVE THE PLANTS, AND WITHOUT THE PLANTS WE WOULDN'T HAVE TREES, WITHOUT THE TREES, WE WOULDN'T HAVE OXYGEN. WITHOUT THE OXYGEN, NO ONE WOULD BE HERE. I DREW THE ROSE BECAUSE I WAS THINKING OF BEAUTY AND THE BEAST, AND I WAS LIKE I CAN DO A ROSE SO I DID A ROSE WITH THE THREE DOTS, I JUST WANTED TO USE THE GLITTER INSTEAD OF WASTING IT. IT TURNED OUT REALLY WELL.

MM: ARE YOU HAPPY WITH IT THEN?

MS: YEP.

MM: ARE THERE ANY OTHER PAGES YOU WANT TO SHARE WITH US TODAY?

MS: YES, I JUST NEED A KLEENEX FOR THE GLUE. I ATTACHED THIS ON THERE BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE IT HANGING, SO...

MM: DO YOU HAVE A TITLE FOR IT?

MS: MIXED COLOURS. CAUSE IT'S ALL MIXED COLOURS. ON THIS PAGE, I ADDED A LITTLE BIT MORE PURPLE, AND I DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE THE OTHER PAGE BLANK. I FOUND THAT CARD SYMBOLS THING, AND FOUND THE FEATHER, AND THEY LOOKED GOOD TOGETHER, SO I ADDED THOSE TOGETHER. THAT I ADDED THERE ON TOO, AND ADDED SOME COLOURS. I AM NOT REALLY DONE WITH IT YET, BUT... WITH WHERE I AM, IT'S PROBABLY GOING TO LOOK WEIRD, BUT, I LIKE IT.

MM: ANYTHING ABOUT THAT ROSE? I KNOW THAT WAS THE FIRST PIECE YOU DID AND YOU ADDED ALL THAT GLITTER.

MS: BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

MM: BEAUTY AND THE BEAST. THAT WOULD BE THE TITLE OF IT?

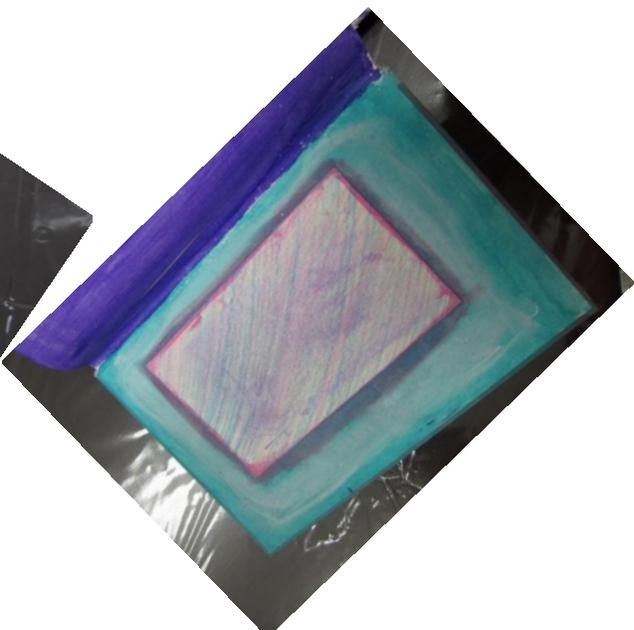
MS: YEP.

...

MM: DO YOU HAVE A VISION OF WHERE YOU ARE GOING TO GO NEXT, WITH YOUR ART?

MS: (SHAKING HEAD "NO")

MM: NOT YET. OKAY GREAT. THANK- YOU SO MUCH.



SESSION THREE

MS: THIS SIDE I USED OIL PASTELS, THEN I WENT AROUND A LOT OF THINGS YOU CAN BARELY SEE. I WENT BLACK AROUND HERE AND OVER A FINGER PRINT. ON HERE, I PUT THE HEART THERE BECAUSE, HARLEY WAS MY CAT, AND HE PASSED AWAY ON THIS DATE. THAT'S WHY I PUT IT THERE, AT THE EXACT TIME, IN MY BASEMENT. I PUT THE HEART THERE BECAUSE HE LOVED A LOT OF THINGS. THAT I PUT HARLEY AND MY NEW CAT, AND I PUT EQUALS FRIENDS. I PUT A HEART AND THEN I PUT A DIAMOND. AND THEN HERE, I PUT FRIENDSHIP FOREVER, BECAUSE I WAS THINKING ABOUT ALL OF YOU. (POINTING A GROUPS MEMBERS). I PUT LOVE, I PUT PEACE. I DON'T KNOW WHY I PUT THAT. IT WAS JUST, I WANTED TO SOMETHING LIKE THAT. OVER HERE, I'VE GOT MY ENVELOP AND A PICTURE OF A BASKET, OVER TOP OF MY ART THAT DECIDED TO WRECK ON ME. ON THE BACK HERE I PUT A K FOR THE FIRST LETTER OF MY NAME. AND THEN I STARTED. ON THIS BOOK, NOT DONE IT YET, BUT ON THIS, FRONT COVER, I PUT ON MY HAND PRINT AND A LOT OF MY FINGER PRINTS. LIKE ALL OF THEM. LET ME JUST FIND IT.

...

I PUT "DIE HAPPY" BECAUSE EVERYONE DIES AT ONE POINT, AND THEY GOT TO BE HAPPY WHEN THEY DO. I HAVE ANOTHER HAND PRINT SOMEWHERE. THIS I ATTEMPTED TO WRITE "DIE..." I WAS GOING TO PUT HAPPY UNDERNEATH, BUT IT DIDN'T SHOW UP. I PUT HALF A HAND PRINT. I JUST HAVE TO FIND THAT PAGE.

...

I JUST WENT TO A RANDOM PAGE AND PUT MY HAND PRINT ON IT. I'LL GET IT SOON.

...

IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL HANDPRINT. MY MIDDLE FINGER DIDN'T WANT TO SHOW, I MEAN MY RING FINGER. IT WAS AT THE END OF A CHAPTER I KNOW THAT. I KNOW I AM CLOSE. SORRY IF I TAKE LONG. IT'S NOT MY FAULT I CAN'T FIND IT.

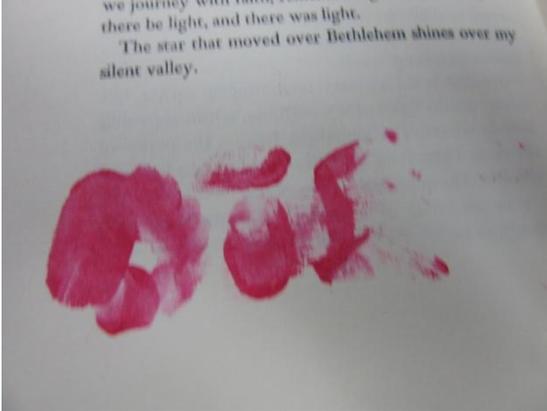
MM: AWESOME, THANKS SO MUCH FOR SHARING.

...

MS: FOUND IT!

MM: YOU FOUND IT, WANT TO SHOW US.

MS: HANDPRINT OVER A PAGE AND IT LOOKS COOL.



we journey with rain, and
there be light, and there was light.
The star that moved over Bethlehem shines over my
silent valley.

patterns of my
we were with
longer ask
of weather. I
my with a
to of down
ry's gentle
elf and of
t of man-
ngle shell
sweeps in,
ole. One
er. Now
said, Let
ver my



SESSION FOUR

MS: SO, DREW THIS BECAUSE I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO AND I REMEMBERED I HAD A PICTURE ON MY PHONE OF LINDY FROM *I DIDN'T DO IT*, HAVING ILLUMINATI CONFIRMED ON HER SHIRT. SO I, I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, PLUS I ALREADY HAD AN ARROW THERE AND A TORNADO LOOKING THING AND I DIDN'T WANT IT TO BE A PINK TORNADO, WITH A LITTLE ONE COMING AT HIM SO I PUT EYES ON THEM TO MAKE THEM LOOK PEOPLE. I COLOURED THAT, BECAUSE HONESTLY I WAS JUST BORED.

I WANT THE BORDERS TO BE PINK, BECAUSE IT SAYS FORWARD. A LOT PEOPLE, WHEN WE GO FORWARD WITH LIFE ARE GONNA LIKE PINK.

I DREW A CROSS, BECAUSE WHEN I WAS FLIPPING THROUGH THE PAGES I SAW SOME WORDS THAT I JUST, I COULD DRAW. SO, I BOXED RED CROSS, THERE, AND PUT A RED CROSS WITH BROWN INSIDE.

IT SAYS HERE "LOVELY SOUP" SO I PUT A SILVER BOWL, WITH BLUE INSIDE TO LIKE, OBTAIN SOUP BUT IT'S WATER AND YOU CAN'T REALLY SEE IT, BUT THERE IS WHITE HERE AS STEAM.

IT SAYS "SNOW DROPS" SO, I PUT, LIKE SNOW FALLING FROM THE SKY, I DON'T KNOW IF YOU GUYS CAN SEE THAT? AND THEN AT THE BOTTOM, IT'S JUST SNOW, LIKE WE HAVE OUTSIDE. (WHISPERING) WHICH IS HORRIBLE.

I DREW RING BECAUSE IT SAYS RINGS OVER HERE SO IT'S SOMETHING I COULD DRAW. I WAS GONNA WRITE, GONNA DO THE TELEPHONE BUT, BUT LIKE, NOOO I CAN'T DRAW THAT VERY WELL.

IT SAID "PEACE" SIGN, SO I DREW A PEACE SIGN, TO RESEMBLE PEACE IN THE WORLD.

IT SAID "TEA", SO I DREW HOT TEA, WITH STEAM COMING OUT.

IT SAYS "MILK" WELL, IT SAYS "PERISHING UNDER SIX QUARTS OF MILK" SO I DREW MILK IN WHITE AND PUT MILK ON IT SO YOU GUYS CAN SEE WHAT IT REALLY IS.

AGAIN, I BOXED, SO I PUT A LITTLE BLUE THING TO RESEMBLE THE SEA.

SAID GIFT, I DON'T KNOW IF YOU CAN SEE IT, BUT RIGHT THERE IN PINK, BOXED, I DREW A GIFT, BECAUSE IT'S ALMOST CHRISTMAS, AND I WAS FLIPPING THROUGH THE PAGES, AND ITS SOMETHING I COULD DRAW.

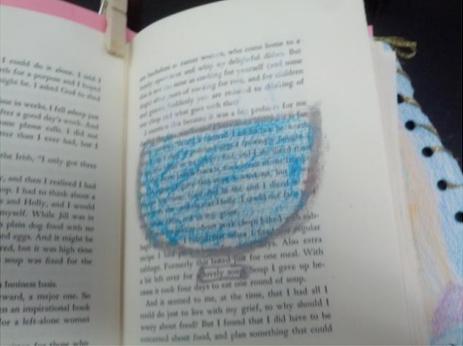
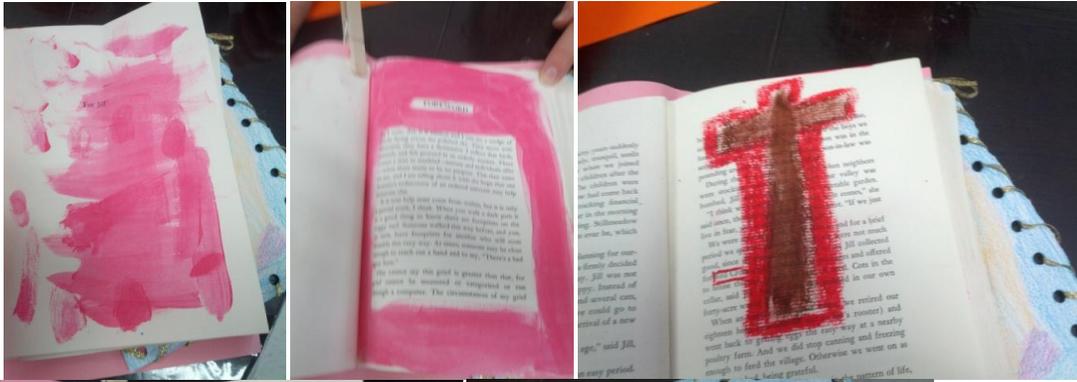
IT SAYS "NOTE" HERE, AND BECAUSE I KNOW ALL OF US LIKE TO PASS NOTES IN CLASS, I DREW, SOME, AND I PUT BLACK LETTER THINGS, WELL SQUIGGLY LINES TO MAKE IT LOOK LIKE IT'S WRITING.

I DID THIS, BECAUSE PURPLE IS MY SECOND FAVORITE COLOUR, AND BECAUSE I DID TOO MUCH PINK, I PUT PURPLE. AND BECAUSE I WANTED SOMETHING THAT I COULD ACTUALLY SEE ON THE PAGE. I ASKED LUCY HARTFILIA WHAT HER FAVORITE COLOUR WAS AND, I PUT HER FAVORITE COLOUR ON THERE, BECAUSE SHE IS MY BEST FRIEND.

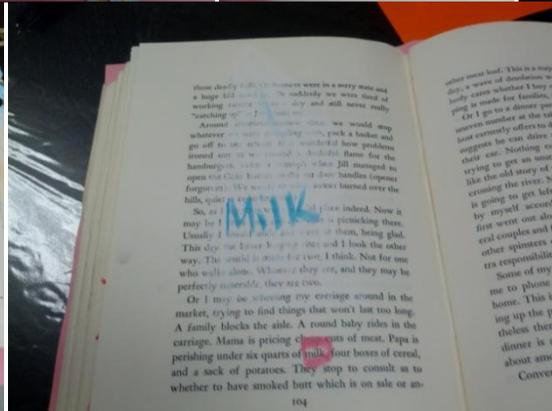
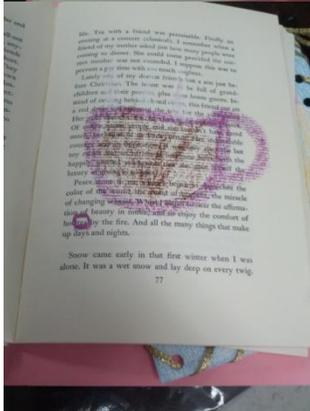
WHEN WE DID THAT WARM UP THING, I DREW THIS, AND BEFORE YOU GUYS EVEN CAME IN HERE, I PUT HOLES IN IT TO MAKE A LITTLE LIKE FANCY DESIGN, AND I ATTACHED IT TO MY BOOK, BECAUSE WHEN I GET THIS BACK IT'S GONNA RESEMBLE HOW MUCH FUN WE HAD HERE.

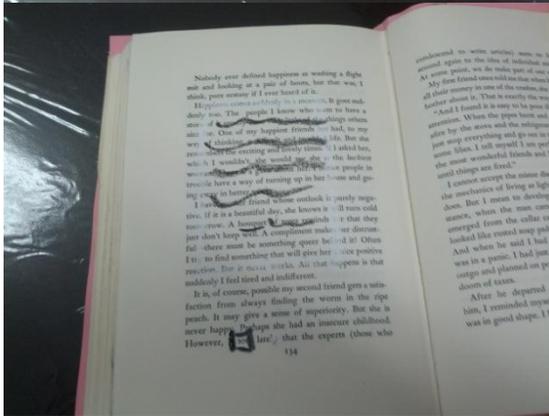
MM: THANK-YOU SO MUCH MIDNIGHT SKY.

MS: I DID THIS, BECAUSE I REALLY WANTED TO USE THESE ROCKS AND PINK LETTERS.



Snow falling





FRIENDSHIP

CHAPTER 7: WIT(H)NESSING

“(...) fully being with and beside the other in remembrance and experience”
(Snowber and Bickel, p.76, 2015).

In keeping with the Arts Based Research approach, I embarked on the witnessing phase of my research. Since this thesis uses a qualitative approach there is a complex relationship between data and analysis making it difficult to distinguish one from the other. This process included deep contemplation and meaning making as a response to the group art making sessions followed by my individually-created artwork. Throughout the month in which the group art making sessions were held, I was creating art in response to each of these sessions. Through my art therapy training and knowledge of the unconscious, I have used the unconscious as a response to the art making sessions. The method I employed for the creation of the works followed several steps. Once the session was complete, and I was back in my private studio, I listened to the audio recording of the session's Story Sharing. I reviewed the images the co-researchers took of their work and I read over my notes. Once immersed in the stimulations of the session, I then created artwork, keeping in mind the witnessing of the session and the stories which were shared. I allowed my body and creative self to move about the studio choosing supplies and working diligently with them until a sense of completion was formed in the art. I made every attempt to allow for an embodied image to come forth (Schaverien, 1992). Knowing my process of creating needs to be silent and contemplative, I ensured these criteria were met. After the month of group art making sessions, I was left with four images, one witnessing each of the sessions. Through this process I was discovering a deeper connection between myself and the divine (Allen 2012). As I let my art making lead my inquiry, I invited the Spirit to come into my work. Meaning making for me comes from within. I believe that God provides us with all that we need inside which is

much like a Rogerian person-centered approach, although Rogers was not a theist (Rogers, 1981). As an artist I trust that the art I create is power-filled with my own insights of life and can lead me to be more connected to God, the one who created me.

Session One – *The Art Animal*



Figure 8. *The Art Animal* by M. Muggeridge, 2015

The initial session, one filled with anticipation. The image I created in witnessing session one, has two images on one page (see Figure 8). These two images resemble a dust jacket for a book, one image for the front of the book and the second for the back. Clearly these images are related in colour and in presence to one another on the page. In speaking with the image, our conversation is as follows:

Marie Muggeridge: Animal, you wear a collar? Who's are you?

Artwork: I am the art animal. I lead those to the art making process. Do not worry I am always with you. I will be present in your sessions to guide your co-researchers into meaningful art making.

MM: Yes, you are right I am eager that the co-researchers find meaning for themselves in these sessions. This was my goal for the research.

AW: Don't fret. This is much like a therapy session, meaning and value must be brought forward by the co-researcher. Putting your own value on their experience is not what these two parts of your work is about.

MM: Thank-you wise art animal.

Art animal why do you look at the moon?

AW: I look at the moon and its ability to reflect the light of the sun in order for me to see it. The moon reflects all that is true in the work you are doing. Just like the sun is bright and colourful so is the research work you are doing.

MM: Art piece do you want to be a book?

AW: We will see...Thank-you for taking the time to talk with me.

Within this dialogue I make meaning from the artwork. It is fortuitous that I speak to the art animal in my first image. The art animal reminds me of the free and fluid and unpredictable nature of art making. The art animal reminds me and reassures me that the process of creating is a process guided by something bigger and more powerful than I. As well, the art animal reminds me of the presence of God in all aspects of my life and specifically this one of research.

In the artwork's second response, it asks me to recall the nature of my therapeutic practice which employs a Rogerian approach allowing the client/co-researcher to find meaning in one's own life (1981). In my therapeutic practice, I encourage those I work with to tell me their knowings about the art. In this way, they claim their own story enabling them to continue on the path of self discovery. Collaborative Inquiry

methodology creates a natural sequence which allows co-researchers to maintain ownership of their shared stories.

In the third interaction with the artwork/art animal, the response is that of reassurance of the work I was doing. The words of the moon reflecting light being similar to the brightness of my research work reminds me of the Christian belief that we were all made in the likeness of God's image which I associate with a reflective purpose we each have. Corresponding to my notebook writings where I state the strange and unnatural feeling I have in the sessions, the art animal reassures me that my work is valuable. My writings in the notebook express my discomfort with the similarities and differences of facilitating an art group. Unlike in sessions with clients, I felt the presence of self doubt in combination with the comfort and familiarity of working with people. This juxtaposition is what I was expressing in my informal writings. The insecurity about whether I had all the tools to accomplish this task of facilitating was juxtaposed with the pressure of knowing this was to be formalized *research*. I believe that the art animal was sent to ease these anxieties and to remind me of my abilities as an art therapist.

My final question to the art piece, about its desire to be a book, was not fully answered. Yet, there was a sense of mystery and playfulness to the art's response. It left the answer up to me, which is fitting, as in a way it was asking me to be like the co-researchers and trust in the process of making.

Session Two – *The Nebulous*



Figure 9. The Nebulous by M. Muggeridge, 2015

During the second session of art making the co-researchers and I were more relaxed and interested in continuing the art process. Throughout the session symbolic images were created by each co-researcher. These symbols are iconic ones such as fire, heart, flowers and a popular anime character. For each of the co-researchers the images were of their own creating.

In dialogue with my witnessing artwork, *The Nebulous*, (see Figure 9) the following came forward:

MM: Nebulous what are you?

AW: I am the centre of your work.

MM: Ah, yes I can see that. But what are you about to unravel?

AW: That is for me to know and you to find out.

MM: OH! Please let me know now. I am desperate to understand more.

AW: All in time. All will be revealed as needed.

MM: I love the wind that blows through your core. Are you unraveling because of the wind? When will you be done? Is there a spider in there with you?

AW: Nope no spider, just me inside this home.

Meaning making. The conversation between myself and the artwork was short. The questions I asked were direct but the responses I received were very loose. My impatient nature to know the meaning of this artwork comes through in my second and third lines; yet, the artwork stays firm, not revealing anything until it is ready. I make meaning from this interaction as it pertains to the spot I am in on this path of thesis research and writing. I am eager to know the end and how all unfolds, but the artwork affirms “All in time. All will be revealed as needed.” This statement of patience and trust reminds me of that of the disciples of Jesus, who wished to know more about events to come, such as Christ’s death or “the day your Lord will come” (Matthew 24:42, New International Version). This Scripture passage and the artworks’ insights correlate because both the disciples and I were impatient to know the future. It is through the Spirit that my art is created and through the Spirit that the conversation with the art is had; therefore, it is fitting that the artwork challenges me to be secure in the Lord rather than in my knowledge of the future.

Session Three – *The Protecting Woman*



Figure 10. The Protecting Woman by M. Muggeridge, 2015

In today's session the envelope was explained and each co-researcher took this for her own interpretation. Each co-researcher took her own approach to creating a safe pocket where her final chapter would be inserted. Since this was our third session together the co-researchers showed confidence in making their art and approaching the pocket as they felt was best for them and their book. This was a great relief that the co-researchers were finding their own voice and expression in the art-making sessions. From their interaction with their books, I could see that they were comfortable working originally and spontaneously in books as their artwork was created fluidly.

Today's image, *The Protecting Woman*, started with a full spread sheet of music from a recycled book (see Figure 10). The visible words which remain after the addition of paint and oil pastels create a found poem.

on guard
and keeps me safe from harm.
she watch
protect her
and keeps me safe from harm.
my protect
my lovely.
together!
ever!
excitement of living
of joy and wonder.

The predominant image which came forward in this art work is that of a woman, with curled hair and a softly curious expression on her face. It is she who speaks the words of the poem. It is she who 'protects her' and who enables the 'excitement,' 'joy' and 'wonder' into the lives of those around her.

Meaning making. Meaning making around this poem and woman reminds me of the loving protection God has for me – her child. I am encouraged by God to live freely and without worries, to give my worries to God as stated in 1Peter 5:7 "Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you" (New International Version). I am called to be

enveloped in God's loving arms to allow for the 'joy' of life to surround me. This woman in the image is reminding me that God's love is present if I but offer God my songs of joy and my cries for help.

The other half of this image is that of a glittery pink heart. This heart is woven around a music note. Again this heart is encompassing all that we are all able to be when immersed in the love of God if we but surrender to God's loving embrace. I connect the theme of safety from this woman figure to the safe-pocket which was being created in today's artmaking session. The females were creating a safe place to keep their coming chapter. Metaphorically the book can be the caressing arms for this pocket which will eventually hold the chapter in safety similar to the poem's words about creating protection for wonder and joy to permeate one's life.

Session Four – *The Eerie Peace Sign*



Figure 11. The Eerie Peace Sign by M. Muggeridge, 2015

In response to the fourth session with the co-researchers, I started *The Eerie Peace Sign* by tracing a large circle (see Figure 11). Using paint I began to fill in the circle with green, purple and orange colours. Next I chose a magazine page with a gnarly textured image on which I traced a circle. From this a peace sign emerged in silver marker. I painted the purple and squiggle lines and then glued the orange and white beads onto the painted circle.

The peace sign image was created on top of the image of a gnarled growing texture. The harsh lime green of this image also reminds me of fungus or growing bacteria. What does this mean? By looking more deeply at this part of the art, it seems that the peace sign is actually trying to push out and cleanse the circle of these growing

bacteria. In my notes from session four, I see that there was a conversation about creepy and eerie things in the art of the co-researchers. In particular the concept of the “Operator” was spoken about, an urban legend in which bad things are prevented by calling on him. These bad things may be in the form of Slender Man, another character from this urban legend. According to the co-researchers, the repeated drawing of the Operator’s symbol is a way to call him to you. My meaning making from this conversation is that the co-researchers are finding the sessions safe enough to talk about the things that scare them. Their openness with their fears shows that they are comfortable displaying their vulnerability. The witnessing artwork's peace sign is expressing the need to contain the eeriness of the conversations through a calm openness. In a way, holding the eerie bacteria in plain view allows for more vulnerable conversations to take place.

Subsequent Artwork

The next set of images was created in response to my four previously exhibited images from the group sessions. Each image was created spontaneously and then each was harvested spontaneously from the unconscious. This unconsciously harvested material was then sifted through to make meaning theologically and revealed insights which pertain to the artwork and my life. Much like Stone and Duke (2006) explain that theological meaning can be layered on top of non-theological views, I have written candidly about the process in which this correlation of views comes together.

Artwork – *The Praying Woman, The Animal and The Self Portrait*



Figure 12. The Praying Woman, The Animal and the Self Portrait,
by M. Muggeridge, 2016

In this mixed media art image, *The Praying Woman, The Animal and The Self Portrait*, there are three figures that presented (see Figure 12). There are also a few words that revealed themselves on the canvas: Uplift, Spiritual Feminine, Movement, and Enjoyment. In the artwork created, I used the fluid nature of watercolour paints to my process of allowing the Spirit to enter into my canvas. By liberally applying water and loose paint I was able to create coloured pools of paint allowing for the Spirit to be present in the drying paint. Once dried, I drew out some prominent shapes into their form. This process of allowing the colours to freely shape the image invites the Spirit to enter the work. Employing my active imagination to uncover the shape's true meaning is a spiritual process. As I ponder the images' shapes, I take a step back from analyzing the

art. Instead I focus on creating a connection between my spiritually guided imagination and the artwork being presented to me. In a way the development of the image is a form of meditation, allowing me to simply *be*. This form of meditation has the advantage of creating an art image from which I can dig deeper into the meanings of the elements which presented themselves in the art work. The three elements presented in this art work are *The Praying Woman, the Animal and The Self Portrait*.

The praying woman.

The Praying Woman

*Dressed in blue with a hooded robe
 Standing, eyes closed and her hands folded
 Only her hands and face white and shining
 White like the feathers of a dove
 The dove which sent good news to Noah*

*The animals surround the praying woman
 Creating a circle of peace and prosperity
 The animals know this woman
 The animals trust this woman
 The animals take comfort in this woman*

*But can we?
 We humans are resistant to this connection
 Resistant to the knowledge she holds
 Knowledge she longs to share*

*We can know this woman
 We can trust this woman
 We can take comfort in this woman*

For she is the ONE

Meaning making. This poem came from The Praying Woman's presence. Her poem speaks to a larger picture in which I believe that I struggle to trust in God. Trusting in God is a personal journey and one which takes patience and struggle. This poem relates to the witnessing of the sessions with the co-researchers. As they created art, they too were being asked to trust in the process of making art. They may have been asking themselves the same questions about connecting with me the facilitator of the studio and project. Their questions may have been: We don't know this Marie. Can we trust this Marie? Will we be comfortable with this Marie? These are questions which arise for myself when I encounter new situations, but I take comfort in knowing that God is present with me, even on days when I resist God's presence in my life. Trusting God is a process and journey. For the co-researchers the process of working through the art making sessions became easier as they knew what to expect from the session, each other, themselves, the art materials and me. Once something new has ceased to be new, the level of trust and comfort can begin to take shape.

The animal.

Marie: Hello little animal perched on the rock.

Animal: Hello right back.

Marie: Your pink face with long ears and bushy tail remind me of a variety of animals.

Are you the same animal from my first image?

Animal: I am not he, but connected to him all the same.

M: I see, what are you doing here on the rocks?

A: I am half way up the rocks, but not all the way there.

M: Looking back at your image, you are correct.

A: Thank-you for checking back in with me. It's lovely to be recognized as important and to have a voice that is welcomed in collaboration.

M: It is my goal to be connected well to those (in art or in human form) around me. I take pride in trying to make authentic connections with others.

A: Well, it certainly has made an impact on me. I am on these rocks to tell you that there is always more to be done. The rocks will never stop multiplying, but if you shift your perspective, you might want to take my word for it - these are stepping stones. Each stone leading to the next, each a decision to make about how you will leave your path/mark on the world.

M: I am willing to accept your perspective. Thank-you.

A: Excellent. That will be all for now.

M: Thank-you. Safe travels.

Meaning making. The first thing that came up from the dialogue with the animal was that she wanted me to be reassured that my approach to others has impact. The opportunity for empowerment I attempt to create with those around me, specifically my co-researchers is a great asset. This asset is important to my work as a therapist, in which I want to allow for the power of the client to come forward and be claimed by the client. The practice of checking back and admitting when something is a mistake can be that much more encouraging for clients who are able to feel the careful and deep listening that is happening by the therapist. The second element that presented itself in the dialogue with the animal was the symbolism of the rock or stepping stones. I connect this idea of trying to complete the altered books in only the few sessions we had. I sensed that the co-researchers began to feel that the pages were never ending. Much like the Animal said to me there will continually be more stepping stones to be taken. In applying the Animal's

wisdom to my own life, I take that there will always be a new decision to make about life. Even when I think I have come to an end, there is always a new beginning waiting. Remembering that the next stepping stone is right there encourages me to be firmly planted on the stone I am already on and allows me to fully embrace the richness of being right where I am, without needing to rush on to the next step.

Self portrait.

MM: Wild haired woman, pink lips and blue glittering eyes. Your presence here is unusual. Faces depicting myself are not common in my art practice. Smiling and peaceful what are you here for?

SP: I am here to have you hear.

MM: Mysterious you will be?

SP: As always attempting to connect you back to yourself.

MM: Okay, but what are you here for?

SP: I will share what you have shared: Uplift. Spiritual Feminine. Movement. Enjoyment.

MM: Mysterious again.

SP: Help me - define each of those words for me.

MM: Uplift - to raise something higher than it was. Spiritual Feminine - the female version of God and the wonders of soft, warm, welcoming, holding, caring woman. Movement - traveling, shifting. Enjoyment - feeling content with what is present.

SP: Ah! So you do know some of why I am here.

MM: Thank-you.

Meaning making. Connecting to the self portrait is challenging. Developing a dialogue with the self portrait required persuasion. I believe this stems from the difficulty to look at one's reflection. So far through my art making, the art has revealed and acknowledged positive outcomes of my process in with working with the co-researchers. In contrast to these images, which communicated very fluidly with me, with the self portrait image I struggle to hear what it is trying to say. In a way I wonder if it is actually trying to teach me a lesson in inherent knowing.

Artwork – *Focusing IN*



Figure 13. *Focusing IN* by M. Muggeridge, 2016

With the frustration of communicating with the Self Portrait, I delved into an accompanying image, *Focusing IN* (see Figure 13). My intention was to enlarge the eye in the self portrait to allow for more insight to be harvested. The most important part of this eye was the pupil. I knew this was the most important because in the original Self Portrait the pupil was filled in with glitter. Glitter is a signature of many of my creations. When glitter appears in my art, I know that there it is special and powerful. For the past three years, glitter has been a key element to my artwork and very important to my

meaning making. Three years ago, I had an experience where I imagined glitter had been poured all over me. At that moment the glitter signified that I was important, beautiful and powerful. The meaning of glitter has deep importance to me because of this experience. Glitter can be found in my home, my jewelry, my art making and most profoundly in my spirit. I am trying to make meaning of what this glittery eye is interested in telling me. What I know is that the pupil was painted with lots of water, allowing for a marbling effect. This technique of painting requires much patience as the image cannot be moved while the water evaporates leaving the pigment in a watery like pattern. During the time it took to allow the water to evaporate, I became restless and impatient as the paint dried ever slowly.

Why did this pupil require this much patience and waiting on my part?

Perhaps the meaning of patience is important as I struggle with it because I am eager to have answers. I recall in my research sessions that some of the co-researchers created art which needed to be handled with care, because it was wet with glue or paint. Caring for this art until the next session was my task. When the co-researchers witnessed that the items were now securely adhered, it was as if they had seen magic in their artwork. I saw the look of amazement on their faces now all their beads were stuck and their paint dry. They were then able to close that page of the book and proceed to the next. But without taking this time to wait, the image would have been ruined by turning the page too quickly. The experience of witnessing the co-researcher's reaction was a gift, reminding me of life's small delights just as I watched the water evaporate from my images' pupil waiting in anticipation to see what the result would be.

What lesson is to be learned from this?

The lesson learned from this slow drying glittery pupil, was that of giving time to let the image breathe in the air. I had hoped that an image would be revealed in the pupil; instead what has arrived is the resemblance of stars in a galaxy. This galaxy is blue milky and deep in colour and space.

MM: Hello Galaxy, in the pupil.

G: Hello to you.

MM: Your galaxy has presented itself in my artwork. What do you call this place?

G: We call it the Deep Blue.

MM: What makes up this galaxy?

G: Stars, planets, dreams and water.

MM: Can you reveal any more details of your galaxy to me?

G: I can tell you that I am unique, no one else has ever created me. Yet I am familiar to all. I do not take vengeance on those who do not know me, but I sincerely welcome those who are in search of me.

MM: Galaxy, what knowledge can you impart to me?

G: I can tell you that the glitter you see within me, will always be there. In any galaxy you create, glitter will make itself present.

MM: You say that the glitter will always be there, and for this I thank-you. I do wonder why you enjoy this glitter too?

G: I embrace the glitter, as I embrace all that is important and treasure any time a galaxy is made. Whomever is creating the galaxy puts part of themselves into it, and therefore, I must be witness to what is held dear to them.

MM: Why galaxy have you come to see me today?

G: I have come because you beckoned me. I have come to take interest in your life. What is it that you are deeply desiring?

MM: I am asking for there to be more light on my path. I am asking for more clarity to be made with the relevance to my research.

G: Ah, yes I see, this can be tricky. All I can offer is myself.

MM: Thank-you.

Meaning Making. There is much meaning to be taken from the dialogue with the pupil – Galaxy. To begin with the Galaxy says that there are more galaxies out there, more to be created. I am curious about my connotation of the word ‘galaxy.’ For me a galaxy is grand, beautiful from afar, yet made up of many tiny pieces, which may not be as beautiful. I am thinking of the satellite images taken of the Milky Way, the galaxy in which we live. In some way thinking of how small we are in such a big galaxy, encourages me to ask, what is the bigger picture? For me the bigger picture is my relationship to God. I am but a mere speck in the larger picture, yet without me, the picture would be different; therefore, God has put me here in this galaxy to be me. God asks that I am mindful every day, as to what I can offer to those around me. With the image of God as part of my knowing, I can take rest and peace in the idea that God has a greater plan, than I can even fully know.

God's Galaxy

My galaxy is made
Plants, animals, people

Glitter between each
Remember the connection

God's galaxy
Is beautiful and unique
Is created in each of us

Where is your galaxy?

Mine is
In the licks of a dog
In the wisdom of a grandmother
In the way the sun sets

Mine is witnessed
With the first snow fall
With the loving embrace
With the glowing moon

Mine welcome
Those who love
Those who laugh
Those who take time to care

My galaxy is here

Where is your galaxy?

Artwork – *Chameleon Eye*

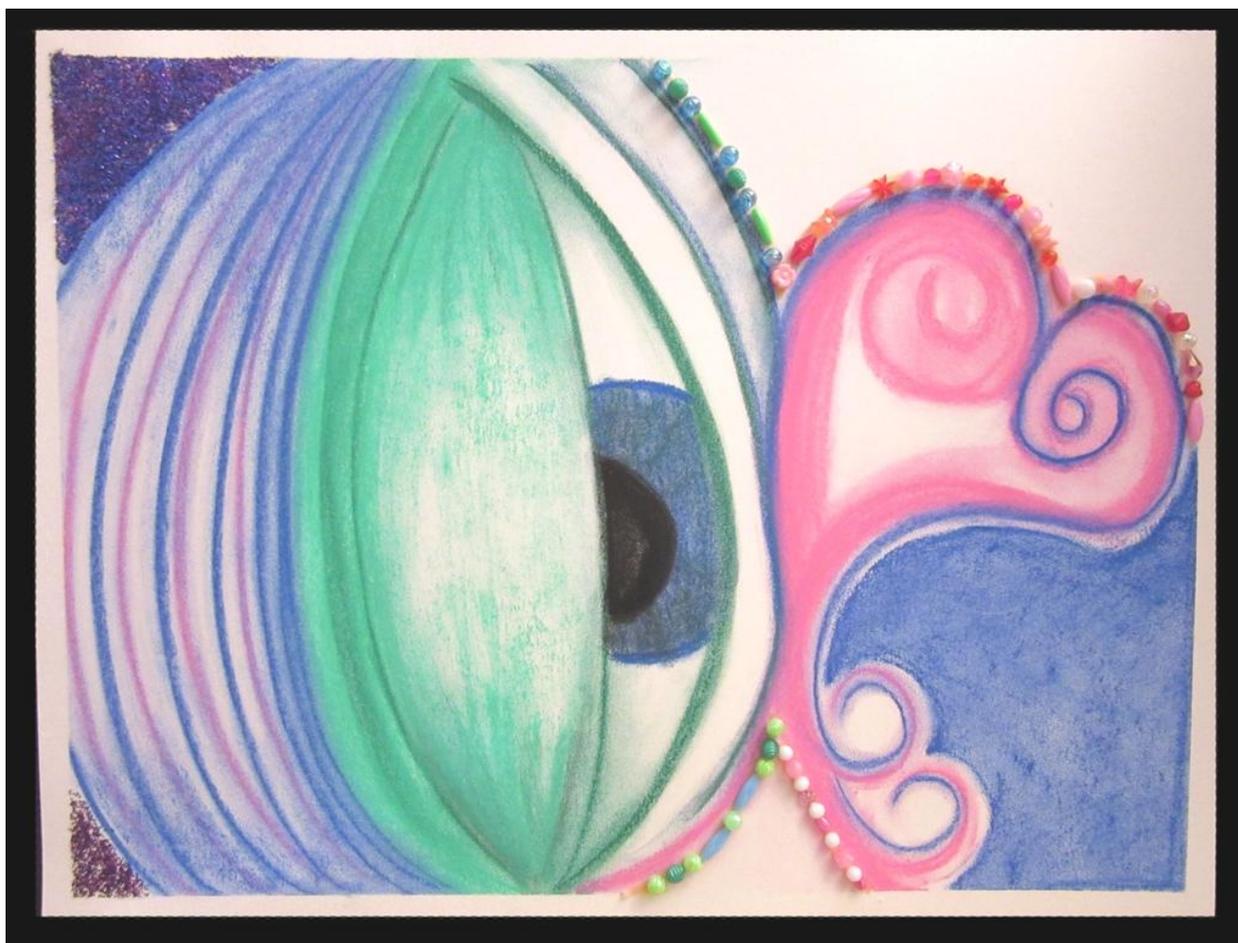


Figure 14. *Chameleon Eye* by M. Muggeridge, 2016

Another Eye? Really?

When starting out to create art today, I began by reviewing the written chapters of the co-researchers. I noticed in the artwork and written words the colours, themes and symbols. Each of these aspects inspired my creative self today. I chose a large paper with a deep tooth as well as chalk pastels and I began to use the colour of the chalk to penetrate the deep pores of the paper taking time and care to push vigorously into the paper's pulp. The paper's texture accepted the coloured chalk and allowed for the holding

of multiple colours. Starting with the green chalk an eye emerged. Not unlike the image of Amanda's fourth session's dark creature eye (see Top Figure, p.48. The lid is half closed and the pupil only revealed partly. This slit in the eye reveals a darker and more mysterious eye than the images created recently. To my surprise this is not scary, but is also not too friendly (see Figure 14).

What is the meaning of this eye?

The deep green colour of the eye lid suggests a non-human being possibly that of a chameleon or lizard. Upon further reflection is it likely the pink and blue shapes below are curled like that of a lizard's tail, the bright colours indicate the possibility of a chameleon. A quick Google search reveals a multitude of chameleons of many colours and in many habitats. What does a chameleon mean?

MM: Hello Chameleon Eye. What do you have to say for yourself?

CE: I am covered under layers of colour.

I am ready to emerge.

Under the colours is the real me.

I change with the times and the moments.

I am here to explore with you.

MM: Alright CE, I have many animals floating in my images right now. The animal with a collar from session two's image. And now you Chameleon. How can I see you more clearly? What is your presence here for?

CE: We are all part of the unconscious. You do a swell job at keeping the unconscious open; therefore, sometimes we emerge and you have no idea why.

MM: Yes this is true CE. I don't know why.

CE: I can tell you that the females you worked with were starting to tap into their unconscious. Those who create abstract art or took reference from their book, were accessing a deeper part of themselves. A part of them, that you had not fully explained, but they were able to feel your genuine support and encouragement enabling them to make art amongst friends.

MM: I appreciate your insight CE. It is nice to hear that there is more to the process of the group than I knew.

Artwork – *Wit(h)ness*

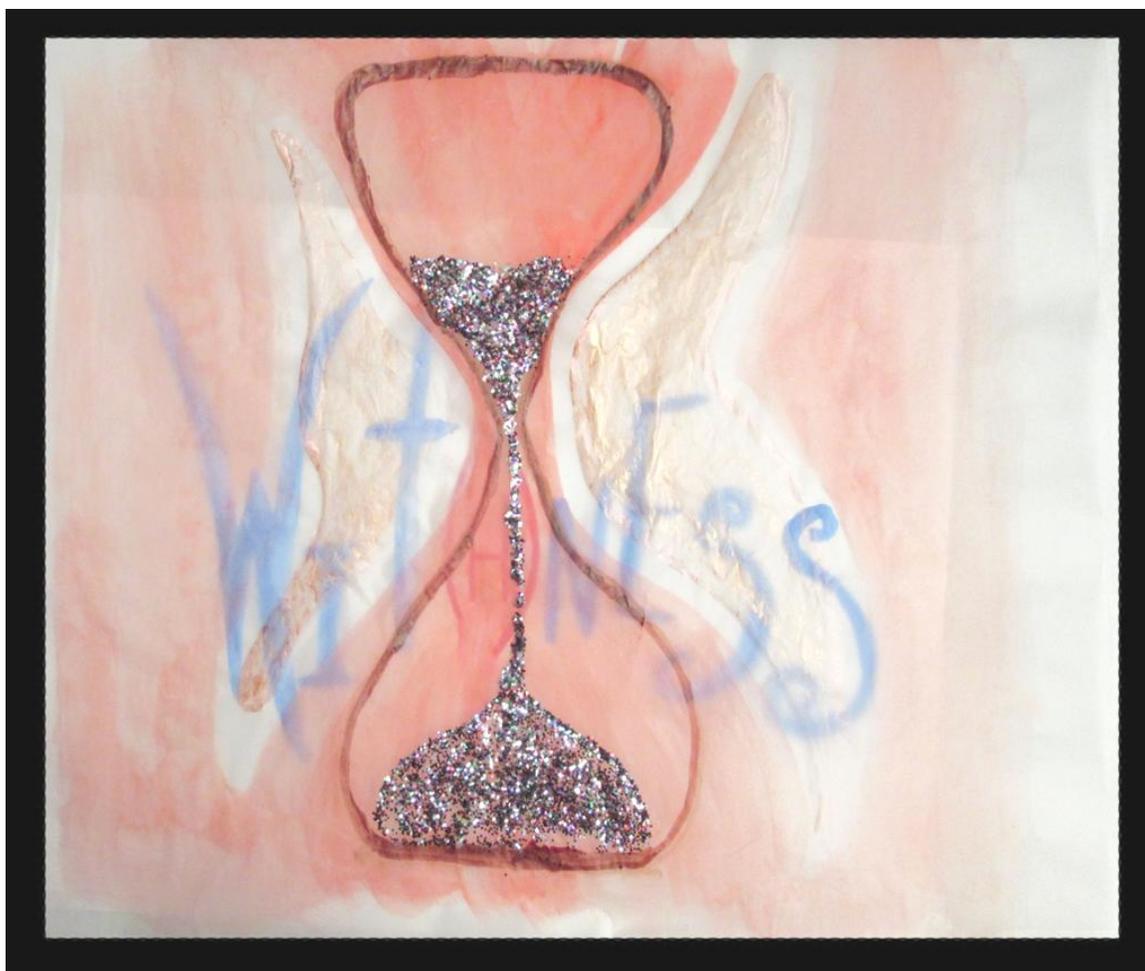


Figure 15 & 16. *Wit(h)ness* by M. Muggeridge, 2016

In reading Snowber and Bickel's (2015) chapter, *Companions With Mystery: Art, Spirit, and the Ecstatic I* became increasingly intrigued by their concept of wit(h)nessing.

By adding the 'h' to the word witness, they presented the connection between spirituality and art making and their own (life's) process. With this new idea in mind and desiring to see how this concept fit into my own process of being *with* others, God, art, and myself, I began with my own art making process. Using the written word Wit(h)ness I created the base layer for the discovery of how I apply this concept to my own work (see Figure 15). I felt a deep resonance with this concept of connection as it is a topic I employ with my art making, but had never been able to so eloquently discuss. The other main connection to this word is that it is similar to the title of my final chapter – *Wit(h)nessing*. All these connections create a web of discovery for any art work created around this topic. In the art a second layer was applied overtop of the written word “Wit(h)ness” this layer was created with thin tracing paper, in part connecting to the word below and also allowing for the movement of the art to come forward (see Figure 16). Using matte and iridescent water colour paints the form of two wings presented itself along with the central image of a sand timer. The sand, made up of glitter, is about a two thirds passed through to the bottom and still continuing to pass through the small opening where, when lined up with the image below, the 'h' is connected.

What does all of this mean?

The presence of glitter signifies the connection to the part of me that is shiny and present in God's image of me. The glitter re-connects me to my 'wit(h)ness' in God's image and glory. It is in the creating of art that I connect to God in an authentic and pure way.

The hourglass signifies the passing of time represented by the passing of glitter. This is the passing of the infinite moments in which God is ever present in my life. Again at the point in which these moments are caught passing through the 'h' is present. This important 'h' reminds me of my connection to God and being with the Spirit. An hourglass has the ability to be turned over once all the sand has moved from one side to the other, allowing this movement of sand to be continuously and repeatedly in motion. In a way the moments never 'run out' but can be recaptured when the glass is turned over again. The hourglass embodies God's unconditional love and forgiveness. As a child of God, I am always loved and forgiven. There are always second, and infinite, chances when God is invited into one's life. The infinite number of times that you can turn over the hourglass and have the same re-filling is identical to asking God infinite number of times to be forgiven and receive God's mercy.

Artwork – *Light Filled Egg*



Figure 17. *Light Filled Egg* by M. Muggeridge, 2016

This image was created using iridescent water colours taped out onto watercolour paper (see Figure 17). The simple shape was in my mind after the first brush stroke on the page. In creating this image, I used layers of clear water to achieve the soft glow which surrounds the egg. I had no direct intention when creating this artwork, but I was drawn to the colour yellow and the iridescence of the paint. I only took a moment to become entranced with the layering of water and colour to create this soft and glowing image. Once it was complete I had little recollection of physically creating this art piece. The following is the dialogue between the *Light Filled Egg* and myself:

MM: Hello Light Filled Egg.

LFE: Hello.

MM: You are so soft and airy. Most eggs are heavy filled with new life or nutrients. But you are an egg with lightness.

LFE: Yes this is true. In expression you can be creative and create new realities.

MM: This is true, yet what is your new reality?

LFE: I am an egg filled with light. I am a visual of your Connection.

MM: Ah, yes, my Connection is deep and fulfilling yet comes from the Spirit. Like an egg.

LFE: Yes just like an egg. This Connection is complex and can create new realities to live within.

MM: What are these new realities today?

LFE: They are the radiance of Love outward. The egg has been discovered and you have come to an end: a new understanding of your current being.

MM: While speaking with you something fell in my studio, startling me. I have a heaviness in body, that I am now completed.

LFE: Yes, this is the final piece you are to create.

MM: I am unsure of what you mean.

LFE: Your journey has been long, it has been fulfilling and you have completed your part. Be on your way and let go.

Meaning Making. With this new and ever changing life I live, it is impossible to know the future. I sit here today grateful to have completed my journey with the art, yet also unsure of what to do now. The image of the egg is an interesting one, similar to that of an eye, yet different. An egg shows new beginning, but it also shows the creating. Something had to create, nurture and care for the egg, and it is the fruit of someone's labour. Interestingly eggs have great meaning to my family especially for my grandparents. My grandfather was an egg farmer and my grandmother worked the business with him. My father and aunt also played parts in the success of the egg

business. In a strange way the egg connects me back to my first piece of art, in art therapy courses. This artwork entitled *Home* embodied and evoked my deceased Grandmother's spirit to enter into the class I was taking (see Figure 18).



Figure 18. Home by M. Muggeridge, 2012

With the aid of my instructor, my grandmother's presence was received and made me feel at peace with the choice I had made to pursue Art Therapy Graduate studies. The full circle has been made as this is the last major project to complete for me to finish my degree. What does this all mean? God is showing me that I have succeeded, through the other artworks which described my abilities to be present and facilitate the art-making group as I did in this research project. I come away with the knowledge that story sharing

is a major part of listening to someone's authentic voice. The encouragement to find one's power through the process of artmaking and sharing of one's ideas is at the core of my practice as an Art Therapist. I have been blessed to trust in the process of art making and be open to all that the Spirit has to impart to me.

Creative Synthesis

When reflecting upon the data and analysis process, I was surprised to discover a shift in focus to the role of the Spirit revealed in the art. Three themes have been discovered through my thesis process: spiritual and therapeutic trust, owning one's authentic voice and divine providence.

Trust. As a human I can take comfort in knowing God's unconditional love is at the center of my life. Embracing the Spirit in this way may prove challenging at times due to outside pressures. By living a deeply rooted life in the Spirit, there come opportunities to feel the warmth and love of God. The art work *The Protecting Woman* (Figure 10) revealed the insight that I am called to take comfort in the welcoming arms of God. Another example of trusting in a greater power derives from the art therapy motto "trust the process" (McNiff, 2004, p.23). In *The Praying Woman* (Figure 12) the concept of trusting in God throughout my life is a prominent insight. Trusting God to shape our lives is much like trusting the process of art making; through the conscious trust of the art making, the unconscious is able to make itself present in the art work, only if I am open and vulnerable enough to trust. The third insight revealed concerning trust in the Spirit comes from the artwork *The Light Filled Egg* (Figure 17). In this image, a symbol of an egg gave me great comfort and reminded me God's presence is the most important aspect of my existence. I am able to connect trusting God with trusting the art. The art is a tangible way in which the Spirit is able to communicate with me on a deeper level. In the

case of trusting the Spirit, the language of art making is employed to create a common language in the divine relationship. Just as personal relationships have unique expression, so is it with the Spirit. To deepen one's personal relationship with God, one must find an authentic mode of expression. Those who do not identify with a higher power may also find a deeper expression of authentic self.

This theme of trust also pertains to the relationship between client and therapist. In Chapter Two the literature explored places a high value on trust. Ginsburg, Menapace and Slap (1997) found that a common language must be established in order to build trust between adolescents and their healthcare providers. Likewise, the therapist's ability to foster trust between herself and her client is an important element to a successful therapeutic relationship. This fostering can take place in the form of 'holding space' during the session. This therapeutic concept is a key element to the trust building between the client and therapist. The safety and presence the therapist is able to cultivate is critical to 'holding space.' In the literature, Filip (1994) expresses the truth that the therapist's presence is often more important than the content of the session. In the artwork *Wit(h)ness* this imperative solidarity with the client is revealed which reflects my trust that God is ever present (Figure 16). In session with clients 'holding space' increases the clients' ability to trust the therapist will not abandon them. The trust developed between the client and the therapist allows for a deeper ability to risk providing the structure for the unpredictable nature of therapy. As found in the image, *The Art Animal*, an insight revealed is that art making is free and fluid (Figure 8). In the therapeutic sessions unexpected understandings may occur and it is within the trusting therapeutic relationship that these understandings can be further developed. The therapist's own trust in the power of the art making process is of critical importance to the client's ability to trust in the art

as well. As discussed by Moon (1999) who describes his expression of trust in the art making as key to the progress of the client's healing journey, the therapist's true conviction in the healing power of the art must be sustained when being present with a client.

Voice. A foundation of the therapeutic relationship is communication. In the image *The Eerie Peace Sign*, the artwork reveals the necessity of open and honest communication (Figure 11). This piece revealed that when there is a topic that is difficult to discuss, naming it can diminish the negative hold it has on the client. As for *The Eerie Peace Sign* the artwork was depicting the urban legend discussed amongst the co-researchers. I was able to express my unease around the urban legend through the artwork I created. It is through artmaking that the ability to externalize one's fears can reduce the power with which it scares us. This leads to the next insight from the image *The Praying Woman, The Animal and The Self Portrait*, where *The Animal* stands on many stones, representing the stepping stones of life which we cannot always see, but with trust in God, we are able to take the next step no matter how frightening or difficult it may be. In this process of taking steps, there is often uncertainty and a need to safely be heard (Figure 12). As stated by Jolly et al., (2007) "adolescent voice is the power to express self through dialogues with a nonjudgmental listener who gives and receives feedback" which is what art therapy can accomplish. Although the therapist is the evident listener, the art can also give expression and be a nonjudgmental listener that entices the client's authentic self expression without any agenda. As well, with the aid of an art therapist, the client can more fully trust and harvest the meaning embedded within the art.

Being open to the voice of the artwork is an important part of working as an art therapist. *The Self Portrait*, within *The Praying Woman, The Animal and The Self*

Portrait, gives voice to the insecurities of looking at my reflection and accepting it whether good or bad which is challenging. In order to reflect openly about myself, it is important to be able to claim my voice and *The Self Portrait* is expressing that only by being self reflective can my voice be expressed fearlessly.

Wider View, Spiritual Connection. Looking at the voice of individuals in a wider context related to the artwork created and harvested for meaning, there are three elements presented: unconditional love, inherent goodness and patience. First the unconditional love that God has for each person is similar to Rogers' (1981) "unconditional positive regard" although Roger's would not make this connection as he is not a theist (p. 98). The unconditional love from God was revealed in the *Wit(h)ness* artwork in the form of an hourglass (Figure 16). The ability to repeatedly turn over the hourglass and have the sand move symbolized the continuous forgiveness and unconditional love God has for us. It is in God's love for me that I am able to see clients in the same light with unconditional positive regard. When working with clients, I also employ the person-centered approach trusting in their God-given knowledge to guide them on their healing journey. Trusting in the Spirit to guide me and my clients on the designated path allows for authentic healing for the client.

Secondly, I believe that all are created in the likeness of God, therefore, are inherently good. An important insight in the artwork *The Art Animal* is that we are created in the likeness of God (Figure 8). In the dialogue with the artwork the reflection of the moon indicates the reflection of God within each of us. It is only with the light of the Spirit that we illuminate our lives and others. Through the insights of this art, I am able to witness the power and majesty of God's grace. God's ability to create each of us in God's likeness has a broader application. Connecting the poem, "The Galaxy," with

The Art Animal I can see that God created each of us to be a part of a larger “beautiful and unique” world as revealed in "The Galaxy."

The final aspect of the connecting to the Spirit is by developing patience with life. This insight was made known in the process of creating *Focussing IN* during which the paint took much time, and therefore patience, to solidify its position on the canvas much like the patience we often require when trusting God’s plan for us (Figure 13). Any rushing or pushing forward could result in the overturning of the image or the unravelling of God’s divine plan. This patience is also similar to working with clients since allowing time to build rapport and patience for clients to open up in their own time is essential for therapeutic relationships to thrive. In the article by Rindner (2004), emphasis is on the nurse to follow the lead and pace of the adolescent with whom she is working. Through the literature we can see that following the adolescent’s needs is imperative to working successfully together.

From the created response art and reviewed literature have emerged several themes: trusting the Spirit and therapeutic relationship, claiming authentic voice and wider view, spiritual connection. The Spirit asks us to trust in her infinite goodness and love for each of us, and through this trust we are able to be nourished by her presence. Trusting the Spirit carries over into trusting the art making process to reveal meaning. The therapeutic relationship also requires trust for progress to be made. As well, the importance of claiming an authentic voice was discovered through the art making. This authentic voice enables us to name that which scares us taking away its power. Also revealed in the artwork is the endless love God has for us shown through divine forgiveness and patience which we are called to share.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

In the first chapter Rational, Methods and Methodologies, a description of my personal interest in the creation of altered books with female adolescents was developed. This chapter also described the methodologies of Arts Based and a form of Collaborative Inquiry research, concluding with the methods that were to be employed with the co-researchers. In the Literature Review, three topics were discussed, the adolescent voice, the mental health of adolescents and the art making experience. Over one month, I met four times, with the four co-researchers, who were supplied with art materials to create an altered book. It is based on these four sessions that their four unique chapters were created. Through the process of transcribing the story sharing conversations of each art making session, the co-researchers were given an opportunity to express their stories more fully through the editing and elaboration of their chapter. Following these sessions, I, the primary researcher, employing an Arts Based form of inquiry, used art making to gain a deeper access to the unconscious and the Spirit. This unexpected and unique ability of art making, increases accessibility to the Spirit in this Arts Based form of research. In creative communication with my artwork, I was able to harvest insights based on my spirituality and the art making connection with the Spirit. By developing a common language with the Spirit, I was able to connect and trust the art in a deeper way. This experience of working with the Spirit was new knowledge which I did not set out to research.

Revisiting the Literature

The literature review covered three main topics: the voice of the adolescent, the mental health of adolescents and the experience of art making. The complexity of each topic is evident when considered in different contexts. The literature surrounding the

voice was broken down into two sections: the expression and reception of voice. In the expression of the adolescent voice four main factors were discovered in the literature. The first factor was strengthening of the voice of a bullied adolescent to be strong enough to stand-up for herself against mockery. Secondly, the personal environment of the adolescent was vital to the development of self-esteem. The third factor of healthy expression of the adolescent voice was that of increased participation in extracurricular activities. The final factor was complexity of decision-making with limited life experience. All these factors contribute to the expression of the adolescent voice.

In the second section of voice-related literature, the focus turned towards the health care provider's ability to hear the adolescent's voice and five main findings emerged. First, the health care provider's actions exhibit the importance of the whole adolescent. Through authentic actions, the adolescent perceives his or her value in the eyes of the provider. Secondly, the connections made between a caring adult and adolescent are essential. A supportive and concerned adult creates a relationship which allows the adolescents to develop power in their voice. As well, the health care provider needs to allow clients to move at their own pace through healing with non-judgemental listening. The third means to authentically hear the adolescent voice is to respect the pace of the adolescent's dialogue and to listen non-judgementally when the adolescent speaks. Fourthly, practitioners respect the client from a position of authority through common and even level of language and conversation between the two parties. Finally, education about misconceptions of body image and about positive self perception concerning the body is important for a healthy voice to be heard. All these factors create a complexity of interactions, between the adolescent and the care provider which can help the adolescent authentic voice to be heard.

The second area of literature investigation was female adolescent mental health issues including the following sub-topics: depression and suicide in adolescents leading to self harm, self confidence decreasing as female adolescents get older, holistic methods of multi-disciplinary care and school-wide approaches to mental health education. The first topic discussed in adolescent mental health is the inability to successfully treat depression to prevent suicide. Since some adolescents are unable to be heard through verbal communications, they may resort to self harm in order to be heard. Secondly, female adolescent's self confidence was reported as decreasing through the teen years. This rise in self-confidence suggests that in the aging process something is triggered. The third positive way to interact with adolescents in the health care system is through a holistic team approach where more diverse interventions can be employed. The final aspect which aids in positive adolescent health is through school wide programs educating all students about mental health related challenges. The mental health of female adolescents requires an understanding of the need for a diverse approach to successfully create positive mental health programs.

The final topic reviewed in the literature, expression through art making, is divided into three sections: therapist's conviction, self expression and transformative power. In the first section of the therapist's conviction emphasis was placed on the therapist's whole-hearted trust in the process of artmaking. This implicit trust in the art is transferred to the client during sessions by keeping the art at the centre of the work. Secondly, self expression can be shared more fully in the outward creation of art work. Communities which support artistic self expression create unique and powerful opportunities for all to share their authentic voices. In the case of adolescents, the expression is even more imperative as their identities are still developing. The third topic

covered is the transformative power of art making which is exemplified in the reclaiming of a book's pages through artmaking. By transforming art supplies into one's unique expression, the opportunity to share one's authentic voice is encouraged. The discussed literature covered the topics of the adolescent voice, the mental health of adolescents and the experience of art making.

Additional literature research in the larger field has documented experiences of healing through art therapy. In my opinion it is due to the recent emergence of art therapy that insufficient follow-up research has been done with the adolescents as the primary population. I believe that studying the long term effects of therapeutic art making could move the field of art therapy forward as another essential healing method. I would have liked to do more literature research specifically using books as canvas as the reverence towards books changes with new generations of adolescents.

To widen my literature review I would further research the use of altered books as therapy and connect more to psychotherapy theories, such as, but not limited to, cognitive behaviour and pharmaceutical therapies which are already widely accepted. The collaboration of fields is currently necessary to make the work of art therapy credible. Unfortunately, the current state of psychotherapy relies heavily on evidence-based research to develop any new changes in practice. Most accessible healthcare is supported by the government and through provincial bodies; therefore, regulation of care needs to have evidence to support its accessibility otherwise the government will not fund it. If art therapy is to become accessible in the health care system, then more evidence-based research needs to occur.

Further Topics of Inquiry

Several topics of supplementary interest include God's voice and the time frame of altered book making. Through this thesis process I have developed a new interest in artwork as being divinely inspired and a way of experiencing God's voice. In art therapy training emphasis is placed on the unconscious being at the centre of the discoveries made through art making, yet I am curious to find out more about the discoveries being a way to communicate with God. Another topic I am interested in is the making of altered books over an extended period of time. Through the process of creating art with a book over many years, how might this affect the mental state of the individual. For example, students could create altered books over the course of the teenage years in a school. The education of listening deeply to one's inner self at a young age and what findings may result through this process could be at the centre of a study. Some questions I would like to further explore are: Why is it difficult to find a voice when you are female adolescent? What are the missing links to creating female empowerment equal to males?

Areas of Further Application

This thesis can be applied to a few areas: the field of adolescent interactions, the expression of one's self and the connection between art and the Spirit. In the further application of adolescent interactions, one can see that giving space, time and authentic listening to an adolescent can help to foster a healthy relationship between the therapist and adolescent client. Through the literature research and the primary researcher's observations, by creating an open atmosphere the adolescents can create expression through art and words. Subsequently through witnessing self expression of the co-researchers in the form of altered books, one could conclude that art making is a unique way of expression which can be utilised more. The third area of application comes from

the authentic and candid interactions the primary researcher shared in her Witnessing chapter. This very personal way of connecting to the Spirit is a primary example of working closely and with full trust in the art. This deep exploration can impact on the ways in which others find connection with the Spirit.

The Affirming Voice

The Affirming Voice is the collection of themes that I have interpreted using the Collaborative Inquiry process. This involved analyzing the co-researchers' chapters and my Creative Synthesis where I uncovered similar insights. The predominant similarities, between co-researcher and researcher are the reflection of the moon, the feminine presence, the trust in the art process, the theme of love and an acknowledgment of something greater. First, in Amanda's artwork she references the moon's ability to expose the soul. Her art reads, "The sun sees the body, the moon sees your soul" and the *Art Animal* explained to me that with the moon's reflection you can see that humans are created in the likeness of God. Another connection is found in Erin Jaeger's chapter which brings forward the feminine power within her image **THE QUEEN OF MOGEKO**. This feminine power illustrated in the queen correlates with *The Protecting Woman* who is powerful because of her uninhibited ability to live life freely knowing the power of God's love. In addition, this motif of trust permeated co-researcher Erin Jaeger's art through her freedom and trust in the art process. She demonstrates her trust when she says, "**THEN I GLUED THE PAGES TOGETHER, BECAUSE I SAID WHY NOT, AND I DID IT.**" Her ability to trust the process of creating art, and freedom to express herself is a core element of my findings. Having a deep trust in the art process is an important aspect of creating a connection to the Spirit, and trusting that the Spirit will guide the art. A fourth similarity is found in co-researcher; Lucy Hartfilia's book themed **LOVE**. The

connection to unconditional love ebbs and flows throughout the Wit(h)nessing chapter, specifically when referencing God's continual forgiveness, acceptance and patience with us. Lastly, co-researcher Midnight Sky brings to light the deeper connection to all that surrounds us. In her words there is an intrinsic interconnectedness in the earth's rhythm:

I PUT A GOLD STAR ON GRASS BECAUSE WITHOUT THE GRASS WE WOULDN'T HAVE THE PLANTS, AND WITHOUT THE PLANTS WE WOULDN'T HAVE TREES, WITHOUT THE TREES, WE WOULDN'T HAVE OXYGEN. WITHOUT THE OXYGEN, NO ONE WOULD BE HERE.

Midnight Sky's intuitive acknowledgment that there is something greater than herself connects to my witnessing insights about God's wider view of us. These surprising, divinely inspired insights are another way that the Spirit is ever present.

Personal Statement

Art making is essential for my Spiritual life since it opens up new methods of allowing God into my life. By trusting in the art, I am trusting God to reveal the Spirit to me. It is through my spiritual connection that I have capacity to join a client's healing journey.

REFERENCES

- Allen, P. (2012). Art as enquiry: Towards a research method that holds soul truth. *Journal Of Applied Arts & Health*, 3(1), 13-20. doi:10.1386/jaah.3.1.13_1
- Arnett, J. (2007). Emerging adulthood: What is it, and what is it good for? *Child Development Perspectives*, 1(2), 68-73.
- Barone, T., & Eisner, E. (2011). *Arts based research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Cheung, A., & Dewa, C. (2007). Mental health service use among adolescents and young adults with major depressive disorder and suicidality. *Canadian Journal Of Psychiatry. Revue Canadienne De Psychiatrie*, 52(4), 228-232
- Chilton, G. (2007). Altered books in art therapy with adolescents. *Journal of the American Art Therapy Association*, 24 (2), 59-63.
- Clandinin, D. J., & Huber, J. (2010). Narrative inquiry. In P. P. Peterson, E. Baker, & B. McGaw, (Eds.). *International Encyclopedia of Education* (3rd edition). New York, NY: Elsevier. (pp. 436-441).
- Clark, M., & Olson, J. (2000). *Nursing within a faith community*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cobb, R., & Negash, S. (2010). Altered book making as a form of art therapy: A narrative approach. *Journal Of Family Psychotherapy*, 21(1), 54-69.
- Ferguson, G. (1959). *Signs and Symbols in Christian Art*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Filip, C. A. (1994). In focus: The value in a single session of art therapy. *American Journal of Art Therapy*, 33 (1), 2.
- Fliegel, L. (2005). "I love ballet": Arts incentives for adolescent health and community development. *New Directions For Youth Development*, 2005(106), 49-60.

- Freeman, J. (2010). The Health of Canada's Young People: A mental health focus.
- Freeman, J. & Luu, K. (2012). *The Health of Canada's Young People: A mental health focus - Mental Health - Public Health Agency of Canada*. Retrieved 15 December 2015, from <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/hp-ps/dca-dea/publications/hbsc-mentale/health-sante-eng.php>
- Gilligan, C., & Machoian, L. (2002). Learning to speak the language: A relational interpretation of an adolescent girl's suicidality. *Studies In Gender And Sexuality*, 3(3), 321-341.
- Ginsburg, K., Menapace, A., & Slap, G. (1997). Factors affecting the decision to seek health care: the voice of adolescents. *Pediatrics*, 100(6), 922-930.
- Golan, M., Hagay, N., & Tamir, S. (2014). Gender related differences in response to “in favor of myself” wellness program to enhance positive self & body image among adolescents. *Plos One*, 9(3), e91778.
- Hinz, L. (2009). *Expressive therapies continuum*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Holland, A., & Andre, T. (1994). The relationship of self-esteem to selected personal and environmental resources of adolescents. *Adolescence*. 29(114), 345-360
- Jolly, K., Weiss, J., & Liehr, P. (2007). Understanding adolescent voice as a guide for nursing practice and research. *Issues In Comprehensive Pediatric Nursing*, 30(1-2), 3-13.
- Jurewicz, I. (2015). Mental health in young adults and adolescents - supporting general physicians to provide holistic care. *Clinical Medicine*, 15(2), 151-154.

- Kapitan, L. (2004). *Lynn Kapitan - Artist Disenchantment and the Collaborative Witness Project - Lesley University. Lesley.edu*. Retrieved 2 July 2016, from <http://www.lesley.edu/journal-pedagogy-pluralism-practice/lynn-kapitan/collaborative-witness-project/>
- Kapitan, L. (2010). *Introduction to art therapy research*. New York: Brunner-Routledge.
- Kaufman, H. (2011). *(De)Constructing the book: An arts-based exploration of altered books in art therapy* (Master's Thesis). The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL.
- Khan, S., Gagné, M., Yang, L., & Shapka, J. (2016). Exploring the relationship between adolescents' self-concept and their offline and online social worlds. *Computers In Human Behavior, 55*, 940-945.
- Khanlou, N. (2004). Influences on adolescent self-esteem in multicultural Canadian secondary schools. *Public Health Nursing, 21*(5), 404-411.
- King, A., Grieves, J., & Opp, D. (2008). The estimated impact of performing arts on adolescent mood within a community sample of mental health professionals. *Journal Of Creativity In Mental Health, 2*(4), 65-73.
- Leavy, P. (2009). *Method meets art*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Lund, I., Ertesvag, S., & Roland, E. (2010). Listening to shy voices: Shy adolescents' experiences with being bullied at school. *Journal Of Child & Adolescent Trauma, 3*(3), 205-223.
- McNiff, S. (2004). *Art heals*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.
- McNiff, S. (2013). *Art as research*. Chicago, IL, USA: Intellect.
- Mechanic, D. (1991). Adolescents at risk – new directions. *Journal Of Adolescent Health, 12*(8), 638-643.

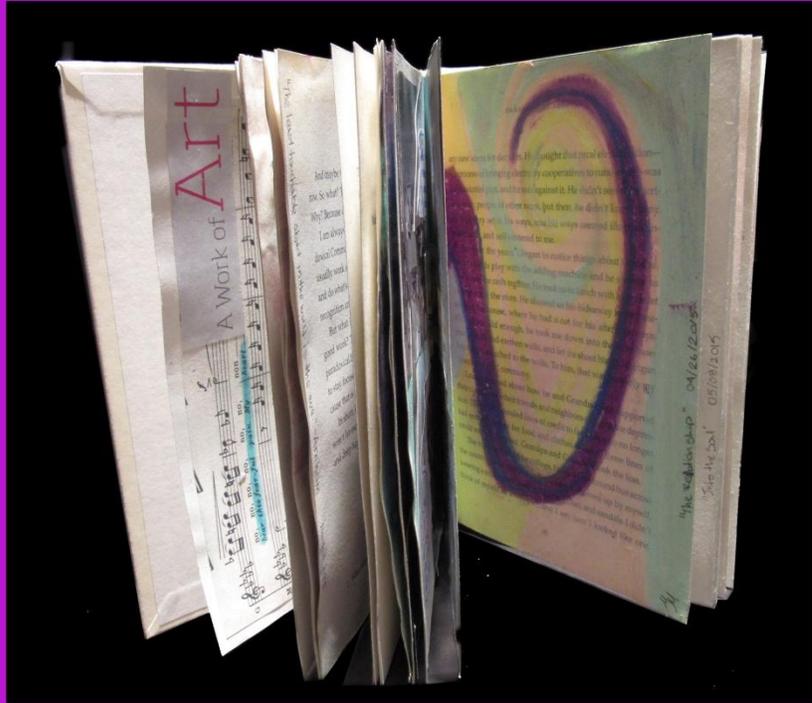
- Mental Health Commission of Canada. (2013). *School-Based Mental Health in Canada: A Final Report*. Retrieved 29 December 2015, from <http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/English/node/14036>
- Moon, B. (1999). The tears make me paint: The role of responsive artmaking in adolescent art therapy. *Art Therapy, 16*(2), 78-82.
- Moon, B. (2012). *The dynamics of art as therapy with adolescents*. Springfield, Ill: Charles C. Thomas.
- Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*. (3rd edition) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Potash, J. (2009). Fast food art, talk show therapy: The impact of mass media on adolescent art therapy. *Art Therapy, 26*(2), 52-57.
- Rindner, E. (2004). Using Freirean empowerment for health education with adolescents in primary, secondary, and tertiary psychiatric settings. *Journal Of Child And Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing, 17*(2), 78-84.
- Rogers, C. R. (1981). The foundations of the Person-Centered Approach. *Dialectics and Humanism, 8*(1), 5-16.
- Schaverien, J. (1992). The life in the picture: The embodied image. *The Revealing Image*. London: Routledge, 79-102.
- Sharaf, A., Thompson, E., & Walsh, E. (2009). Protective effects of self-esteem and family support on suicide risk behaviors among at-risk adolescents. *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing, 22*(3), 160-168.
- Silber, L. (2012). Adolescent girls and the transgenerational relational catch. *Journal of Infant, Child, and Adolescent Psychotherapy, 11*(2), 121-132.

- Snowber, C. & Bickel, B. (2015). Companion with mystery: Art, spirit, and the ecstatic. In S. Walsh, B. Bickel, & C. Leggo. *Arts-Based and Contemplative Practices in Research and Teaching* (67-87). New York: Routledge.
- Statistics Canada. (2014, January 28). *Suicides and suicide rate, by sex and by age group*. Retrieved from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tablestableaux/sums/101/cst01/hlth66a-eng.htm>
- Stone, H., & Duke, J. (2006). *How to think theologically*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.
- Turner, F. (1996). *Social work treatment*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Walsh, S., Bickel, B. & Leggo, C. (2015). Introduction. In Walsh, S., Bickel, B. & Leggo, C. (2015) *Arts-Based and Contemplative Practices in Research and Teaching* (67-87). New York: Routledge.
- Wren, D. (1996). Adolescent females "voice" changes can signal difficulties for teachers and administrators. *Adolescence*, 32(126), 463--470.
- Vick, R. (1999). Utilizing prestructured art elements in brief group art therapy with adolescents. *Art Therapy*, 16(2), 68-77.
- Yalom, I. D. (1983). *Inpatient group psychotherapy*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

APPENDIX A

Altered Book Poster, M. Muggeridge, 2015

Female Volunteers needed for Art Making Project!



You will join 3 other girls in an art group,
where you will each create an Altered Book.
We will have 5 sessions together.

Group dates will be determined
based on your availability.

Please sign up at the office. If you qualify
you will receive an invitation letter.

APPENDIX B**Consent Letter for Altered Books Workshop Session (page 1 of 2)****Consent Letter for Altered Books Workshop Sessions**

Dear Potential Co-researcher and Guardian,

You are receiving this letter because you expressed interest at the office regarding my research. Thank-you for noticing the poster and asking more about this project. My name is Marie, and I am currently a Master's Student at St. Stephen's College doing my Thesis research. As a female researcher my goal is to work with four female junior high students in an art project involving Altered Books.

Altered Books are regular published books which are transformed using art materials, as an expression of yourself. In a group setting four female students and myself will work to create individual altered books.

With the permission of the principal, Mr. Joe Gulli, we will meet in a spare office at St. Mark's School during non-instructional school time but when another school staff member is onsite. We will meet four times for two hours each time to make art and audio record a story-sharing portion where we talk about any ideas that might have come up in the art. At this time you will get to take pictures with my camera of the art you have made. There will be a final session, called Digging Deeper, where only you and I will get to read all that you have said in the story-sharing portion. In this Digging Deeper, session we can talk about what you want to include and what you want to remove. This will be written as your own chapter in the larger report I am creating (thesis document). At the end of the Digging Deeper, session you will get a hard-copy of the writing you have approved and your original Altered Book.

Until this final session, your Altered Book will be kept safely locked at the school. All photos taken of the art and the audio recordings will be on a password protected USB stick kept with me. To keep your confidentially, I will not include your real name and you will be allowed to choose your fake name. You have the right to opt out of the project at any time, and if you miss a session you may return to the next one. Without you attendance in the Digging Deeper Session, your audio recording will be safely disposed of and your unfinished book will be safely kept at the office with the principal where you can pick it up. I do not have any intention of using your data for anything else and your Altered Book is yours to keep.

If you have questions, you can contact me on my personal line at 000-000-0000 or at myemail@address.com.

The plan for this study has been reviewed for its adherence to ethical guidelines by a Research Ethics Board at the University of Alberta. For questions regarding participant rights and ethical conduct of research, contact the Research Ethics Office at (780) 492-2615.

Sincerely,

Marie Muggeridge

Consent Letter for Altered Books Workshop Session (page 2 of 2)

Consent Form for Altered Books Workshop

I, _____, would like to participate in the Altered Books Workshop
(student's name printed) sessions.

I, _____, give consent for my daughter to participate in the Altered
(guardian's name printed) Books Workshop sessions.

Please sign below for your daughter's consent:

Student's Name: _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Guardian's Name: _____

Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C

Information Handout for St. Mark's School Staff

Master's Level Thesis Research: Empowerment through Altered Books

Master's of Psychotherapy and Spirituality with a Specialization in Art Therapy Candidate at St. Stephen's College:

Marie Muggeridge

Supervisor:

Gioia Chilton, PhD, ATR-BC

Description of Research:

I will be conducting Qualitative Research with a group of four females attending St. Marks School. Over the course of four consecutive weeks, for 2 hours each time, the females will be creating altered books. An altered book is a published book that has been given life by an artist, by painting, collaging, writing, drawing on the pages and cover of the book. Once these sessions are complete I will hold an individual session with each female to have them edit the stories they have shared in the sessions, the goal of this session is to create an individual written chapter in the thesis document, under a pseudo name, to give power to their voice. The females will keep the art work they have created and a printed copy of their chapter. Having worked with adolescents, you are aware it is hard for adolescents to express their voice in healthy ways. Therefore, my research is interested in the adolescent claiming her voice, whatever that voice may have to say. With the aid of creating an altered book my interest is to see if and how this activity may help the adolescent claim their voice.

Images of Altered Books:



Teachers Role:

In keeping with the premise of claiming one's voice it is important to my research that the adolescent make the choice on their *own* to come forward for participation in the group. Therefore, when a student approaches you about this project, take their interest as them claiming their voice. You can assure the adolescents that the sessions will be taken place on the school property and that the researcher has been granted permission by the school board to work with students in this capacity.

Process for selection of Participants:

There will be posters put up in the school and an announcement put in the newsletter. The students will be directed to contact you with their interest at which point you can email Joe Gulli with their request. Once there are four interested females I will come to the school to speak to each of them individually about the consent form and process and to send the consent letter home with them to have their parents sign it. Once all the consent forms are returned then I will begin my groups with the girls. I will be starting the groups either last week of October or first week of November.