EMPOWERMENT, QUALITY OF LIFE AND ART WITH ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES; A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF AN HOLISTIC ARTS APPROACH

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts
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EMPOWERMENT, QUALITY OF LIFE AND ART WITH ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES; A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF AN HOLISTIC ARTS APPROACH by Natalie Wood
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Abstract

This thesis describes a holistic model for teaching art to adults with cognitive and/or psychiatric disabilities, and evaluates whether it empowers and enhances their quality of life.

Grounded theory was used to generate valued indicators and categories from data collected over six years from eight participants belonging to a community arts group. This was used to describe the Holistic Arts Model that was then compared to other models of empowerment and quality of life.

The research revealed that the model does empower and enhance quality of life. It also revealed issues such as the impact of poverty, and the divisions between empowerment and quality of life, that would be of value to any discussion on art and adults with disabilities. It is also useful in defining concepts of excellence and developing further theories and practices for teaching, learning and evaluation in art for this population.
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Dedication

In memory of Patricia Yates who, despite all odds, pursued the dream of the artist.
Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

"...to provide this population with the opportunity for self expression through art, is to have them connect with their peers based on their abilities to legitimise their voice so that they may tell their stories and educate the rest of society to their experiences. To create therefore is to empower, to politicise, to develop community and to create a space for self-advocacy." (Wood, 1996, p.14)

I.1 Rationale and Overview

My interest in developing a Holistic Approach to teaching art to adults with disabilities originated from my own experience as a self-taught artist who worked professionally as a case manager with adults with cognitive and/or psychiatric disabilities. I understood that as a group, individuals with disabilities, throughout Western and Canadian history, have been perceived and treated in many ways but especially as outcasts. I was aware of the impact that these perceptions have had on the policies and treatment decisions experienced by people with disabilities. Whether it was the belief in demon possession or the more modern scientific belief in biological determinism, it all lead to the positioning of people with disabilities as socially and politically inferior.

With the passage of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms that came into effect in 1985, people with disabilities were recognised as a disadvantaged group that needed constitutional protection. This Charter was based on
the understanding that the historical impact of various policies had exposed individuals to discrimination, disempowerment and a substandard quality of life. For many professionals working with individuals with disabilities, this understanding has created the desire for change in the provision of services and treatment of individuals with disabilities and the inclusion of approaches that empower and enhance quality of life.

My professional career of working with adults with cognitive and psychiatric disabilities began after I had completed a Bachelor's degree in psychology in 1988 at the University of Toronto. At first I began working with adults with cognitive and psychiatric disabilities in group homes and later in community-based situations. In fact I have spent a total of ten years working in a professional capacity with this population. I have also spent the same length of time taking studio courses in different visual art media at the Ontario College of Art, the Toronto School of Art and George Brown College.

Aware of the impact of art on my life in terms of my own sense of empowerment and enhancement of my quality of life, I decided to combine my artistic skills in my work with adults with disabilities. I began to ask myself, what if this population was exposed to art and creative
opportunities, would they also experience a sense of empowerment and an enhancement of their quality of lives?

Consequently in 1992, I conducted an informal research and review of Toronto-based community art programs that taught art to adults with disabilities. I was looking for a framework with which to structure an art program. It was a fortuitous event when I visited the Creative Spirit Art Centre (CSAC) which had been launched in June of that same year. Its purpose was to provide a number of services for artists with disabilities including art education, a studio space, a public art gallery, and a resource and information centre on art and disabilities.

The information provided gave me a direction. In the spring of that year, I submitted a proposal at the Community Health Centre where I was working to begin a visual arts program for adults with cognitive and or psychiatric disabilities who were living in the community. My proposal was approved and I was given a small budget to start a visual arts program that year at the centre.

1.2 Early proposal of the Holistic Arts Approach

My conceptual framework (CF) I intended to be holistic in nature. In my proposal I discussed needing to create an environment where the participants could find a visual art form for their self-expression. I believed both
participation in/and creating art could empower and enhance quality of life and was an excellent form of communication, education, and liberation. As well, I expected that the program would facilitate healing and promote self-esteem by enabling artists to transcend and transform themselves and their environment.

One of the initial goals of the program was to provide a safe and supportive environment for the participants to explore themes of personal growth and appropriate forms of self-expression through the creative arts. Another was to allow the participants to visually record their thoughts and ideas, so as to promote the development of self-esteem, while the focus remained on the process of making art rather than the outcome.

As a practical approach (PA) to attaining these goals, the participants would be exposed to different ways of making art so as to allow for the development of their own expression. Exercises were to be discussed with participants and general instructions given so as to develop an awareness of the technical aspects of art involved in their artwork.

I had proposed a very simple relationship at the time, as shown in Fig.1. It was that the Conceptual Framework (CF) of a Holistic Approach to teaching art to adults with disabilities included the Conceptual Approach (CA) and the
Practical Approach (PA) that I had developed. At the same time, I believed that the Conceptual Approach and Practical Approach of this art program when it interacted with the Abilities of the participants, and the Time involved for them to learn and master their expressions, meant they would automatically experience Empowerment and an enhanced Quality of Life.

Now, six years later in 1999 the program has tripled in size and the participants have formed themselves into a group that has yearly exhibitions to sell their art. I have also developed and maintained a series of networks and contacts with other community-based art programs here in Toronto, such as the Creative Spirit Art Centre, and at the University of California, the National Institute of Art and Disabilities (NIAD).

My work with this group has had quite the impact; however, I was unsure whether the artists in the group felt empowered or whether they saw their participation as allowing them to develop a better quality of life.
Fig. 1. Flow chart of Holistic Arts Approach from Proposal submitted to community centre in 1993.

Conceptual Framework (CF)

Conceptual Approach (CA)
- Social & political understanding of disability
- Art as healing
- Education in a variety art techniques & media

Practical Approach (PA)
- Provide a safe environment
- Emphasis on process of creating
- Provide opportunities to create

Abilities of individual

Time

EMPOWERMENT & QUALITY OF LIFE
1.3 General Statement of the Problem

I began to look for documentation that would provide answers to my queries, explain my experience and support my approach to teaching art with this population. However, research and documentation on the topic of art and disabilities revealed a scarcity of such information. It also revealed a large number of documents that promoted an approach of using art solely as a tool for therapeutic or remedial intervention and/or behavioural modification with this population.

To study this particular topic it was necessary to examine research in the fields of Art therapy, Education, that is art and aesthetic education, and adult education, and the Disability and Rehabilitation fields. Research was necessary in these separate fields, as there is no specific field or discipline in existence that does work solely on this topic.

Since my approach was holistic in nature, I felt that it combined and synthesised elements from art therapy and art education. I felt strongly that a solely therapeutic approach was not necessary for teaching or learning art for this population. This was based on my observation that therapeutic interventions could actually prove to be dangerously disempowering, a belief I had formed after
witnessing some of the art therapy approaches used with this population.

Investigating the field of Art therapy, I expected this discipline to be informed by a medical perspective; I was not surprised. The focus is understandably "therapeutic", where according to Joan M. Erikson (1979), "therapy" is a word that "connot[es] illness and recovery from illness". Although this may be theoretically valid the focus is still on the person's illness, diagnosis and treatment.

The assumption not stated in this perspective on disability is the belief in the inherent biological and social inferiority of this population (The Roeher Institute, 1996). This holds out little empowerment potential and is problematic for individuals with disabilities who want to focus on exploring their creativity in an art setting and are not interested in curing themselves of their disabling behaviours or finding hidden meanings in their work (Erikson, 1979; McKenzie, 1998).

Despite the tendency to view this population within a clinical framework, there was a noted scarcity of documentation and research into art therapeutic interventions for people with disabilities. Rees (1998) suggests that the cause of this may be the very nature of the work with this population that allows for a "cloak of
devaluation and despair [to] shroud not only those receiving services but extends equally to those providing services"(p.xvii). This is an important validation of the limiting and oppressive contagion of a medically prescriptive perception of people with disabilities, and the oppressive attitudes to which people with disabilities are subjected.

My research in the fields of Education and Art education revealed again a dearth of information and literature on the topic of community-based art education and adults with disabilities (Blandy, 1993; Jones, 1993). Most of the research focussed instead on teaching art to children and youth who have disabilities and who attend school (Jones, 1993).

The philosophical approach that these disciplines have to art with adults with disabilities is noticeably congruent with the prevalence of the biomedical approach in the field of disabilities. Blandy (1989) identifies this as being very problematic and points out that the operating assumption is that to have a disability one must need constant rehabilitation, treatment and therapy even in recreational and leisure activities.

This approach to art education has very little to do with learning art and more to do with art therapy and
behaviour modification. It seems to be based upon the belief as articulated by Rees (1998) that people with disabilities are more susceptible to mental illnesses than the normal population. There are data to support this fact in the field of developmental disabilities where it is stated that between 17 to 34% of this population is purported to have a mental illness (Brown, Raphael & Renwick, 1997). However, these figures may be elevated, as they do not take into consideration the tendency to medically over-scrutinise this population (Rioux, 1996), and the general lack of understanding of how to meet their emotional needs (Brown, Brown & Bayer, 1992).

Yet this is the stereotyped perception that many people have of people with disabilities. This perception is revealed when discussions arise regarding art and those with disabilities and people assume that the focus of the artwork is therapeutic or based in behaviour modification principles and not simply for the pleasure of learning art. Rioux (1996) identifies this as an example of how people with disabilities are consistently contextualised into a clinical lifestyle.

The field of disabilities, although also focussed on diagnosis and treatment, has recently begun to include more theories and models of empowerment and quality of life in
its conceptualisation of human service ideologies and rehabilitation for this population. From these theories what becomes painfully apparent is that people with disabilities have historically been given very little opportunity to become empowered or enhance their quality of life.

Nevertheless, the role of empowerment theories which emerged from the Movements of the 60's (Zippay, 1995) have had recent impact on the field of disabilities in terms of the development of alternative orientations to disability. In particular, the development of the Normalisation principle (1972) and the inception of the socio-political orientation (Blandy, 1991) to understanding disability have interwoven liberating and holistic elements in their perceptions.

This in turn has lead to the acknowledgement of demands by people with disabilities that there be an evaluation of human service programs where their experiences are important in determining the quality of these programs and their impact on the quality of their lives (Centre for Health Promotion, 1996). The development of quality of life definitions and measurement models in the field of disabilities was, thereby, stimulated with the assumption that the services interacting with people with disabilities needed to be empowering (Brown, Brown & Bayer, 1992).
Some of the findings of these studies have shown the extent to which the human service programs have traditionally contributed to the disempowered state of people with disabilities. Brown et al. (1992) in their quality of life study have discovered that "the attitudes of staff and parents are often geared towards encouraging people to be quiet and conform" (p.48). Brown, Bayer & McFarlane (1988) show that in areas of social skills, leisure and recreation are usually undeveloped and that interventions need to occur that empower and enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities.

In contrast, my approach seemed much more congruent with art educators working in the field of adult education. This is a field that has traditionally been concerned with conscientization (Friere, 1993) and the struggle to give voice and empower people who have been dehumanised and oppressed. It challenges traditional educational thinking with the intention of actively orienting people towards social reform (Elphick, 1981).

Cleveland (1992) documented the work of some such art educators with specific focus on the United States of America. He was quick to call what he found an "Arts Movement" in an attempt to indicate the vast numbers of programs of this type being created in this country. He
states that the approach taken by many of the art educators is to "do the most good by concentrating on the empowering qualities of the creative process and not on diagnosis and treatment" (p. 5). Here the assumption is in the belief that there is a natural link between creating and empowering people, including people with disabilities, and that art is naturally seen as healing.

However, there still is an unmet need as identified by many art educators in the Adult Education field. Jones (1993) points out that, "for artists working with special needs groups, little training is available and what there is lacks any theoretical or philosophical framework"(p.282).

The lack of written material embodying or describing the connections between empowerment, quality of life and a holistic arts approach with adults with disabilities is problematic. This is an issue that needs to be addressed in a way that will remediate the stereotyped perceptions and be of benefit not only to human service workers but also and most importantly to the population of people with disabilities.

In an attempt to address this issue, this thesis conducts a qualitative investigation and evaluation of the Toronto based art program that I developed that uses a holistic arts approach with adults with cognitive and/or
psychiatric disabilities.

To direct this study, I have asked myself five questions that I pursue in the body of this thesis. The Major Question central to the discussion in this thesis is: does the holistic arts approach that I have developed empower and enhance the quality of life of adult participants with cognitive and or psychiatric disabilities, and if so, how?

The other questions include: (a) what is a holistic approach to art with adults with disabilities and how does it differ from other approaches? (b) what are the philosophies and approaches that are employed in the disciplines of rehabilitation and people with disabilities and what is their significance in the development of a conceptual framework for teaching art? (c) what is the significance of Adult Education goals, principles and guidelines to this process? And (d) how well suited is the quality of life measure—Being, Belonging, and Becoming as promoted by the Centre for Health Promotion, University of Toronto— for evaluating an art program for adults with cognitive and or psychiatric disabilities?

The approach of this study is supported by its methodological procedures of generating evaluative outcomes and categories through the use of grounded theory. The
paradigm that is applied is qualitative and ethnemethodological, whereby the experience of the artists with disabilities and their teachers is investigated to reveal the orientation and value they have towards their work.

The researcher is also informed by a socio-political orientation to disability (Blandy, 1991) which has at its foundations the practice of normalisation (Wolfensberger & Tullman, 1982, cited in Tunks, 1993). A socio-political orientation includes the understanding that environmental barriers and societal attitudes have historically prevented people with disabilities from participating fully in life. Their experiences are therefore recognised as stemming from their belonging to an oppressed minority group (Hahn, 1984). In this perspective disability is seen as a "socially constructed myth, one that is changed by culturally and temporarily determined factors beyond the control of individual human beings" (Warren & Nadeau, 1988, p.193).

Also to engage in an empowerment and quality of life study means this will be done in partnership with adults with disabilities and their experiences and values will be considered as valuable. This study will define and formalise an alternative conceptual framework (that is different from the problematic medically-orientated approach) for working in
partnership with adults with cognitive and/or psychiatric disabilities in a community art setting. It will show that this model empowers and enhances the quality of life of its participants.

This study is necessary to develop support and backing for programs that already exist as well as to assist educators already in the field to meet the needs of artists with disabilities in terms of setting or redefining goals. This can create an environment that would stimulate dialogue with other educators while promoting a philosophy that would create an atmosphere of respect, learning and empowerment for the artist as well as the educator.

In this chapter I defined the steps that lead me to conducting this study from my own personal experience and understanding of the empowering elements in creating to a questioning of whether art with adults with disabilities could produce similar effects.

My research has revealed the different and problematic frameworks that have been used to interact with this group of people in the provision of programming from a variety of sources. In the next chapter I will provide a discussion of the research I reviewed in the fields of Education, Art and Aesthetic Education, Art therapy and the Disability and Rehabilitation fields that support the need
for a Holistic Arts Approach.

In Chapter III, I outline the design of this study with operational definitions and include the limits to this study. In the next Chapter I present my findings and in Chapter V, I discuss the findings in relation to my study's goals and other questions that have emerged.
Chapter II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

II.1 Overview of Literature

My interest in searching out support for a Holistic Approach to teaching art to adults with disabilities lead me to conduct research in several very distinct areas of academia as there was no literature that spoke specifically to my topic. Consequently the literature that I unearthed exposed many problematic issues that interestingly enough began to course their way into a number of common themes. In my research I investigated areas in Education, including Special education and Adult Education. Within the area of Art Education, I also included Aesthetic education. Next, I looked into art therapy and finally the fields of disability and rehabilitation theory and praxis.

Within and among many of the fields there was no documentation of a similar holistic arts approach. Yet there were common problematic themes that transcended the boundaries inherent within each of the fields of inquiry. The documentation that existed showed an over-reliance on the frameworks of a biomedical or behaviourist approach to teaching and supporting adults with disabilities. There was a mutually supporting benefit to this framework as provided
by the prevalence of attitudes and stereotypes that limited opportunities for learning and growth for adults with disabilities. Further to this, the documentation of some relevance to the topic was limited by their conceptual frameworks or their applications to different population groups or to other topics other than art.

Despite these problematic aspects however it was possible to sift out the elements that informed both the Conceptual and Practical Approaches to the development of the Holistic Arts Approach. Indeed the elements within the literature written by educators such as Blandy, (1989, 1991, 1993), Lowenfeld (1982), Katz (1993), and Guay (1992) are compatible with and have supported the Holistic Approach to teaching art to adults with disabilities. Additionally, the discussion of the extensive influence that aesthetic theory has had on educational practices, the application of socio-political theory to the work with adults with disabilities, the impact of Friere's (1993) critical education perspective and the quality of life movement have contributed to the development of this Approach.

II.2 Education Literature

II.2.1 Special Education

Within the Educational context the investigation was conducted in both Special Education and Adult Education. The
literature in the Special Education context is mainly concerned with the education of children and youth with disabilities (Jones, 1993) and is strongly influenced by a medical or prescriptive approach (Blandy, 1989).

For example, one such discussion gives a task analysis for working with children with disabilities doing arts and crafts. Crawford and Mendell (1987) state in step two of their thirty-seven step task analysis that the "learner will hold the crayon in the proper writing position nine times out of ten" (p. 91). Teaching a learner to hold a crayon in a "writing position" is not so much about art and knowledge of art as it is about prescriptive regulation of behaviour.

Blandy (1989) recounts an early experience of teaching art to a six year old child diagnosed with moderate to severe mental retardation. He asserts that the art activities she participated in were designed to promote fine and gross motor development, body and environmental awareness, attention span, task organisation and self-esteem. Nowhere in the child's planning was there a discussion of or promotion of the knowledge of art or the development of creativity which her non-disabled peers were learning.

This led Blandy (1989) to comment on the experience of special education groups by stating that,
Within this model, goals and objectives of art education which are art oriented are replaced, suppressed, de-emphasized, or become secondary to educational goals that prescribe measures to compensate for, or eradicate negatively-valued behaviours or characteristics associated with disability and deviancy (p. 9).

In this model or approach, learning art even while in an educational setting is not promoted. In fact Males and Scott (1984), speak to the issue of learning when they identify as an obstacle, instead of a belief that the difficulty with educating people with disabilities is their "limited ability to learn and reason" (p. 115). This belief does not take into account the possibility that intelligence as used in the schools may have no relationship to creativity (Lowenfeld & Brittain, 1970), and that a multiplicity of intelligences may exist (Gardner, 1989).

Gardner (1989) identifies seven intelligences, namely linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, kinaesthetic, interpersonal (knowledge about persons), and intrapersonal (knowledge about oneself) intelligence. He asserts that artistic thinking, that is thinking in artistic symbols and "the abilities involved in dealing with the visual arts... with dance, mime, use of the body, and so on-
all represent separate sets of cognitive skills, [which] are usually downplayed in the schools" (Brandt, 1987/8, p.30).

Biologically deterministic policies, which are supported by the entrenched belief that intelligence is a single thing that can be measured, have created what Rioux (1996) suggests is one of the stages in distinguishing and socially constructing "inferior" people. At this stage people are labelled then become exposed to professional treatment and eventually to a "paternalistic denial of liberties and self-determination" (p. 121). According to Carrigan (1994), such attitudes continue to prevail and have created many obstacles to learning and creative development for special education groups.

However, some excellent approaches to teaching special education groups have been promoted by educators such as Viktor Lowenfeld and Douglas Blandy. Lowenfeld's contributions (1970, 1982) are particularly important as he describes developmental stages in art and creative learning and growth that are applicable to all individuals. His response when asked whether mentally retarded individuals were creative was, that, "as long as there is a spark in a human being which can be kindled to a flame, we should never give up trying to kindle the spark" (Lowenfeld, 1982 p. 15). He believed that art education should inspire the growth and
development of a creative and sensitive individual who would contribute positively to society.

Meanwhile, Blandy's (1989) approach applies an understanding of the socio-political orientation to education for people with disabilities with his promotion of community integrative experiences for learning art. He believes that within this framework art is a "source of personal empowerment and a source for connecting with others" (p. 10). He stresses that art educators need to work on mutually defined goals with their students that relate to "art criticism, aesthetics, art history, art and society, and studio production" (p. 11)

In their work with children and youth experiencing mental and physical challenges, Blandy, Pancsofar and Mockenstrum (1988) have developed a number of guidelines for teaching art that could be generalised to adults with disabilities. One of these guidelines calls for the incorporation of the Principle of Partial Participation. This principle refers to creative and adaptive strategies employed by an educator to engage the student as much as possible when s/he is at risk of not being able to complete an activity on his/her own as opposed to doing the activity for them.

Both Blandy and Lowenfeld emphasised the importance of
the teacher's intervention to ensure that the student participates in the art activity as much as possible. Guay (1992), in her analysis of teaching practices with special education populations, found that teachers who had involved themselves in creative problem solving processes and innovations were successful in preventing the adoption of non-art objectives and goals in the classroom. Ludins-Katz and Katz (1990) also stress the importance of the creation of adaptive devices for those with physical challenges. With these approaches, creating becomes accessible and a significant act for the student, no matter the length of time it takes or how questionable the aesthetic outcome, whether it be scribbles, lines, or dots.

II.2.2 Adult Education

The issue of access to the learning in and the study of art is also prevalent within the field of Adult Education. However, the literature in this field reveals less of an emphasis on the application of the medical approach or the regulation of behaviour for people with disabilities when learning art. It is important to note that in this field, education is defined in a broader sense that includes creative development and life long learning opportunities (Jones, 1993). This definition is very relevant when one considers, as Katz (1993) and Preece (1993) have, that as
the general population ages, so too does the population of adults with disabilities who may be looking for opportunities to continue their education, especially in community-based settings.

For adults with disabilities, Blandy (1993) sees their involvement in life long learning opportunities as promoting their integration into the community and enhancing their quality of life. However there is a noted lack of structure and appropriate support for people with disabilities if accessing community based learning in art. In fact many of the community based venues are yet to make their art education programs accessible (Blandy, 1993).

Jones (1993) speaks about the lack of structure when he identifies the need for a theoretical and philosophical framework in the training of art educators who intend to be teaching adults with disabilities. Blandy (1993) attempts to meet this challenge by presenting a framework which he has developed from synthesising elements of special education and art education. However he bases this synthesis on the intent of community integration, with the assumption that this would be an empowering opportunity for adults with disabilities.

This may indeed be the case in the short run when we look at some of the studies. For instance, Preece (1993)
recounts a successful project that linked a number of adults with disabilities to Lancaster University’s Adult Education Department in England. The intent of the project was developing a course to construct a hovercraft and bridge the gap between ‘non-traditional students’ including adults with disabilities and higher education.

However, as Carrigan (1994) points out, if this connection with the community is not consistent and based in some mutual respect the same fearful and negative attitudes crop up again reverting social roles and expectations to the status quo and to the detriment of people with disabilities.

The perspective is different for artists who have become adult educators. Many seem to espouse the notion of community development through the unfolding of strengths and strong identities for people who have been marginalised, as opposed to community integration.

Cleveland (1992) points out in his study of artists teaching art in ‘other places’, that these educators work from project to project in social institutions and specific communities such as prisons and working class neighbourhoods. Despite their transient nature there is a common grounding in the artistic quality and focus of the projects to concentrate on the empowering qualities of the creative process.
Elphick (1981), almost a century ago called this 'movement', community arts and defined it as being concerned with,

...explaining and giving voice to the consequences of urban decay; the inequalities of our distribution of wealth; the effect on large sections of our population, of the lack of opportunities available to others and the effect on the individual of having a complete lack of self-confidence, self respect and faith in one's own abilities (p. 57).

Many of these educators acknowledge the impact of the 60's movements for equality and freedom in their approaches (Cleveland, 1992). This includes the writings of Paulo Friere (1985) who described his work with a specific community of rural workers in Brazil where he promoted the belief that education was central to empowerment. Jones (1993) sees Friere's work as useful and of particular relevance to many adult educators, as it is to this discussion. His analysis has been generalised to show how education is traditionally used to serve the interests of those with power in society. In particular he notes the manipulation of science and technology as powerful instruments in the systematic oppression of people.
In his writings Friere (1985) studied the behaviours and attitudes manifested by people who have historically been disempowered and promoted his conviction that critical education could overcome these tendencies and liberate those disadvantaged to struggle with and transform society. He calls this the act of conscientisation, which he defines as, "learning to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality" (p.17).

Friere (1985) presents a perspective that is congruent with the socio-political analysis of the experience of people with disabilities. He espoused a social and political development of the oppressed community as necessary for a more equitable redistribution of rights and liberties. These are the perspectives adopted and put to practical application in the Holistic Arts Model.

Also of relevance to the field of Adult Education are the elements attributed to learning and its philosophical context. This philosophy of learning holds that every time something new is learned there is an added effect of a change in the behaviour and personality of the individual with an accompanying reinventing of or transformation of the individual (Thomas, 1991). To believe therefore that adults with disabilities cannot learn is quite damning in the face
of this philosophy.

II.3 **Art and Aesthetic Education**

Contextualising learning as transformative is very rare not only within special education settings, but also in art education contexts. The art education contexts within Canada and the United States of America adhere to a notion of the learning of the "discipline of art" and the study of art as a subject (McWhinnie, 1991, p.4).

Similarly in Ontario, a look at *The Ontario Curriculum for The Arts* published by the Ontario Ministry of Education and Training (1998) reveals the influence of the learning of concepts and technical aspects of art. It states that the four areas of achievement in the arts for students are identified as "understanding of concepts, critical analysis and appreciation, performance and creative work and communication" (p.8).

It is an approach that does not place emphasis on the role of creativity, the impact of social issues, and the goals of creative self-expression, self-actualisation and the development of the individual through art (McWhinnie, 1991). Instead it only promotes "knowing about art (adult art) and recognising great art" (Unsworth, 1992, p. 64).

Effland (1995) defines this approach to art education as indicative of a formalist aesthetic style. He shows that
the four major orientations to Aesthetic theory, which he defined as, mimetic, pragmatic, expressive and formalist each influence or show a relationship between specific art education teaching practices, learning theories and social beliefs.

He saw the formalist approach as representative of a cognitive style to learning in art. This style promotes the attainment of concepts and implies an elitist view of society. He equated this theory with the rise in Discipline based art education in the United States of America as well as in Ontario and Canada.

The mimetic approach believes in the value of imitation for learning in art and is very much grounded in notions of social control and traditional values. Effland (1995) points out that this is one of the oldest philosophies of art, which uses behaviour modification techniques of reinforcement and other social control techniques to facilitate learning. These are similar to the approaches applied with special education populations as discussed above.

The pragmatic theory believes in the instrumental perspective to learning in art and holds that education is an instrument for social reconstruction and transformation. This holds with the values of many adult educators teaching
art in various communities. Elphick (1981) states that because “community arts challenges traditional arts, ... challenging traditional educational thinking together both indicate possibilities for change in our society” (p. 56).

The expressive theory meanwhile focusses on the individual and is about the liberation of self and the integration of the personality through the expression of ideas, feelings and emotions of the person. This model emphasises the therapeutic aspects of art in education. Advocates of this model include Viktor Lowenfeld (1982), who believed that therapy, “is intricately bound up with the nature of art education” (p.3) and the growth of the individual.

He espoused the notion that his approach to art education has a number of growth components. These components include emotional growth, perceptual growth (use of the senses), social growth (the development of the ability to live co-operatively), creative growth and aesthetic growth, which is what he felt took place when we bring into relationship all the parts of our total personality.

With the shift in the art world from Mimetic to Modernism (which includes the expressive and formalist models) to Postmodernism there has been an expansion in the
definition of what constitutes art and aesthetic experience. The rise of postmodernism and its acknowledgement of the diversity of views, experience and truth in the world has made it difficult for works of art to be understood and interpreted unless its specific context is known. Viewed without an understanding of the theory or context, the art piece becomes meaningless (Neperud & Krug, 1995).

These events have set the context for the rise in popularity and interest in Art Brut and Outsider art. These art categories are often confused with each other in popular culture. MacGregor (1989) adopts the artist Dubuffet’s definition of art work belonging to the category of Art Brut if it has been created by an untrained artist, who “exists on the edge of our society, exiled as a madman, an eccentric, a criminal, or a fool” (p. 301). While Bennet (1990) admonishes the lay person not to “think of it [outsider art] as an art movement as much as an anthropological discovery: artists with no training who create vivid pictures based solely on their internal feelings” (p.16). Despite these attempts at a distinction, both these definitions include a reference to the art of people with disabilities who live experiences either on the edge or outside the mainstream.

Central to these notions of Art Brut and Outsider Art
is the influence of the expressive orientation of art aesthetic theory. The work produced is not valued for its therapeutic insights, despite the recognition of its source from a compulsive desire to create within the individual. Instead it is valued for its communication of the personal stories of outsiders, where sometimes the words are painted right on the image making this new aesthetic belong to this orientation.

This is the aesthetic popularised by the works of Toronto based but internationally known artist Menno Krant, or the lesser known works of Carter Todd in Madison, Wisconsin. The art works of the six artists studied in this paper also have elements of this new aesthetic. And these too do not celebrate the therapeutic goals or insights.

II.4 Art Therapy

Knowing that art therapy was not really the goal of a community based program for teaching art to adults with disabilities, I still did a brief research of the literature in art therapy to discover there were many different schools of thought within the field. Males (1990) outlines four types, the diagnostic, the analytic, the expressive, and a combined approach, which uses all three. None of these types was found to be relevant to this discussion, as regardless of the approaches, the art therapist still works within a
model that conveys a connotation of illness and recovery from illness.

My decision to research the literature in this field made me realize how susceptible I was to the notion that I needed to learn some therapeutic insights in my work with adults with disabilities. Waller (1984) assured me that I was not alone in this belief as many teachers working with special needs groups also think that this is necessary. Mercer (1992) states this is not surprising as this is consistent with the pervasiveness of the medical and psychomedical model used by professionals in the field of disabilities.

Rees (1998) is in contention with the above statement when she discusses and promotes support for the belief that people with disabilities are more susceptible to mental ill health. The reasons listed, knowingly or unknowingly, attribute this belief to the impact of socio-political factors on the lives of people with disabilities. It is included here as it gives a good description of the 'life styles' of people with disabilities.

The determining factors, include limited ways of coping with stress and multiple life events such as the death of family members and the move to group homes. Then there are the side effects of neurological problems, such as epilepsy,
not to mention medication. Also, in their lives they have very few opportunities to develop informal support networks and often they find themselves vulnerable to physical, sexual and financial abuse. Plus they experience a systematic disempowerment as they regularly are not given the opportunities to exercise full rights as a citizen or to partake in socially valued roles (Rees, 1998).

The impact of art therapy on changing the social and political inequality of people with disabilities has as yet not been proven anywhere. McWhinnie (1991), gives a possible historical analysis for the popularity of art therapy when he states that, "The strong interest in and growth of programs in art therapy may be a consequence of art education's losing sight of earlier aims and objectives" (p.6). In other words art education’s move to an adoption of a mimetic or formalist orientation would certainly have lost the elements of the expressive orientation. The development of art therapy, therefore, may have been a result of the failure of art education to be or remain holistic.

Art therapy with people with disabilities has, in effect extended the role of science and medicine into their creative lives. This still renders the individual as problematic or prone to mental health illnesses yet at the
same time I believe it has exposed adults with disabilities to art materials and making art who otherwise never would have had the opportunity. The work of occupational and art therapists in hospitals and institutions has led to an education of some people with disabilities in a variety of art techniques as well as contributing to the development of their creativity.

Despite this, the emphasis of therapy, as mentioned earlier, is still about curing people and not so much about directly attempting to empower people with disabilities or about enhancing the quality of their lives.

II.5 Empowerment and Quality of Life

The literature from the field of disabilities and rehabilitation, had to be researched to discover the impact of empowerment theory and quality of life models on people with disabilities.

Since the 1970's certain theorists in the field of disability have been concerned with developing human service ideologies that could empower the population of people with disabilities. These ideologies were meant to become frameworks from which human service workers could function professionally and ethically with this population who are extremely vulnerable to being preyed upon by societal elements. The development of human service ideologies such
as Normalization, Social Role Valorization and the induction of the Socio-political approach to disabilities and quality of life theories and models are all directly linked to empowerment theories that began appearing in the 60's.

With Wolfensberger's principle of Normalization, later renamed Social Role Valorization, these ideologies became less specific to people with cognitive or developmental disabilities and began to include people with psychiatric and physical disabilities. This was a move embracing the socio-political conceptualisation of disability wherein groups who have traditionally been disempowered and given very little control of their own lifestyles within the community (Brown et al. 1992) attempt to empower themselves and enhance the quality of their lives.

II.5.1 Empowerment

In the past three decades, Empowerment theory has had a significant influence on the various models of disability, the human service ideologies associated with these models and, ultimately, on the health and well being of people with disabilities. There are many definitions and conceptualisations of Empowerment since its first appearance in the literature of Social Workers in the 1960's (Zippay, 1995). In the past three decades, empowerment theory has moved from a ground breaking new paradigm to one that is
mainstream encompassing many fields and disciplines (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). In many respects empowerment has become the new buzz word (Lord & Hutchison, 1993) that has been used by so many diverse groups that its true meaning has become lost (Zippay, 1995).

However, the definition, that is of great relevance to this discussion, and is similar to the one subscribed to by many community psychologists (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995), is the definition presented by Lord and Hutchison (1993), researchers in the field of disabilities. They describe a research study they conducted on the concept of empowerment, defined for the purposes of their study as "processes whereby individuals achieve increasing control of various aspects of their lives and participate in the community with dignity" (Lord & Hutchison, 1993, p.7).

Their research was designed so that persons with developmental disabilities had the opportunity to share what the concept of empowerment meant to them. They identified three areas that were relevant to their understanding of their own development process towards a sense of empowerment. These areas are personal control, interdependence, where "knowing and relying on others for support did not detract from people's ability to take responsibility for their future" (Lord & Hutchison, 1993,
p.18) and, the importance of involvement in community life.

Since then there have been developments in the field that incorporate the aspects of empowerment defined in the above study. These include: a movement towards providing more personal control through choice, consumer participation and self-determination (Turnbull, 1988; Alper, Jayne, & Schloss, 1993; Drake, 1992); the discovery that people with developmental disabilities need to maintain a level of interdependence rather than independence (The Roeher Institute, 1996; Luckasson & Spitalnik, 1994); and, a recognition and emphasis on the importance of promoting the social and political involvement of people with disabilities in their communities (Bikenbach, 1992; Turnbull, 1988).

An almost revolutionary development has been Wolfensberger's principle of Normalisation, which has been adopted by many if not all of the human service and rehabilitation organizations. With this principle, human service program goals are based on the success with which people with disabilities can best "approximate the lives of 'normal' people, and to what extent they can achieve the skills of able-bodied persons... and independent living" (The Roeher Institute, 1996, p.15). Similarly, Wolfensberger (1972) defines the principle of normalisation as the, utilisation of means which are as culturally normative
as possible, in order to establish and/or maintain personal behaviours and characteristics which are as culturally normative as possible. (p. 28)

Wolfensberger promotes this principle as one that can be applied to all persons with a disability and not only to persons with a developmental disability (The Roeher Institute, 1993). His principle called for people without disabilities to examine the attitudes and perceptions they held of persons with disabilities. It also strongly advised that every possible step should be taken to assist people with disabilities to appear less different in the eyes of society (The Roeher Institute, 1993).

By the end of the 70's, the concept had already become a permanent part of the vocabulary in the development of policy associated with persons with developmental disabilities (Simmons, 1982). The concept had also played a major role in the movement away from institutionalisation towards community living, and in the way people with developmental disabilities were viewed by service agencies (Perrin, 1982). In fact many settings were transformed and began to reflect a new respect for the dignity of all individuals, including those with severe disabilities (Borthwick-Duffy, 1992).

In 1980, however, Wolfensberger felt compelled to
revise his definition and renamed the principle Social Role Valorization as it became apparent that many had "misinterpreted" and "failed to take seriously" the true meaning of Normalization (Wolfensberger, 1983). In 1983 Wolfensberger proposed that the highest goal of the principle of normalisation has been clarified to be the establishment, enhancement, or defense of the social role(s) of a person or group, via the enhancement of people's social images and personal competencies. (p. 234)

Among other objectives, he stressed the importance of choice, achieving societal integration, community participation and independent living (Wolfensberger, 1983). The first three objectives are similar to some of the aspects identified as contributing to a sense of empowerment for persons with disabilities (Lord & Hutchinson, 1993). They are personal control, community participation and social involvement in the community.

This principle, however, does not go far enough in embodying all of the aspects of empowerment, such as the recognition of the need for addressing the political and human rights of persons with disabilities. It also does not recognise the importance of interdependent living as opposed to independent living. There are many who have criticised
the intent of this principle (Dalley, 1992; Szivos, 1992) and not only on these two points.

Dalley (1992) argues that Wolfensberger failed to address the way in which persons with disabilities are perceived, assessed and esteemed in society. Also Dalley (1992) claims that Wolfensberger is too simplistic in asserting that, "by adopting his training strategies in unproblematic fashion, 'society' through the agency of its 'human service professionals' will alter its perception of devalued people" (p. 102). Adopting this human service ideology, however, could not address or alter the discrimination faced by people with disabilities.

This ideology focusses on roles, values and functioning capabilities of people with disabilities and, therefore, reveals its affinity to a Functional or Economic model of disability. Both this model and its respective ideology understands disability to be within the individual and, therefore, targets the individual for change and does not fully bear in mind that the social and political environment can also be targeted for change.

Bikenbach (1992) discusses the existence of three models of disability: The Biomedical, and Economic (which he identifies as the standards models) and the Socio-political model. These models have all developed and incorporated
their own definitions and perceptions of disability. They have also all impacted on the creation of social policy to some extent.

The Economic model of disability defines disability in terms of a person's capabilities and, thereby, their productivity. In this model, "a person with disabilities is a person who embodies an economic cost that must be factored into society-wide economic policy decisions" (Bikenbach, 1992, p.13). This model takes on a Functional approach (The Roeher Institute, 1996) to disability where the person is identified through diagnoses and assessments to have an individual impairment or to be functionally incapable of full participation as a productive member of society.

The Economic model is analogous to the Biomedical model in that both emphasize the treatment and alteration of the functional deficit or the biological condition of the person with disability. Both are implicit in much of present-day disablement policy (Bikenbach, 1992). For instance, the biomedical model has left its mark on the evaluation and eligibility criteria for various forms of social assistance such as the Ontario Disability Support Plan, while the economic model has provided the rationale.

Proponents of the socio-political model on the other hand, do address the experience of discrimination for
persons with disabilities. They state that disabilities are socially constructed phenomena brought about by attitudes towards people with disabilities which, once embedded in social practices and institutions, sustain the disadvantageous social condition of people with disabilities. (p. 13)

This model conceives of disability as an interaction between the individual and the environment rather than something primarily within the person (Hahn, 1984). It is based on the assumption that persons with disabilities will always comprise a proportion of the population and sees the outcome as addressing human rights and the equality of well-being (The Roeher Institute, 1996). With respect to the aspects of empowerment, this model promotes choice, control, interdependence and participation in the social and political community and unites all people with disabilities.

For the past two decades, the socio-political model of disability has been one of the motivational forces behind the critiques and calls for reform in the field of disabilities (Bikenbach, 1992). Bikenbach (1992) claims and rightfully so that this model has steered the movement of persons with disabilities towards self-empowerment and the protection of legal rights. Its impact on the self-advocacy movement, People First, can readily be seen in the statement
of their goals. The goals of the People's First movement include promoting equality for all persons and teaching the community about the rights of People First (Delaney, 1993).

Similarly, its influence has led the American Association of Mental Retardation in 1992 to revise its theoretical framework to incorporate some of the changing perceptions of developmental disability. It defines mental retardation as a "state in which functioning is impaired" and "broadens the concept of mental retardation [by] shift[ing] the emphasis from the measurement of traits to understanding the individual's actual functioning in daily living" (AAMR, 1992, p.10). It also recognised the importance of the environment, its impact on functioning and the societal impact of discrimination on persons with disabilities. In keeping with the focus of the socio-political model of disability, the AAMR acknowledged the failure of its previous framework and the impact of deinstitutionalization and normalization to address the systemic factors that prevent persons with disabilities from participating as equals in the community.

A review of the history of deinstitutionalization reveals that the main assumption behind this movement was that people's quality of life would improve in smaller community settings. Many of the studies at that time were
focussed on identifying community placement success, that is, on whether individuals stayed in their community placements or not and the length of their stays in these placements (Borthwick-Duffy, 1991). However, by the 80's, the concept of placement success grew to reflect other variables such as community involvement and integration, the development of social networks, personal control and the degree of normalisation in the home (Lord & Pedlar, 1991), factors now associated with the concept of quality of life.

II.5.2 Quality of Life

In 1987, the concept of quality of life had entered the arena of policy creation. That year, the Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services had made a commitment in its Multi Year Plan, to develop a methodology for measuring the quality of life of persons with developmental disabilities in Ontario (Woodill, Renwick, Brown, & Raphael, 1994). Since then they have adopted and funded the research and study of the concept of quality of life as designed by Woodill et al. (1994). The study is called the Quality of Life Project.

Quality of life, like the concepts of empowerment and normalisation, has become the new buzz word in the field of disabilities with the result that there is much confusion around its definition, conceptualisation and use. Wolfensberger (1994) argues that in order to generate
productive forms of discussion, the term quality of life needs to have clarity and utility, which cannot be obtained if concepts become invested with surplus meaning. When this happens they become code words devoid of the original meaning and intent of the concepts. He suggested following his actions with regard to normalisation and "hanging up quality of life as a hopeless term" (p.285) and instead introducing another more useful term.

However, Woodill et al. (1994) attempted to avoid the confusion associated with this term by developing a definition and detailed conceptualisation and operationalisation of quality of life. In their conceptualisation, they define quality of life as "the degree to which a person enjoys the important possibilities of his or her life" (p. 67). In this definition, "enjoy" means satisfaction with and "having," while "possibilities" includes both opportunities and limitations people generally experience in their lives (Centre for Health Promotion, 1996). They emphasise that quality of life is not about quality assurance and does not necessarily reflect "the quality of resources that are available, the quality of care that is given, or the quality of services that are provided." (p. 64)

The Quality of Life Project, which shares the aspects
of empowerment and the qualities of the Socio-political model, makes certain assumptions in the design of its study. It adopted the principle of normalisation, and it also agreed that their perspective must emphasize the "empowerment of people with disabilities, and [it must] not serve as a vehicle to increase the power and control of others over the lives of persons with disabilities" (Woodill et al. 1994, p. 64). With its emphasis on empowerment, the study acknowledges that it has always been difficult for persons with developmental disabilities to develop a sense of power and personal control over their lives. They recognize the alienation and systemic disempowerment that persons with disabilities experience as they interact with human service agencies and the larger society.

Consequently, it is designed to include the voices of adults with disabilities in its study, and, in so doing it provides an opportunity for persons with disabilities to have a say in the making of policies that will impact on their well-being. It is important to note here that social policies that have been aimed at people with developmental disabilities "have usually been inspired by what society thought of them rather than by what they demanded or wrested from society" (Simmons, 1982). This Project, therefore, may set a precedent with regard to persons with developmental
disabilities having "democratized decision making in societal institutions" (The Roeher Institute, 1993).

In their study, quality of life is qualitatively measured by assessing the responses given by people with developmental disabilities, other persons in their lives and the assessors in nine areas. The Centre for Health Promotion (1996, p.6) charts these nine areas under the domains of Being, Belonging and Becoming. In addition for each of these nine areas there are six specific items used as assessment indicators making a total of 54 items. These are presented here in Table 1.

This study is being conducted in three phases. Phases 1 and 2 that are already completed looked at developing a method for conceptualising and measuring quality of life for adults with disabilities and the testing of this measurement for its reliability and validity. Unfortunately, the third phase, the data collection, consists of three parts and is yet to be fully completed and analysed. Data collection for the first part of phase three was just completed in December of 1998; therefore the results are not published as yet.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Being Domain</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Being</td>
<td>- Looking after physical health</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Eating a balanced diet</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Physical mobility and agility</td>
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<td>- Hygiene and body care</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Personal appearance</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Activity level and fitness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological Being</td>
<td>- Self-control over emotions &amp; feelings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Initiating positive independent activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Self-concept</td>
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<td>- Self esteem</td>
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<td>- Freedom from anxiety</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Freedom from psychological problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spiritual Being</td>
<td>- Understanding right and wrong</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Attaching meaning to life</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Feeling at peace</td>
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<td>- Religion &amp; religious activities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Celebrating Life</td>
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<td>- Helping others</td>
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Table 1.2

The Belonging Domain and its descriptors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belonging Domain</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Belonging</td>
<td>- Place of residence</td>
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<td>- Personal possessions</td>
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<td>- Space for privacy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Feeling safe</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Living in a neighbourhood</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Living in Canada</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Belonging</td>
<td>- Having a spouse or special person</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Family</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Friends</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Acquaintances</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Small social groups (e.g. clubs)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Larger social groups</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Belonging</td>
<td>- Access to education</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Access to meaningful work/activity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Access to professionals</td>
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<td>- Having own money</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Access to community places</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Access to community events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Belonging Domain</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>Practical Belonging</td>
<td>- Work, school, or similar major activity</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Work around the home</td>
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<td>- Doing volunteer work</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Looking after oneself</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Looking after other people or pets</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Going to appointments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leisure Becoming</td>
<td>- Visiting and socialising</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Organised recreational activities</td>
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However, a similar study was done in three western provinces of Canada by Brown, Bayer, & MacFarlane. This longitudinal study took place over six years ending in 1994. Their definition of quality of life was seen as "the discrepancy between a person's achieved and their unmet needs" (p.111) or the extent with which persons had or increased their control over his/her environment.

The findings of this study that are relevant to this paper are that, firstly, there are a large number of individuals who function at above average level of performance who are still maintained in traditional service agencies (that is in group homes and are not integrated into the community). Secondly, that most agency programs did not meet the emotional needs of the participants as these programs encouraged the participants to be as subdued as possible and not be assertive. Thirdly, that most agencies still concentrated on developing vocational programs whereas participants expressed the most needs in non-vocational areas. Lastly, that leisure and recreational activities are not encouraged to any major degree in the programs. Instead there are more spectator-types of recreation that are being encouraged while those activities promoting self-actualisation and community involvement are specifically discouraged (Brown et al. 1992).
Therefore, despite the fact that in the field of disability and, in particular, developmental disabilities, there has been an observed move towards the adoption of empowerment aspects amongst the human service agencies, there is still much more work to be done. As the study proves, one cannot say that the majority of persons with developmental disabilities and dual diagnosis are much more empowered since the process of deinstitutionalisation. However, Simmons (1982) maintains that for many, this empowerment and change in their quality of life is relatively much lower than the population at large.

The socio-political model of disability needs to penetrate and inform more of the programs created for adults with disabilities. Whether the Quality of Life Project findings are similar for Ontario we will have to wait and see. The project, however, is operating in a political climate at the present time that is more concerned about outcomes and fiscal restraint than about the rights and social well-being of people.
Chapter III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

III.1 Overview

The aim of this study is to describe a holistic model for teaching art to adults with cognitive and/or psychiatric disabilities, and to evaluate whether it empowers and enhances the quality of life of the participants.

The definitions of empowerment and quality of life used in this study are:

Empowerment is defined as the process whereby individuals develop a sense of personal control, interdependence and experience the importance of involvement in community life (Lord et al. 1993).

Quality of life is defined by The Centre for Health Promotion, as "the degree to which a person enjoys the important possibilities of his or her life"(p.4). In this definition, "'enjoy' means both 'satisfaction with' and 'having'. 'Possibilities' includes both opportunities and limitations people generally experience in their lives, whether by their own choice or due to circumstances in their lives"(p.3).

III.2 Assumptions

My assumptions throughout this study are outlined here. Firstly, adults with disabilities have the right to
participate in leisure time activities and life long learning opportunities, such as art. In discussing the normalization principle, Wolfensberger (1972) states that adults with cognitive disabilities not only need meaningful work, but also need opportunities to recreate and participate in leisure time activities. He also points out that rarely are they given the opportunity to have some influence on their own leisure time.

Secondly, adults with disabilities are creative and can be artists but they have to be given the opportunity in a creative setting to make art. Katz and Ludins-Katz (1990) who have been involved in developing Creative Art Centres for people with disabilities since 1975, claim that, "when the opportunity exists, we have seen the creative impulse burst forth like a surge of flood water when the dam has been removed" (p.5).

A third assumption is that art in and of itself is healing and leads to a better quality of life. Erikson (1979) maintains that the, Laws of the (art) media themselves, which are inherently precise, predictable, and consistent, teach you unfailingly to know yourself and free you to be yourself and to grow. (p.75)

A fourth assumption is that adults with disabilities
can participate in and contribute to society. Blandy (1993) informs us that opportunities for life long learning in art are seen by many as an important component influencing the individual's ability to integrate and, thereby, contribute to the community.

A fifth assumption is that adults with disabilities have rights and many adults need to be empowered to take full advantage of these rights. It is indeed problematic that people with disabilities rarely get opportunities to develop a sense of their own personal empowerment (Woodill, Renwick, Brown, & Raphael, 1994). Woodill et al. (1994) have identified this as an important principle to be promoted and adhered to when working with and for people with disabilities. In their conceptualisation of Quality of life they stress that it is important to,

emphasise the empowerment of people with developmental disabilities and not serve as a vehicle to increase the power and control of others over the lives of persons with disabilities. (p. 64)

The sixth assumption is that historical attitudes and beliefs that those with disabilities cannot create and contribute to society are prevalent today. These attitudes are supported by a common assumption in society that links
creativity with intelligence (Harlan, 1993). However this does not take into consideration the many art collectors who seek the art of Outsiders and the success of artists with disabilities such as Todd Carter.

These attitudes cause the misconception that people with disabilities only need art for therapeutic or rehabilitation purposes. In fact Blandy (1991) traces the historical development of art in relation to people with disabilities and shows that in between 1720 and 1970, art became formally linked with a rehabilitative and remedial purpose in the minds of those caring for people perceived as being disabled.

The eighth assumption is that if given the opportunity people with disabilities can learn and they can be taught. In fact there are in existence a multiplicity of intelligences (Gardner, 1982) and people with disabilities can display other forms of intelligence than the championed intellectual intelligence.

The final assumption is that adults with disabilities are an invisible entity in society that have historically experienced alienation and inequality. Rioux (1996) supports this fact in her discussion of the social and legal construction of inequality that has led to the lesser status of people with disabilities.
For the purpose of measurement and design clarity, the question to be answered by this study is,

What are the values (intrinsic and instrumental) as identified by the participants of the holistic arts model and do these values coincide with those of the facilitator/co-ordinator?

This operationalised question reveals the style of this research as qualitative and in keeping with the conceptual framework and the concept of empowerment and quality of life, grounded theory has been chosen as the best methodology for this process. Charmaz (1994) writes that the grounded theory method, "stresses discovery and theory development rather than logical deductive reasoning which relies on prior theoretical framework" (p. 96).

III.3 Methodological Procedures

III.3.1 Selection

The study selects as a sample, six adults with cognitive and or psychiatric disabilities, who have been participants of the holistic arts model, and the two co-ordinators. The selection of the six artists is based on the length of time of their participation in the program and their voluntary participation in the Summer Facilitation training project, in which they were trained to facilitate an art workshop. These six participants wrote journals or
created video-journals specifically for the Summer facilitation training project. The journals, daily notes and interviews, both written and taped were also collected from the two co-ordinators of the program, who are considered participants in this study.

III.3.1.1 Confidentiality

For reasons of confidentiality only pseudonyms were used in place of the real names of the participants. In addition any other revealing characteristics or data that had been collected that might identify any of the participants were dealt with accordingly, and removed from the study. As this is an exceptionally small sample no individual descriptions of the participants were provided to avoid the risk of a breach in confidentiality.

III.3.2 Characteristics of the Participants

The sample is restricted to six participants and the two co-ordinators of a holistic arts model in Southern Ontario.

The artist/participants that have been chosen are adults who have either a mild or borderline cognitive disability, psychiatric disability or have been dually diagnosed. The Roeher Institute (1996) states that disability "takes many forms, including limitations in mental and physical functioning, speech, visual and hearing
acuity and in emotional well-being” (p. 13). An individual who has been dually diagnosed is someone who has a mental illness and developmental disability.

The artists have participated in this holistic arts model for a minimum of two years with the majority having participated for three to five years. Before their enrolment in this arts program they had received no formal training in art with four out of the six having had no training whatsoever.

There are four females and two males all above the age of thirty, all are Caucasian except for two persons of colour. They all live below the poverty line and receive the Family Benefits Allowance or Ontario Disability Support Payment Plan from the Ministry of Community and Social Services.

All six artists were in receipt of services at the Community Centre through the case management program. With five of the six artists the researcher was also in the role of being their case manager. As a case manager I provided advocacy, instrumental and life counselling, with the purpose of supporting adults with mild or borderline cognitive disabilities to live independently in the community. Three of the five artists were referred through the Central case management agency, while two began
receiving service after they made self-referrals through their connection with the researcher and the art group.

III.3.3 The Context

The holistic arts model that was developed will be described and evaluated in this study. This arts program has been in operation since 1993 and is located in a community based setting in the city of Toronto. Three of the artists live in the surrounding community in which the art program is run. The other three take approximately an hour by public transit to come to the program, which is held for three to four hours one afternoon per week.

The Community Centre provides a number of services to the surrounding community through their legal, social, housing and health departments. Many of the artists have been recipients of all or some of these services.

III.3.4 Description of Teachers in the Study

The program has two teachers or co-ordinators, one who is also the researcher works full time as a case manager at the Community Centre and had originally conceived of this program. Of the two teachers/facilitators, one is male, the other female.

The other co-ordinator is a student artist and volunteer living in the surrounding community of the Community Centre, volunteering with the art program on and
off for three years. During the Summer training project this volunteer was paid to be the co-ordinator of the project. Money was received by the City's arts funding body to carry out this project.

III.4 Description of the Art Program

The program goals are to:

a) Provide opportunities for people with disabilities to express themselves through the visual arts

b) Make the world of art accessible by providing education so that the participants become exposed to different art techniques and media

c) Create opportunities for participants to educate the larger community to their experiences, abilities and achievements

d) Provide a studio space and a clearing-house to assist in promoting and selling the art produced by group members.

The program is structured to occur once a week for three to four hours, with outings and visits to galleries and museums done at separate times. An education and instruction style occurs in a group format where individual participants' needs are supported so that each person can work according to his/her own speed and they are encouraged to practise and develop their own styles and aesthetic. The
number of participants over the span of 1993 to 1998 varied from 3 to 17. Their work is displayed and sold every year at an annual art exhibit with ten percent returning to the program for the purchase of supplies. From time to time special art projects appear that include commissioned work, including entering art works into juried competitions. The program through the Community Centre provided TTC tickets, materials, and supplies.

III.5 Data Collection

Personal statements of the six artist/participants and co-ordinators of the program and also data from the participants of the summer facilitation training project, their artwork as well as selected art work produced by the six participants was collected.

III.5.1 Data Collection Procedures

Videotapes, audio-tapes, interviews of artists and teachers, discussions of portfolios by artists and teachers, journals of the six artists, and co-ordinators, and funding reports and surveys of Project participants were collected. Artwork was collected from summer art project participants and the six artists.

III.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis occurred according to grounded theory (Straus, 1987). Using a constant comparative method the data
collected was compared according to each emergent code or category. Firstly, during open coding, the data were analysed and compared with the other collected data from the three sources. Then axial and selective coding lead to the identification of core categories. Categories were compared between the artists and the co-ordinators in a triangulated process that highlighted the commonalities and differences.

This process was carried out by the researcher. An independent source was consulted to verify the codes that emerged from the data and to assist in confirming substantive outcomes and theory that have been used to evaluate the art program (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). An evaluation of this model emerged based on empowerment and quality of life assessment tools as derived by the participants. This was compared to the quality of life findings and indicators as developed in studies done by Brown, Brown & Bayer, or the Centre for Health Promotion at the University of Toronto.

III.7 Limitations of the Study

This study is limited in a number of ways. Firstly, the area of research is limited to adults with mild or borderline cognitive disabilities, dually diagnosed individuals and those with psychiatric disabilities.

Secondly, as the study is looking at adults, research
in special education was included in so far as it informed the practical aspects of teaching. Instead a focus on Adult Education principles in community settings was preferred. Thirdly, emphasis was also placed on visual art education.

Finally as is the case with all theories, the theory emerging from this study is open to testing, verification and further evolution.
Chapter IV

FINDINGS

IV.1 Operational Question

The question that served to direct the analysis was What are the values (intrinsic and instrumental) as identified by the participants of the holistic arts model and do these values coincide with those of the co-ordinator/researcher?

In conducting the analysis I organised the data yearly among the eight participants. There were six years of information, from 1993 to 1998, with a variety of data from the daily log of the art group to interviews conducted by different media and transcripts of videotapes and personal journals from all of the participants.

A description of my findings will be organised accordingly, followed by a discussion of the themes that have emerged including a possible hypothesis and substantive theory.

IV.2 Freeing the Creative Spirit: 1993

IV.2.1 The Data

This was the experimental and introductory phase of the program. As a case manager there was an expectation that I would do group work with the individuals on my caseload and this was my first attempt at combining my artistic skills
within this framework.

The data collected during this time was the proposal for the creation of the art group for adults with disabilities that would run for three to four hours one afternoon for four weeks within the month of August. A curriculum was included with the proposal that was followed up with the evaluation of the program and of the two exhibits one which was called Freeing the Creative Spirit.

The proposal laid the foundations for the conceptual framework of the holistic approach by stressing its aversion to art therapy yet containing within it many expressive and therapeutic vocabulary such as the participants' need for safety and support. It also stressed the notion of transforming the individual and society to create a more empowered individual and a more equitable society. And last but not least it identified that there would be instruction in the use of a variety of art media.

As reported earlier the Holistic Arts Approach and its elements could almost be seen in an equation format. The format showed that intrinsic to the proposal were the assumptions or beliefs that the Conceptual Framework of the Holistic Arts Approach (HAP) contained the elements of the Conceptual Approach (CA) and the Practical Approach (PA). When these two elements interacted over time with the
Ability (AB) of the participants there was an outcome of empowerment and an enhanced quality of life. The Conceptual Approach alluded to the various perspectives or theories that created the holistic quality to this Arts Approach, while the Practical approach became the active elements of support.

IV.2.2 The Categories and their properties

The data in this year revealed a number of properties and categories, some of which eventually developed into core categories. Two general areas of information emerged in the process of analysing the data. One is the data that inform the Holistic Arts Approach and its categories. The other is the data specific to the discernment of indicators for the development of Empowerment and Quality of Life for the participants in the study.

The area defined by the Holistic Arts Approach includes the Conceptual Approach which developed into a category determined by its properties of the Expressive, the Pragmatic or Socio-political perspective, and the Educational or Formalist.

The Expressive property included an understanding of the perspective of the personal and psychological impact of being labelled with a disability. Friere (1985) carefully depicts the attitudes and behaviours of the oppressed to be
fatalistic, self-deprecating, emotionally dependent and engaged in the internalisation of the oppressor’s image of them.

This property was informed by the expressive aesthetic theory of art education as discussed earlier. Its relevance coincided with the emphasis in the proposal and in the development of the arts approach on the "promotion of self-expression... healing... self-esteem...".

The Pragmatic is another orientation in aesthetic theory that has as its educational centre the goal of social reconstruction. This of course is similar to the socio-political approach that sees as problematic the inequality faced by people with disabilities and proposes that the solution to the problem needs to be the implementation of change to the discriminatory practices of institutions and society.

The Educational property in a sense refers to the formalist orientation of aesthetic theory that emphasises the notion of the learning of concepts in art. This property speaks specifically to the technical transmission of knowledge of art and its various elements such as colour theory and mixing.

The Practical Approach was essentially the active element including many of the tools that sought to
systematically support the Conceptual Approach and its properties. The Expressive properties of the Practical Approach included an emphasis on the process of making art rather than the product and the provision of safety and support to the participants of the art group.

The pragmatic or socio-political properties stressed the importance of providing opportunities to make creating accessible to the participants. This usually meant the provision of free art supplies and TTC tickets. As well this category called for the necessity of ending the program with an exhibition of the work created, as this would provide opportunities for the artists to interact with the community based on their contributions as producers of culture.

This practice of having an exhibition would in essence address the stereotypical attitudes of many non-disabled individuals who would be given the opportunities themselves to learn, understand and form continuous relationships with the participants. As Carrigan (1994) discovers in her study of attitudes about persons with disabilities it is very difficult to change entrenched fears and stereotypes people without disabilities generally have towards people with disabilities.

The educational properties include a flexible teaching structure with the ability to fluctuate between a directive
and self-directive approach. Included also is the structuring of the learning in art through the development of curriculum and the practical skills acquisition through the exposure to different art media.

The next area informed the core category of Ability. This is one of the more dynamic categories of this study as it is the place where the participant interacts with the theories forming the Holistic Arts Approach. Its properties also relate to the expressive, pragmatic and educational properties of the other two categories. The expressive properties within the category of Ability refer to the intent, beliefs and emotional development of the person. It essentially is the place of Personal Learning for the participant.

The pragmatic properties within the category of Ability include the actual learning ability of the participant. Within the socio-political framework this refers specifically to a sifting process where the participants’ abilities to learn are distinguished from their personal limitations and the limiting elements of societal attitudes and restrictions both internalised and felt.

Friere (1985) provides a good description of this process that he called conscientisation and saw the validity in using education as a subversive force for the
transformation of society. He writes, that education and learning could bring about, "the practice of freedom the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of the world" (p. 16).

In this category the participant engages in a process of learning social and political barriers that impede their development, growth and interdependence. The use of a group format to teach art to this population also provides opportunities for the participants to engage in Social Learning through connections with the group. Also, the fact that the first show of the group was timed with the Community Centre open house began a formation of a relationship with the Centre in the minds of staff, board members and funders.

The Educational property of this category speaks specifically to the Artistic skill and ability of the participant. It takes into consideration the meaning and experience they ascribe to their learning of art and includes any previous education they may have in art.

This category is the most dependent on time and the specific limitations that the disabilities of the individual participants struggle with. Cleveland (1992) points out that the population of people with disabilities and especially
those with cognitive disabilities form a much more heterogeneous population than many of the other communities. In fact the disability varies so greatly from individual to individual that the element of the discovery or learning time has to be considered individually.

These are some of the categories and their properties as discovered within the body of the proposal and as it appears in Fig 2. To list these categories again in the form of a hypothesis,

Conceptual Approach (CA) = The combined properties of Expressive art theory (EXP), Socio-political orientation (SP), and the formalist theory of education (ED).

Practical Approach (PA)= The tools associated with supporting combined properties of the above theories of EXP, SP and ED. Since the Practical approach is a separate category these tools are recognised as properties.

Ability (AB) = The combined properties of Artistic Learning (AL) of Personal learning (PL), and Social Learning (SL), (see Fig. 3).
Fig. 2. The Holistic Arts Approach

Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Approach

Socio-political theory (SP)
Expressive theory (EXP)
Formalist (ED)

Practical Approach

Exhibition & show
Process of creating Support & Safety
Curriculum Simple one step to multistep art techniques
Fig 3. The Properties inherent in the Abilities Category

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<td><strong>Personal Learning</strong></td>
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<td>Intent, beliefs &amp; Emotional Development</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Artistic Learning</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Aesthetic development</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media preference</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Social Learning</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning ability</td>
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<tr>
<td>separate from Soc. Limitations &amp; Social connections</td>
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IV.2.3 Observations

The evaluation of the program revealed a baseline perspective to attribute to the Personal, Social, and Artistic learning properties of the Ability category of the group participants.

The personal learning property revealed two elements, a lack of self-confidence in their creative work and their abilities to create, and the belief that they were not creative and therefore could never become artists.

The Social learning property included the inter group elements of first time awkwardness, leader development and
conflicts based on individual behaviours that diverted my attention and angered some of the participants. Essentially the social structure was duplicated within the group with the leader being assessed by the group as having more artistic ability. The leader would also take the time to interact and comment on the work of the group.

The Artistic Learning property had four elements of note. More often than not many in the group could not remember which art pieces were theirs. They could not remember what they did and were as yet unaware of their style of creating and in fact had very little interaction with their artwork. There was an assumption from the group that art meant representational art only and the styles of the expressionists and abstract artists were not considered in the same category. In fact some of the participants had expected more of a focus on arts and crafts as opposed to fine art.

Iv.2.4 The Participants

Three out of the six artists in the study were participants in 1993. There was Ron who having seen the posters advertising the program showed up the first day. Next were Ted and Rita who heard about the program from my professional involvement with them.

After the two exhibitions, one in October and the other
a month later the artists were excited about returning. They had had very positive responses from the community that came to their shows and they also saw the possibility of making money from their work. For the next year they requested a focus on creating saleable art.

As one of the participants of this study, I recorded my excitement within the properties of Personal and Artistic Learning. I was teaching art and had curated two exhibitions. However, an element of Personal learning for myself was the issue of role boundaries, that is my role as teacher and social worker to some of the participants. It was noted by Ron, who discussed with me the disruptive characteristic of this element for the other participants in the group, who, were regularly interrupted in their work by the unconstrained needs of the participants belonging to my caseload. This was an element that became a theme throughout the remainder of the study and will be discussed later.

IV.3 Art for Survival: 1994

The data in this year were collected from the curricula for the two art sessions taking place in the spring and summer, the daily art group notes, Ted's interview with a Canadian television station and a report from the Community Centre.

IV.3.1 The Categories

The second year of the program brought with it some
changes in emphasis in terms of the Conceptual and Practical Approaches categories. This was in direct response to the artists' suggestions and intent.

The Practical Approach Category was expanded to include a Financial property and this was reflected in the addition to the curriculum of the creation of cards for sale. The art show at the end of the summer also emphasised the systematic sale of their artwork. Of the sixty-one pieces for sale, thirty-nine were sold with the highest price being eighty dollars and the total sales adding up to six hundred dollars. The financial element is another theme that will be addressed later. It never became a core category but it raised a pertinent argument regarding the Conceptual Approach properties and their relevance to the perception of people with disabilities.

The curriculum had Conceptual Approach elements belonging to the properties of the expressive, socio-political and educational. For instance there was the use of symbolic line to communicate emotion that resonated with the expressive property. Then the curriculum theme of 'Living with a disability' was reflected in the socio-political property. Plus the theory of the perception of objects versus the actual seeing of them was explored as a formal concept in the techniques of drawing and consequently was
placed within the educational property.

Support for the arguments inherent in the Conceptual Approach was provided in the analysis of the bias of the interview with Ted. The interviewer emphasised the image of the art group and the artwork as rehabilitating for the artists. She identified the group as, "learning to express their creativity through a program at the Community Centre, and for many of them like Ted, art has helped save them" (p. 42).

Maybe this approach that the interviewer took was in reaction to the name of the group’s show which was ‘Art for Survival’, a name they contributed. However for the group, survival more likely meant financial survival as opposed to therapeutic. This fact is upheld in my research that revealed that people with disabilities are usually perceived by the public as needing rehabilitation and therapy for their differences.

Within the Practical Approach category the educational properties of the curriculum called for more of an emphasis on demonstration. As well gallery visits were scheduled to expand their perception of the variety of creative works that are conceived as art.

An important element of the Socio-political property was presented when the group held its exhibit which they
titled 'Art for Survival' in the fall of that year. Amongst the one hundred people in attendance, the Mayor of the city was present and gave a speech while earlier that day Ted was interviewed for a television spot advertising the show and the Centre. This provided an opportunity to educate the community to the strengths of people with disabilities and to foster relationships where they can be perceived as contributors to the production of culture.

IV.3.2 Observations

The recorded observations for this year place the data generated by the group within the personal, artistic and social learning properties of the Ability category. The data reflected elements of the abilities and limitations of the group's capacities within these areas.

Within the personal learning property I observed that the working rhythm of the group was influenced by some of the individuals' focus having a span of about twenty minutes. Consequently artistic activities such as papier-mâché were not successful. I record in my notes that my practical and educational approach would have to take this factor into consideration emphasising quick outcome art activities of one or two steps. This was a feature already present within the proposal; therefore, I had begun to expand this notion albeit unsuccessfully by including other
more complex art activities.

An element of the artistic learning property records them as working collectively to create a collaborative piece for presentation to the Mayor at their exhibition. The artistic piece was a Styrofoam print in black and white.

Elements of group interaction were recorded in the social learning property and included observations that the leaders of the group were helpful in breaking through some group participants' resistance to the challenge of new art techniques. This was in reference to my introduction of the group to a portraiture technique of drawing the head and shoulders of people using a grid format. I recorded it as a useful practical approach and tool for motivating and making certain art techniques more accessible in the future.

Additionally, the social learning property expanded to include the beginning of relationships the artists were developing with the centre and the community. They were starting to be known as a group of artists with disabilities and consequently were becoming politically useful and influential.

For instance in September of that year, they were contacted to be participants of a focus study for a project being proposed by the University Settlement Housing in partnership with the Metro Toronto Association for Community
Living. They were proposing the building of a new housing studio complex that would house artists with disabilities and they had the artists in the group meet with them so that they could contribute to the development of the project.

IV.3.3 The Participants

There was more information on the experience of the three participants, Ted, Ron, and Rita, who were present since 1993.

IV.3.3.1 Ted

For Ted the data collected and analysed were the transcripts from a television interview with the CBC on the eve of the exhibition, and from the daily notes of the group. They contributed to the personal, artistic and social learning properties of this analysis.

Within the personal learning property Ted demonstrated his capacity to be aware of and identify the limiting impact that stereotypical attitudes, behaviour and policies have had on people with disabilities. In his interview he says his artwork shows that, “I can work like everybody else can, and have the ability to work like everybody else can, and have the chance to become an artist and show the world we are all somebody”. In this quote he talks of the importance of being given a chance to become, that is to grow and learn.
In addition, within the range of this property is Ted’s identification of his motivation for coming to the art group. Ted felt that what was good about the group was the people and the coffee as well as the potential for financial benefits. He also explains that his intention in creating and exhibiting his artwork is to transform his situation through communication and education of the world to his abilities. This was considered a pragmatic element of the Personal learning property. An expressive element inherent within this property is Ted’s description of the intrinsic value he gets from creating which he associates with the healing and magical properties of art.

Ted’s artistic learning expanded to include elements of colour theory, in particular the mixing of skin tone and some of the techniques involved in drawing and acrylic painting. He saw himself as an artist who received much of his creative inspiration from his dreams. Ted had also situated the social connections he was making with the group as important to him and therefore contributing to the property of social learning.

IV.3.3.2 Ron

The data for Ron were collected from the daily notes of the group. His data revealed elements of personal and artistic learning. Within the personal learning property he
had identified himself as someone who was inconsistent in attending the classes; this he saw as a problematic aspect of his personality.

He had a more educational intention to his involvement in the group with emphasis on the learning of the concepts and theories of making art. He was very specific in his desire for a structured approach to facilitate his learning that included suggestions of "splitting the class into the more and less advanced" and grading work produced.

He appeared to be limited by his understanding of some of the behaviours he witnessed in the group. He felt that some of the behaviours were childlike and felt that we should not have any outings because of it. His discussion of his concerns set him somewhat apart from the group, and in fact they seemed to limit his interaction and connection with the other artists, yet he did not feel like he did not belong because he kept returning. These elements were seen as constituents of the social and personal learning properties.

IV.3.3.3 Rita

Rita’s data were collected from the daily notes written of the group. The analysis of the data revealed elements of the personal, artistic and social learning properties. Elements conforming to the personal learning property were
Rita's awareness that she needed more direction and more demonstration for her to learn. She seemed very clear with regards to what were her learning limitations as separate from those set by societal policies.

Yet she herself felt that the grading and judging of work was an element that was missing. In this regard she held views similar to Ron's in terms of wanting more of an educational focus to the group. Despite her difficulty with grasping certain technical aspects of making art, and her preference for an arts and crafts focus, she identified her artistic learning goals to be the desire to learn to draw. She also expressed social learning goals in her desire to "get along" with the people in the group.

As one of the participants in this study I recorded my emotional responses to the group attendance in my artistic and personal learning properties. It was very difficult for me to not think that my teaching ability and the group structure were failures when I saw the low numbers in attendance. Essentially the low attendance was probably attributed more to other factors than my teaching ability. On the 11 August 1994, I write that I "need to see them not showing up as less of an indictment on me".

IV.4 Art Works: 1995

This was an expansive year for the group that held
within it many activities that generated much data. The year began with the Community Centre commissioning the art group to produce an art piece as a form of appreciation for then Premier Bob Rae who was visiting the Centre with a gift of money. The money was to go towards the building of a third floor that was to house an equipped art room for the group.

Data were also generated from videotaped and radio interviews, the now yearly art show that they called 'Art Works' and a speaking engagement at a National Conference on Art and Disabilities. In addition, two more artists, Bella and Brenda, participating in this study joined the group this year.

IV.4.1 Observations

The recorded data were analysed and were found to contain elements and properties belonging to the Conceptual and Practical Approach and the Ability categories.

Within the Socio-political property of the Conceptual Approach category, there was an observed attempt to move the group towards a more co-operative structure. For the Premier's visit there was a member of the art group who came up with the idea for the art piece that was created collaboratively by the group and presented to the Premier. Then later on in the year the same member taught an art technique, which was silk screening, to the group. In a
report written in June of that year the Community Centre had recognised this movement as they described the group in a Ministry report as an Artist Co-operative for adults with disabilities.

These elements fit into this property, as it was an attempt to develop leadership skills, share the authority, and increase the sense of personal control for the artists within the group. In addition there was an emphasis on self-directed learning and an encouraging of the artists in creative multitasking. The multitasking took the form of artists setting their own goals for the number and creation of their artwork that did not necessarily follow the lesson plan for the day. For example on November 7th 1995, the lesson plan was to use scratchboard techniques for the creation of holiday season cards, I had written that Ted was “doing his own thing experimenting using acrylics”.

There were educational, financial and expressive elements to the Practical Approach of teaching the art group. The educational elements included taking a more directive approach with members in the group. I attempted through the re-focussing of them back to their art piece as a way to engage them in less stereotypical creations.

These were techniques I had acquired from reading Viktor Lowenfeld’s lectures (1982) that discussed the
importance of grounding the artist in the visual elements of
the artwork. He stated that "in art it is not the 'what'
which counts but the 'how'- how we relate ourselves to it"
(p. 43). For instance in my notes on November 7th, I write
that Bella did some "scratchboard of some candles... had to
ask her to join the candles somehow. Started putting flames
but not emanating from candles... Need to work with her
schema".

Another directive came about from my desire to
discourage tracing. On the 21st November, I write that Rita
"buries her head in book stereotypes and tries to reproduce
them. I try to discourage this as pics [pictures] don’t have
soul to them". With Rita, I tried to follow Lowenfeld’s
(1982) suggestion of using "imitation only as a means to an
end" (p. 32). I met with only varying degrees of success.

Financial elements included an emphasis on creating
products to sell. Ted’s suggestion on Oct 31st/99 was to
create holiday seasons cards for selling which we did.
However no one seemed really serious about following up on
this including myself.

Expressive elements included starting the group with
check-ins and using focussing and healing techniques to
settle the group before creating began. I had seen it
necessary to adopt these techniques, as there was an average
of ten people attending the group.

IV.4.2 The Participants

As mentioned earlier within this year there were the two more additions of Bella and Brenda to the art group. The data collected from the artists were video interviews, the daily notes from the group and a radio interview.

IV.4.2.1 Ted

For Ted it appeared that this was a year where he struggled with his notion of self in relation to his abilities and his awareness of the society's narrow expectations for him. In his interviews he mostly described elements of a socio-political analysis of the world, as well as the therapeutic and educational use of his art that belonged to the personal learning property and the elements within his artistic learning property.

His notion of self included the impact of his illness on his day to day ability to manage his life and work. He gives a good description of how the stresses of living independently could completely overwhelm someone with a similar disability. In August of that year, he says, I was have a job, and I think I'd get a lot of money and then I get scared and then I was worrying about everything and I thought sure pay this, pay this, and pay that and I get scared and
after I get sick then that day that put me on the street...

He then continues to talk about his personal feelings of alienation and rejection evidenced by society's abdication of their social responsibility for people with disabilities.

He then talks of solutions, both personal and societal. Personally he believes in the power of his own creative behaviour. He talked of wearing a red shirt for protection, "protection for God. It's my power..." and later he described it as a gift that he has.

He also talks of painting and how it makes him feel good and gives him a sense of power. He used art therapeutically as a way to figure out himself when something was bothering him or if he did not understand himself. His themes for his paintings were his dreams and animals and he had identified that he had produced over 21 paintings. Painting was also a vehicle for him to communicate his message and "make world better".

He felt it was also necessary for society and the world to attempt to accommodate people with disabilities. He talks of the lack of opportunities and the need to find supports for people like himself. He felt that through his art he could communicate that message to people. He says that "we're trying to express it to everybody we are just as
good, we’re doing our ability as best we can”.

IV.4.2.2 Ron

Ron’s discussions located him similarly with Ted in the understanding of the social and political aspects of inequality for people with disabilities. Ron rarely identified himself as a person with a disability and usually spoke proprietarily about and promoted a group perspective as opposed to his own. In his discussions, therefore, are elements of the socio-political within the personal learning property, elements of his artistic learning and of his social learning.

Ron speaks of the need for a studio space for the art group by revealing the life style limitations that prevents the creative expression for many of the artists, himself included. He says in August of that year “we strive everyday to do the best that we could. Unfortunately not everyone could go home and work.” He also saw an educational role like Ted did for the arts when he talked of the encouragement that people in the group gave to other people to continue their own work.

Elements of his social learning he talks of in terms of his connections with the art group, the Community Centre, and the larger community. He sees the group despite the variety in backgrounds and abilities as working together and
encouraging each other. He says that the "members are really dedicated to their work and really try to push and strive with each other... and help each other along the way by talking, sharing, sharing personal problems etc."

However, although indirectly, he also speaks to the disconnection and struggles within the group during the interview with the radio station. He says, "there are thirteen of us involved or fourteen give or take this guy that shows up on and off." In this statement he refers to Ted and although he jokes about it seemed to be an area of trouble for him. In this interview he also says that "as far as dealing in our personal lives you know we haven't gotten together and talked to each other about things at home and that." This quote reveals his desire for personal connections with the group as well as his inability to get what he needs.

He sees as well the mutually beneficial connections with the Community Centre. He shares with the video interviewer his appreciation of the staff at the Centre for providing them with a sense of community and belonging. In August of 1995 he says

they really try to encourage us and you know if we see them outside, you know during the week they always stop and say hi and how are you and like
what you been up to and what you painting and what you working on, and I think that’s really important to us and to the group as well...”

At the exhibition opening on the 21st September 1995, he gave a speech in front of local politicians, the Mayor and guests. He had already recognised this as an opportunity for program and project advancement that the group’s exhibition was providing for the Community Centre. During his speech he made a plug for the Community Centre for support for their building expansion that was in need of funds by emphasising that the Centre makes a difference.

In addition, during the other speeches, the importance of the art group in the programming at the Centre was acknowledged by the Executive Director. In her speech she described the art group “as probably one of their most successful programs.”

Ron’s connections to the larger community came through the publicity and media events related to the art group. His demeanour as evidenced through the quotes presented above was a proprietary one where he promoted the group and generally acted as their spokesman.

IV.4.2.3 Bella

Bella’s data were easily assessed and positioned within the Personal, Artistic and Social Learning properties of the
Ability Category.

In her Personal Learning property, there were elements of her lack of confidence and her low self-esteem to the point where when her work was sold or was positively responded to the data revealed that she was usually surprised.

Nevertheless elements with the Artistic Learning property showed her ability to follow the art making process. In her video interview on August 1995 she discusses the steps involved in batik making, a process she had just recently learned. She was able to be accurate in her description although she had not had any opportunity to develop any facility with this technique.

During the art show on September, 21st, 1995 a conversation was recorded that revealed some of Bella’s creative process:

Bella: I ah painted the picture on the material and then I went and waxed it, and ah then I took it back down and I painted it and I ah waxed it some more and then we ironed it

Interviewer: Well it’s great, let me get a shot of it, and do you have any more up here?

Bella: Right here

Interviewer: Sunrise oh that’s nice, I think I saw
that one...
Bella: I heard that name somewhere and it popped into my head and then I thought ... something you could name...

Bella’s quickly growing skill and facility with art making and some of its concepts was evidenced when on a trip to a local gallery. Despite her lack of confidence, she was able to point out the light source, tracing its direction and the resulting shadow of a painting. The note that day on the 14th November 1995 indicated that “Bella [was] very proud of herself since she thought she did not and could not do anything”.

An element of the Social Learning property was, Bella’s admission that she misses the art group when there are no sessions. On the 21st September 1995 she shares with the video interviewer her isolation and boredom when she says she has “been going batty at home, staring at the four walls...” and thus revealing her dependence on the art group for meaningful social connections.

IV.4.2.4 Brenda

Interviews and discussions with Brenda showed her to have elements belonging to the Personal Social and Artistic Learning properties of the Ability category. For her what was significant were the expressive and therapeutic reasons
for making art, the importance of the art group for
providing her with social connections and her struggle to
learn and produce art.

Within the Personal Learning property she discussed
expressive and therapeutic elements for her involvement with
the art group. In the radio interview on the 21\textsuperscript{st} September
1995 she says that the art “really helped me out with my
self esteem you know...” Then later on in the evening during
her speech at the art show she revealed that when she first
started the art group, she “was a little afraid you know,
because I didn’t know how I’d react with all the art, but
then when I ... got to use of doing all the artwork..., I found
that I could do art and I could express how I was feeling
with my artwork.”

The elements she discussed that fit with the Social
Learning property were essentially her connection to the art
group. In her radio interview she shares similar experiences
with Bella when she states that she is “always indoors all
the time...[but because of]... the art class and all these
people in here they are all friends to me.” Then later on
that evening in her speech at the art show she thanked
myself “and the art class for making ...me[her] feel like
...I[she] belongs in the art class.”

Elements of her Artistic Learning detected her fear,
frustration and exultation with the creative process involved in making art. This was evidenced in her speech at the art exhibit when she revealed her emotional process that led to her realisation that she could do art. This process was also noted in the daily group log, when on the 21st November 1995 her frustration at her perceived inability to draw was recorded along with her resulting lack of motivation.

**IV.4.2.5 Rita**

There was very little data on Rita for this year as she did not participate in any of the interviews or speeches and she rarely asked for help and direction within the daily sessions.

The recorded elements were supportive of the Artistic Learning property. An analysis of the notes reveals that Rita felt that the art group was beneficial to her because she learnt many new media such as batik and screen printing. She also shared that it was great to see her artwork in display. However it was noted that Rita tended to want to trace images from art books despite the discouragement from myself as the teacher.

**IV.4.2.6 Teacher**

As a participant of this study I showed elements of learning in my Artistic and Social Learning properties of
the Ability category.

Within the Artistic Learning property were the elements of an expansion in my knowledge of a variety of media, including the screen printing techniques I was taught by one of the artists. The Social Learning property revealed elements of my interaction with the group and the larger community outside of the Community Centre. From then Premier Bob Rae's visit to the Conference on Art and Disability I was becoming connected and recognised as an expert in the field of art and disability.

IV.5 Art Visions: 1996

In this year, data were from the daily group notes, although in many ways the program was becoming more formalised. There was only one curriculum drawn up for the spring even though the group continued meeting throughout the year.

In June of this year there was a Quality of Life Conference for which I had written and presented a paper on the art group. At this conference a number of the artists spoke; unfortunately the data were somehow destroyed in the process of taping. There was also the creation of a pamphlet that described the program and its goals, a presentation at another health centre, and an art show in September called Art Visions.
IV.5.1 Observations

The data analysed revealed elements and properties belonging to the core categories of the Conceptual and Practical Approach and the Ability category.

From the data there was an observed emphasis in the educational property of the Conceptual Approach. For instance, the focus of the curriculum was listed as the learning of concepts with respect to the technical aspects of designs.

Within the Practical Approach category the data were seen to be elements of the educational property that attested to the educational focus for the year. The data note the instructional strategies taken with a number of the artists. For instance the notes show on the 9th April 1996 that Ted was directed to fill more of the space of his canvas and another entry that month states that I was looking for more of a structural framework for Rita so that she could be challenged.

IV.5.2 The Participants

Again the participants included Ted, Ron, Bella, Rita and Brenda.

IV.5.2.1 Ted

The analysed data showed elements pertinent to Ted’s Personal and Artistic Learning property. Ted discussed
therapeutic and expressive elements in the creation of his art. The notes for 9th July 1996 state that Ted was angry and that he "says [he] put his angry into his paintings." His anger was due to his realisation that someone had stolen his colour pencils at the boarding home where he was staying. This happened frequently. Ted lost personal items as there were no locks placed on the doors. This tale also shows the interaction of poverty and lack of basic human rights experienced by people with disabilities.

Elements within the Artistic Learning property showed his style of creating. The notes state that on the 2nd April 1996 Ted would draw flowing lines like snakes and would paint in between the lines.

IV.5.2.2 Ron

Ron’s data collected for this year included written statements, daily notes and conversations. The data was analysed into properties of Personal, Artistic, and Social Learning of the Ability category.

The Personal Learning property revealed elements of his struggle with respect to his making art. The notes on the 26th April 1996 disclose that Ron displayed some nervousness while painting that was not witnessed before.

His written statements included that for him art was expressive and communicative. He writes in November 1996
that the message in his artwork is "you are not part of your
environment and the exception is the good artist who shares
his non-conformity with others who have a commitment to a
better and a healthier environment." He also divulged an
awareness of the socio-political perspective when he
mentioned the 'stereo-types' that are encountered on his
daily travels.

Within the Personal Learning property Ron also
discussed financial elements of importance to him. He wanted
to market the group with a focus to making it financially
viable. He suggested developing a pamphlet or flyer to
assist with fund-raising. That year I did create a pamphlet
and Ron took the initiative to put it in different locations
in the city.

Elements within the Artistic Learning property saw Ron
engaging in discussions to induce learning about when he
could tell whether his painting was finished or not. He also
experimented quite a bit especially with a variety of
printing forms and discussed the possibility of creating art
out of found materials.

Another element of this property was Ron's informal
request to start his own art program elsewhere using the
resources and the supplies of the art group. I informed him
why that could not happen explaining that the Community
Centre could not afford to give money to another art program. This request, however, showed Ron’s sense of confidence with the materials and the elements involved in teaching.

Elements of his Social Learning property focussed on the theme of alienation and disconnection. In his written statement he talks of “not being part of the environment” and the non-conformity and outsider status of artists.

IV.5.2.3 Bella

The data collected for Bella consisted of a rough copy of her speech for the Quality of Life Conference plus the daily group notes and an interview with a local newspaper. Bella’s data were analysed and found to reflect elements of the Personal, Artistic and Social Learning properties of the Ability category.

Some of the elements in the Personal Learning property were Bella’s discussion of her feelings of being a failure. She identified the impact of her family’s promotion of society’s negative attitudes towards her. In April 1996, she says, “I always feel like I fail at everything... my family thinks and says so...I always feel that people walk all over me.”

Evidently she is very much aware of the negative attitudes people have of her and she could trace the impact
of these external attitudes to her sense of failure. In this regard happiness is defined by her as an absence of feeling like a failure. She writes, "my art makes me feel like I’m not a failure."

Elements with the Artistic Learning property show that Bella’s emphasis is less on the educational and more on the feeling or expressive aspect of making art. Yet she still struggles with looking for the right way to create with a focus on how things should look. She identified that her artistic preferences were batik and papier-mâché.

Within the Social Learning property Bella reveals her connections with members of the group. In April of 1996, she writes that, "I get support from friends in art class. And I made a few friends in the art class." According to the daily notes of 9th July 1996 it appeared that she would occasionally spend a significant amount of time in conversation as opposed to creating or producing artwork.

IV.5.2.4 Rita

The data collected for Rita showed elements belonging to the Artistic Learning property. The issue of using tracing paper once again emerged with my discouragement of it. In my notes in April 1996, I write that Rita needed a very structured approach to help her create and make art. Yet on the 23rd April I write that Rita displayed good
knowledge of design ideas with a good use of colour.

**IV.5.2.5 Brenda**

There was very little data collected on Brenda this year, but the analysis revealed that Brenda was more interested in social connections at this time. Therefore, elements of her desire to develop connections with the other group members are identified in the Social Learning property.

**IV.5.2.6 Teacher**

As a participant in this study the data that revealed my thoughts and processes most was the paper I had written for presenting at the Quality of Life Conference. In the paper I had attempted to conceptualise the art approach I was taking with the group. I described the Arts Approach as a Creative Arts Model that conceptually "borrows from the approaches of art therapy and art education and places them into a socio-political orientation to people with disabilities, which promotes the principles of normalisation, self-advocacy and empowerment" (Wood, 1996, p.1).

This was an attempt at organising my experiences and almost dramatically repudiating any belief about a therapeutic approach with the group. I write,

A therapeutic approach is not to be encouraged, so
that when an artist does work and asks for feedback, the artistic merit needs to be the focus of the discussion. If their goal was expressive, talk about their achievements through the tension of and rhythm of their brush stroke, thickness of paint or composition.

Of interest too were the observations I made of the artists in the group and their distinct needs and uses for the art group. I identify four uses of the arts model by the various artists as being purely recreational, or social, expressive or educational.

As can be expected, this event developed many elements in my Personal Learning property. I was being recognised within the field of disabilities as someone with expertise and knowledge and I was increasingly developing my experience at public speaking. Additionally, since the Community Centre had sponsored my application to the conference I was also finding support within my work place for my ideas and vision. These were elements of the Social Learning property that also included staff support from the Centre especially in assisting to build frames for the art group. All of the supplies were donated but this was a very lengthy and difficult process and could have been longer without the expertise from staff members.
IV.6 Art Sensations: 1997

The data collected for this year were also relatively small. Most of the information came from the daily notes plus one interview conducted during the art show called Art Sensations. There were two curricula drawn up in the summer from January to April and from July to October 1997. In this year Sheena joined the group and the art show had a total of 120 pieces of art.

IV.6.1 Observations

The analysis of the data also fit within the categories of the Conceptual and Practical Approaches and the category of Ability. Within the Conceptual Approach category, the year seemed to have a focus of many elements belonging to the Educational property. For instance the curriculum discussed the intention of exploring perspective, layering techniques and the introduction to new media such as graffito.

The elements of the Practical Approach category included the Financial and Educational properties. Elements of the Financial property described the group’s marketing activities. This year there was a search for a name and a logo for the group. On 8th July 1997 the group decided upon a name.

Later on that year I had put in an application for
funding from the City’s arts body. The focus of the request was educational. It discussed elements of the intention to teach several art group members how to teach and facilitate art workshops for the public. In the proposal dated July 1997, I write that the Project “will attempt to address areas identified by several long term art members of the art group who wish to take leadership roles and become educators and facilitators of their own art workshops or art groups”.

IV.6.2 The Participants

Sheena was a new addition to the group.

IV.6.2.1 Ted

Ted’s data were gathered from the group’s daily notes and a television interview. These were analysed and fit into the Personal, Artistic, and Social properties of the Ability category.

Elements of Ted’s Personal Learning property included his lack of appropriate housing and the impact this had on his ability to create. In the daily notes on 5th August 1997 there is a written observation that says “Although he moved today, [he] wanted to paint- used charcoal.” This was identified as an anomaly and perhaps attested to his move to a better home.

During the interview he also spoke to the sense of personal and individual accomplishment he and the other
members received from their participation in the art group. On 28th September 1997, he says “that’s why [they] keep coming back... and they love to paint and they love to do things for themselves...”

Ted’s focus was also on the financial and on the 22nd July 1997 it is noted that he had the intent of selling two of his art pieces so he took the initiative to frame it himself.

The elements of his Artistic Learning property included the importance of practice in developing his artistic talent. In the interview he states that, “I say you gotta keep practising you never give up”.

There was also evidence as shown by the daily notes that Ted was engaging in repetitive and ritualistic artwork. Lowenfeld (1982) warns that it is difficult to assess whether the repetition is beneficial or not, so the teacher needs to be careful but could suggest the exploration of alternative media. I attempted to do this and on the 4th February 1997 I write that I “tried to get Ted to separate out and cut out shapes of his sketches and move them around to create [other] images [but]...was too much for Ted.” My attempt was in fact met with resistance so I did not intervene any further in his process.

Although Ted rarely mentioned any social connections
with the group, during his interview on 28th September 1997 he shared with the interviewer that he returns because "everybody's happy". Thus he identifies the importance of positive group connections and support as a factor in his enjoyment of the art group. This also represents a positive element belonging to his Social Learning property.

**IV.6.2.2 Ron**

There was very little data on Ron for this year, except for what was discussed within the daily notes. On the 5th August 1997, he had complained of ill health and this may have been a factor in his generation of very little data. The data analysed were listed in the Artistic and Social Learning properties.

Elements within the Artistic Learning property identified him as working extremely well with acrylics and noted his desire to work on a big canvas, which attested to a significant development in his artistic confidence.

Within the Social Learning property there were elements of his connection to certain members in the group. On 15th July 1997, I write "Ron came in today... worked with Ted." He was also helpful with assisting other members in the group.

**IV.6.2.3 Bella**

Bella’s data were collected from the daily group notes. The analysis of her data revealed elements belonging to the
Personal and Artistic Learning properties.

Elements of the Personal Learning properties included Bella’s continuing self-immolation. On 28th January 1997, I write that Bella “was very unmotivated and down on herself.” It appeared that despite two years with the group she still had these feelings and perceptions of herself. This would attest to the significant impact of social attitudes on her sense of being.

Within her Artistic Learning property it was noted that she began to show a proclivity for working in water-colour and printmaking.

IV.6.2.4 Brenda

The data for Brenda were collected from the group’s daily notes plus a television interview publicising the group’s art show. Brenda’s data when analysed fell into the Personal, and Artistic Learning properties of the Ability category.

Elements within the Personal Learning property included Brenda’s belief in the expressive and therapeutic aspects of art. During her interview on the 28th September 1997 she says “I found put the best way to take out my anger was to take it out on the art thing and to like do some art....”

Brenda also discussed more positive elements with respect to the impact of making art on her sense of self-
confidence and esteem. She says again during the same interview that "when the first time I... did the first art I was so proud of myself to have my work...out in front of the public."

A significant element within the Artistic Learning property is that Brenda discovered collage. I write on the 4th February 1997 that another member "showed some skill with collage—surprisingly so does Brenda." After that on the 29th July 1997 I again comment on the intensity of her work with collage. Brenda had evidently found her medium of expression.

IV.6.2.5 Sheena

The data reveal that Sheena joined the art group in the summer of this year. Any information collected was found to belong to the Social and Artistic Learning properties of the Ability category.

The elements of the Artistic Learning property were all technical in nature. They spoke to Sheena's enthusiasm as well as to her growing knowledge of art.

Within the Social Learning property I note that Sheena's response to the group was very positive and gracious and, as a result she was quickly welcomed by the other artists into the group.
**IV.6.2.6 Rita**

The data for Rita were collected from the daily group notes. The data were analysed and seen to fall into the Artistic Learning property. The elements within this property included Rita’s growing skills and sensibility with design and patterning. It appears that collage did not motivate her.

**IV.6.2.7 Teacher**

As a participant in this study, what is noticed for this year as well as for 1996 is the lack of data from the daily group notes. I am aware that these two years I had become extremely ill to the point where, in the fall of this year, I started working part time.

In the group’s daily notes for 1997, there are brief entries describing myself as exhausted and consequently frustrated. On the 15\textsuperscript{th} July 1997, I note that there was a combination of acrylics and oil pastel techniques being used by the various artists at the end of which I write that I was “very tired at this one.”

At the time there were many more participants in the group averaging about nine every Tuesday. The participants in the group had very different levels of ability and artistic skill so that my need to engage in multiple tasks was essential. Additionally my role as a case manager
expected that I continue to support twenty-eight individuals.

On some level I was able to recognise my own personal limitations in terms of the growing needs of the group. Consequently, I spent a great deal of my limited time searching for funding from a variety of sources so that some of my stress could be alleviated. The proposal that was submitted was intended to teach the artists how to facilitate their own workshops. In hindsight I realise that this was the first real attempt to share the responsibility of maintaining the group and to move it to a level of a co-operative.

IV.7 From Dust to Flame: 1998

This was another expansive year for the art group. Funding was received from the City’s Arts body to train the artists to facilitate art workshops. These were set to begin at the end of the summer 1998. The intention was not to have an art show this year; however, an ad agency decided to sponsor the group’s art show for their holiday season party event in December 1998. The show was called “Dust to Flame” in memoriam of the death of a long-term member of the group.

The data accumulated was generated from the training and facilitation of the workshops from the perspective of
the six artists, the project co-ordinator and myself. The data involved daily group notes, video journals and reports of the project, the written journals of four of the artist/facilitators and the journals of the co-ordinator and myself.

IV.7.1 Observations

The recorded observations for this year have been analysed and located within the Conceptual, Practical Approach and the Ability category for the training, facilitation and post project phase.

IV.7.1.1 The Training

The elements within the Conceptual Approach category define the organisation of the Training package for the six artists. The training was broken down into the educational elements that identified the artistic media and techniques for the artist/facilitators to learn. This included the expectation that they assemble 'kits' where each facilitator could present two examples of the art media they were teaching in the workshop.

For instance, on June of 1998 I wrote guidelines for the artists that listed the steps they needed to take in order to complete their demonstrations in Monoprinting, Styrofoam, Block design, and watercolour printing, acrylic painting, watercolour painting, charcoal, conte, collage and
sgraffito. Monoprinting for example was broken down into eight steps from preparing the glass to pulling a print of the painted image on the glass.

Elements of the Educational property discerned from the Training package included the training around the facilitation and the group process. This was also broken down to accommodate the various learning needs of the facilitators. This aspect of the package defined their actions at the beginning and during the workshops from their introductions to redirection techniques to the final goodbyes. The decision was made to have two demonstrators and one teacher per workshop; this did not always happen however. The workshops ran from 4th August 1998 to 14th August 1998 with seven workshop days, one outing day and the final day of open studio with an art display. (see Appendix)

There were a number of difficulties encountered with the training. Many of the artistsresponded with increased anxiety that impacted on their ability to remember the material and to support each other. There were a number of sessions when some of the artists either did not show up or responded in un-supportive ways to each other.

For instance the co-ordinator of the project writes about his difficulties with training the six artists. On the 20th July 1998, he describes a difficult session where
Sheena began crying after Brenda’s criticism of her teaching. The co-ordinator notes that Sheena said that "Brenda’s behaviour added to the pressure and stress that she was having... [He continues]...I don’t know if I had added to this stress but I realised that they are making things [more] complicated than it seems”. In Sheena’s journal for that day she also describes the incident explaining that she became emotionally out of control, when she was told to practise teaching monoprinting when she expected to do watercolour. She writes, “I feel too overwhelmed with disappointments and bad feelings that I cannot do what I want and I am told to teach when I don’t want to.”

This anxiety was compounded by my absence for three months from March to May 1998. My absence influenced the attendance to the training and there was a drop in participation for the art group from ten people to five. Therefore, the art training continued but in a very unsystematic way. Upon my return in June the co-ordinator and myself began a more structured and intense approach to the training to make up for what they had not learned.

I had attempted to address and relieve their anxieties somewhat on the 14th July 1998 when in my notes I write, "Discussed the importance of acknowledging their fears in this process. Reminded them that they did
not have to prove anything since they have already proven themselves as artists. I reminded them of their shows and the work they sold... and that it was important for them to be gentle with themselves.

During the training Ted and Ron infrequently attended the sessions. This meant that they had less opportunity to develop group supports and to develop their teaching skills. Exposure to the guidelines for many meant a rigid acceptance of the guide as law. However for some others like Ron and Ted who did not have the opportunity to learn these guidelines their teaching style became synonymous with their personalities.

On the 23rd July 1998, in my journal notes I describe a training session with Ron, Ted and Rita who were to teach charcoal and conte. I write that “it was very hard to keep Ron on track- on topic” and that during the acrylic training with the same three artists I write that Ron spent the entire [demonstration] time painting.

My assessment of the difficulties experienced by each artist leads me to suggest additions to the training and therefore the Practical Approach. The additions include more training time with a clear and earlier direction with respect to who was to teach which workshops, and the
teaching of tools and techniques, such as meditation for relieving anxiety. More structured check-ins, presentation of journals should be increased throughout the training with opportunities for group sharing. And lastly, I would observe and assess more closely each individual’s learning and teaching styles. Despite the lack of these additions however on the 28th July 1998 the facilitators were all still very clear that they wanted the opportunity to teach.

IV.7.2 The Summer Art Project

The facilitation of the workshops, was generally an overwhelming experience for everyone. There were similar elements of anxiety around their performance. While there were wonderful moments of group support and solidarity there was also an extreme example of a near group disintegration around teaching styles. Therefore within the Practical Approach category these issues represented elements with the Personal, Social, and Educational properties of the Ability category.

The anxieties of the group of facilitators manifested in very many ways. Those who like Brenda, Bella and Sheena who admitted to having anxious feelings before they taught were guided through a meditation session with myself. This happened twice before the workshops. On the 4th August 1998, I write in my notes that "I brought them into my room and
went through a grounding meditation with them that seemed very successful. Brenda who was very anxious seemed more calm afterwards."

Brenda reports in her video journal on the 5th August 1998 that "my first day that I was teaching and I was a little nervous, but then... Nat [teacher] took me into her room and she gave me some meditation and that seemed to...help me because I was really nervous."

For Sheena I tried to help alleviate her anxieties by reminding her of the goals of the project. On 6th August 1998, she writes that,

Nat listened to me...then she explained to me that the ultimate goal of this project is to make other adults having chances to do art and have fun. So far this goal has been achieved...Besides everyone of our own group has disabilities so we ought to be gentle with ourselves and compassionate to our own members. At this point my emotional upset turn me to weeping....

In the case of others like Ron, Ted and Rita, their anxieties manifested in their late arrivals when they had to teach. For instance, both Ted and Rita showed up late for their charcoal and conte drawing workshop. In my notes for the 5th August 1998, I write that Rita "showed up late- said
she was tired and slept in. I had to remind Ted of the time to come in... then I had to look for him in the coffee shop at 1 p.m. when his workshop was to start. Ron showed up just before 1 p.m. today." Consequently neither of them had much preparation time.

Moments of group support included times when Sheena would prompt and cue some of the facilitators if they forgot something like introducing themselves. Also Brenda was very helpful; even when she was not meant to teach, she would find ways to be supportive. This support ranged from assisting with preparation to commenting and praising the artwork of the participants.

There was more emphasis and demonstration of group support in the second week of the workshops. This was due partly to the fact that the facilitators' anxiety had decreased with their experience of teaching and also because the co-ordinator and myself had instituted after workshop appreciation sessions.

This was done so that during the workshop they could focus mainly on the areas of support they were receiving from each other. This technique was instituted after our experience with a major conflict occurrence in the group. The conflict essentially erupted between Ron and Sheena, quickly spread throughout the group and threatened to
include the co-ordinator and myself.

On 7th August 1998 during our end of week check-in session with Bella, Brenda, Rita, Ron, and Sheena, Sheena raised the issue of her frustration with Ron’s behaviour. According to her notes she felt that since her joining the group and especially after she got married that Ron had begun to attack her verbally. It appeared that this only heightened during the Summer Project and she felt that he was favoured by me in many aspects.

On 7th August 1998, the co-ordinator writes that:

Sheena’s feelings came gushing out so as her tears. She brought out her feelings and anger since the first time she... [had] to encounter Ron. The hurts she felt about how Ron tormented her with his prejudicial speech about how Sheena should go back to China because of how communist she is...

My notes reveal instead my concern that Sheena’s accusations might split the group. I write that:

Sheena in her argument had dropped the spectre of race into and amidst the group. She herself pointed out that because I share the same culture with Ron and she and the others with the co-ordinator that she and the others get along better
with the co-ordinator...

The co-ordinator writes that he was shocked to hear both Sheena and Bella saying that they felt I took sides with Ron because we are both from the Caribbean. He goes on to describe this as a big mess which it was. One of the major reasons why this conflict did not completely destroy the harmony within the group was because the co-ordinator responded very evenly and practically to the accusations. He in fact did not agree with their accusations.

We both used some conflict resolution with the group and finally both Sheena and Ron were able to apologise for their accusations and prejudicial assumptions. In discussing the situation with the Co-ordinator it became apparent that Sheena was going to the co-ordinator with complaints about me and vice versa. As well she was also so anxious about her performance and the performance of the other facilitators that her perspective left very little room for making mistakes.

After this incident the co-ordinator and myself instituted additional components that added changes to the Practical Approach of the training model. These changes were to ensure that there were appropriate structural and emotional supports to help contain anxieties and minimise personal attacks. They were the appreciations, more
consultations between the co-ordinators where decisions are first checked with each other as much as possible, to be more facilitative in setting up the class, and the other recommendations mentioned in the training.

**IV.7.3 Post Project**

The Post project experience of the group saw an increase in the number of participants and a sense of rejuvenation from the long-term members. However in October of that year one of those aforementioned long-term members died quite suddenly with no discernible medical reason for her death.

The impact of her death was felt in the number of conflicts that started to erupt amongst the members. Their fears and unexpressed grief were eventually given an outlet in the Season art show and auction sponsored by the local ad agency.

**IV.7.4 The Participants**

**IV.7.4.1 Ted**

The data on Ted for this year were collected from the group daily notes and his video journal. He did not attend many of the group sessions including the training and the second week of the workshop. The data however were analysed and classified as elements within his Personal, Artistic and Social Learning properties of the Ability category.
The elements within the Personal Learning property show that Ted had some difficulty containing his anxiety throughout the workshop. This translated into behaviour such as absence and inconsistency. After his workshop on the 5th August 1998 I write in my notes that he said he was nervous during his teaching. In fact he was so out of sorts that he came in a rush with his shirt buttoned all wrong. In his video journal he has very little to say about the teaching experience, except that it was good. Instead he clearly identifies himself as an artist. On the 5th August 1998, he says that "I have a talent as an artist, I paint and use charcoal, ah I do things not exist in this world... I’d go further in the future if I keep practising..." It may be true for Ted that as Sheena says on the 6th August 1998, "Mind you we can be good artists but not a teacher."

Despite his nervousness, however, Ted had one of the more engaging teaching styles. He showed that he was good at demonstrating with an individualised focus to teaching. A conversation recorded on the 5th August 1998 during the charcoal and conte workshop shows fairly accurately Ted’s teaching style.

Ted: Hi! (laughter)
Student: (laughing) and here’s tail
Ted: Tail? Oh you could make a tail...
Student: He's so tiny (laughing) it looks more like an alien butterfly from another planet.

Ted: Flying...you did a good one here...I like it its good. I like the tulips

Student: (continuing to laugh)... Is it working?

Laughter

This conversation and a previous one he had before with the same student saw him grounding the student in her experience of butterflies. In their conversation he discussed the size and colours and types of butterflies. He also created a comfortable atmosphere and provided the other facilitators with what Sheena calls his "very positive...really silent support". She also says during the appreciation in 10th August 1998 that, she really appreciated Ted...[who], always go to one ah student and I like that I like, that it’s good and it really help the student to have to help their self-esteem, or to feel that oh I’ve done a master piece right.

For the rest of the year Ted began experiencing personal difficulties especially after the death of one of the members in the group. Ted experienced some conflict with Ron that kept him away from the group for a couple of weeks.
On his return however, he was able to produce a peacock on a large canvas that elicited praises from all the group members that added to his sense of pride.

IV.7.4.2 Ron

The data collected for Ron included written reports, video diary, in addition to taped video sessions of his teaching and the daily group notes. Ron’s data were analysed and fell also within the properties of the Personal, Social and the Artistic Learning.

Elements of the Personal Learning property included his understanding of societal attitudes towards people who are different, including artists. He writes in reference to artists “why therefore so those who have the greatest skill and potential, relegated to the destitute and maligned of every country in the works (Deu’s miscreaten).”

He also later on writes poetically his analysis of the actions within the group and relates it to their struggle to not fall prey to stereotypes of expectations for them. He writes,

therefore the group as a cross section of the Art world represents individuals caught up in the striving of Excellence and an inharmonious downbeat created by each other in that endeavour to surpass their precluded and sterile rationality
or Rationalisation of what is Normal or Expected from Disabled Artists.

However his ability to accommodate personally to people’s differences within the group and in his role as teacher was limited. During his video diary he was asked whether his students listened to him and he responded, “I hadn’t really thought about it eh....” He continued by explaining that he was more concerned with getting the message across about being enthusiastic. Most likely he had some level of anxiety while teaching so that he was unable to gauge or assess his own impact on the students. Otherwise it is possible that he approached his teaching in the format of a lecture.

The elements of his Artistic Learning property include his teaching style which I had mentioned before was very similar to his personality. He believed that “to gain independence one must subject oneself to discipline under a hard teacher”. As a result, his teaching involved a more directive style that essentially was group focussed. He was more interested in a formalist art orientation as he focussed more on the attainment of concepts such as colour theory and composition. He also praised the students and communicated with them around specific points of relevance and recognisable features in their work.
Elements within Ron's Social Learning property cover his focus on the relationship between members of the group. He writes that team-work was accomplished during the project at the Centre and that the relationship of artists with one another is the true art form, and, secondary the appreciation of their Individual work and the Art Statement he or she makes to his or her peer, In or Out of the Art world.

However, his interactions among the other artists in the group had ignited a number of arguments and conflicts. The main one being his conflict with Sheena. In his notes he gives no real explanation of the argument, he just felt that she "took objection to personal aid by one of the helpers to one of her students". However he felt it was handled well by the staff and other teachers. After the project and with the announcement of the death of the long-term art member he also found himself in conflict with Ted. In a conversation on the 24th November 1998 with Ron, he admitted that his style of learning relies heavily on pushing and being challenged. He also admitted to measuring himself and his artistic worth against Ted.

It appears that although Ron promoted the idea of group harmony and support, his style of learning is one based
almost in a conflictual model. It became apparent he adopted this as his style of interaction with a number of the group members and consequently led to all of the group members responding individually to challenge him.

IV.7.4.3 Bella

The data collected with respect to Bella included her journal, group notes and her video sessions. They were analysed within the Personal, Artistic, and Social Learning properties of the Ability category.

Elements within her Personal Learning property showed a marked change in her concept of herself and her ability to deal with conflict. In her journal she writes on the 14th August 1998 that, "my art makes me feel good about myself. My art makes me feel that I can accomplish something by myself." It was clear that it was her art and no one else's.

With respect to conflict she was also able to address and resolve Ron's problematic behaviour during her workshop, without the co-ordinator's help, despite her admission on the 7th August 1998 that she was afraid of Ron. She talked about ignoring him at first; then later she pulled him aside. On the 11th August 1998, she writes that she "talked to Ron in the hallway about his disturbing the class". The co-ordinator witnessed this and said that he was "shocked to see that happen. She actually communicated to him how she
felt...Ron [then] decided to keep his voice down."

The elements within her Social Learning property showed Bella to be a very calming and balancing influence to the group. Sheena mentions this in the second week of the workshops as Bella was away for the first week. Her connections with many of the other group members had grown and she was seen favourably.

Within her Artistic Learning property, Bella’s interest in art had increased to the point where she had discovered another art group that she could attend. As well she writes in her journal that her preferred media are water-colour, batik and Styrofoam printing and graffito. Despite her preference for the expressive approach to art she was shifting to a more educational focus. Her teaching style, therefore, included precise instructions, an awareness of the responses of students, evaluative reflective skills, individual and group instruction as well as behaviour management.

IV.7.4.4 Brenda

Brenda’s data included the group notes, her journal notes, and video-taped sessions and a video diary. Elements of Brenda’s data fit within the Personal, Social and Artistic Learning properties.

Elements within Brenda’s Personal Learning property
show the development of her self-esteem and confidence throughout the project. Her perspective in her abilities had shifted from a place of personal inadequacy where she constantly said "I can’t do it" to a place where she felt a deep sense of satisfaction at her accomplishments.

In one of the video sessions on 10th August she says, one thing I was surprised about is I never had this happen to me before. I never knew how much my collage meant to me until that girl came up and handed me a collage...if you should have seen the look on my face, I felt proud that somebody, cause, when I do ...my collage at home I do it because I get the satisfaction that when I get depressed. I get down I can do all this, but then when I brought it in and showed it to the class and that one person took an eye to it, I mean that’s the first that anybody ever did that for me in a long time that really made me feel that my collage could mean something to somebody when all of this is over.

Elements within the Social Learning property show the importance Brenda places on social connections. She says in her video diary on the 5th August 1998, that “I like meeting new people because that’s the only way that you’re
going to find out if the workshop... is good for them..." Her support of the other teachers during the workshop was phenomenal. Again in the video-sessions on the 10th August 1998, Sheena during her appreciation says that "Brenda helped a lot and say well, you don’t need to be [there], I’ll take care of this room... she’s very positive."

The elements within her Artistic Learning property were more developed than in earlier years as she found a medium she loved. She writes in her journal that, “I like doing collage and watercolour painting with wax....” In fact after the workshops she decided to create a collage depicting her thoughts on cancer. Even though Brenda was functionally illiterate she was able to go to the library and with assistance from the librarian and her literacy teacher, she located information on cancer which she photocopied and spent a great deal of time writing down for her collage. She completed the piece for the “Dust to Flame” art show.

With respect to Brenda’s teaching style it was noted that she was supportive, responsive, used praise often and created an atmosphere of fun. She was very committed to teaching and consequently came early to help prepare, and support the other teachers; plus, to prepare for her class, she practised and experimented at home. The impact of her teaching style was to motivate and inspire as seen with the
student who went home and created a collage for her. On the 13th August 1998 Brenda says "if Nat ever needed help again with being a teacher I'd volunteer again, cos I really enjoyed the workshop this week..."

IV.7.4.5 Sheena

The data collected for Sheena included her journal, the group notes and the video sessions. The information received here was analysed and fit into the properties of the Personal, Social, and Artistic Learning.

Elements within the Personal Learning property reveal Sheena's fears and anxieties around her performance and her ability to teach. She was very hard on herself and others around her, bowing to a standard that was really unnecessary. Her insights, however, were most often valued and adopted by the co-ordinators of the program. However I usually had to remind her to be gentle with herself.

Unfortunately she did not inform us of the hurtful things that Ron was saying to her throughout the workshop otherwise the conflict that erupted between her and Ron could have been averted or contained quicker. Interestingly enough however Sheena saw the conflict as a moment of empowerment for her. She says on the 7th August 1998, "no matter what I have said I talk back to Ron because I learn to become more assertive now and I am straightforward...."
Fortunately she relaxed in the second week so that she could spend more time enjoying the experience of teaching. Her struggle was profound but very fruitful and on the 10th August 1998, she writes,

I have reflected on what Nat said last Friday and decided to try my best to accept everyone’s differences, although I find myself very vulnerable because my weakness is too easily emotionally disturbed and upset turned into outbursts of weeping... I always pretend to be in control of myself. In fact [her husband] pointed out that I am a very ‘strict’ person....

Later on the 17th August 1998 I received a card from Sheena that made me very happy. In it she writes,

I have no chance to thank you personally for what you have taught me both in the art lessons and attitude in life...I do finally realise in the last day about my own prejudice and idealism. Your example of accepting every person’s differences and gentleness/openness do broaden my mind.

Elements within the Social Learning property reveal that Sheena’s anxieties had at first prevented her from making significant connections with the other teachers. This was witnessed when on her first teaching day she resorted for
help from her husband who attended the workshop.

However by the end of the workshops she began to experience a sense of group cohesion. On the 13th August 1998 she says, "we are all now in this week, we came more and more united as a group and we have very good harmony..." It is important to note too that a significant number of the students came through community connections to Sheena. This attests to the strengths of her social support network.

Within her Artistic Learning were elements of growth in her technical expertise in respect to water-colour, acrylic, and printing. For instance on the 13th August 1998 she is recorded during her printing workshop, giving accurate and detailed instructions. She says to a student, "you know when you see that these are so much water and ink here you can have a second print. Because now you have a print it is very ink...it is very hard to dry because of the glycerine is still on it. You can have one more... let’s try."

Her teaching style had elements of the formal and organised where she stuck as much as possible to the guidelines. And on the 13th August 1998 she writes that she regards this summer workshop as a success "because everyone have a good time. The participants... enjoyed their classes, having fun making friends and doing Art, which they have longed for but no chance for places providing this golden
opportunities."

IV.7.4.6 Rita

The data collected on Rita were from her video diary, video sessions and group notes. Her data were analysed and fell within the Personal Artistic and Social Learning properties.

Elements within the Personal Learning properties included her recognition that she was not able to teach but instead contributed as much as she was able. On the 5th August 1998, she says "I'm learning and I don't do that much but it is a good idea." She identifies herself more with being a student than as a teacher.

Although very quiet Rita was able to give support to the other teachers, whether it was practical such as in cleaning up or emotional. The co-ordinator describes an incident in the training where Sheena burst into tears because she felt criticised harshly. On 20th July 1998 the co-ordinator writes that "Rita did a marvellous thing; she comforted Sheena by complementing Sheena on her method of teaching." These elements belong in her Social Learning property.

The elements within her Artistic Learning property includes her learning of and understanding of some of the technical aspects within water-colour such as the effect of
different tonal qualities. She also demonstrated that she had a certain style of teaching. She showed herself to be supportive and was able to contribute during demonstrations.

IV.7.4.7 The Co-ordinator

The data from the Co-ordinator were collected from his journal and daily notes. His notes revealed his journey through his difficulties at the beginning regarding group control and clarity around his roles and responsibilities. His Practical Approach to teaching showed him to be consistently setting boundaries and limitations within and among the facilitators. His own sense of personal growth and learning was present and thus could be placed within the Personal and Artistic Learning properties in his Ability Category.

Within his Personal Learning property he revealed his struggle for control of the group as well as for clarity around his role. In July 7th 1998, during the training he writes that,

today was the most messiest day I ever had.
Everyone was out of control and no one was paying any attention to me. I felt like I had no authority over the classroom... I felt angry...[and] told everyone that when I am in the classroom, I am the teacher. I set aside some rules of respect
or leave....

After this, he saw the group settle down and decided to adopt a "respect or leave" rule for the next classes. On the 6th July 1998, he also notes that he had to intervene in a heated discussion between Bella and Brenda and enforced the rule that they take their issues to their counsellor. He writes "To my surprise they co-operated with my request and the class went into a quiet mode the rest of the afternoon was enjoyable."

Elements of his Artistic Learning property saw him observing the changes amongst the group of facilitators as well as his attempts at understanding their issues and adapting strategies to support them. Amongst the group members he saw over time a change in their eagerness to learn the techniques as well as their willingness to support each other. He described two classes on the 21st and 23rd July 1998 where the facilitators showed focus and eagerness to learn. He also documents on the 30th July 1998 when two of the facilitators take the lead to reorganise their workshop. He adapts to their request and as a result changes the format of the workshop to suit.

His observations of the group were similar to mine although in some respects his approach varied. He talks of the attention seeking behaviours of some of the facilitators
and as a result he saw many of the problems that arose as a consequence of him not having a balance to his giving of attention. On the 20\textsuperscript{th} July 1998, he writes, "on the other hand I think the reason why Brenda is telling me her life story is because I pay too much attention..."

On the other hand I saw their behaviours essentially as a communication that was informing me that they needed either more emotional or structural support.

In the final analysis the co-ordinator discussed in his journal his shock and amazement at the changes and growth among the individual members and within the group. He writes in the 6\textsuperscript{th} August 1998, that the workshops "went well like we planned which boost up our confidence every time we finished a workshop."

IV.7.4.8 Teacher

As I was a participant in this study my notes reveal a range of emotions and disturbances to complete joy at the end of the summer workshops. The year was one that brought with it many significant conflicts and quarrels. My absence from the Community Centre due to poor health and my return to the announcement that due to administrative reasons my role in the project was to only be as a consultant were disturbing. As is described here however, I played a more instrumental role and I valued the experience of working
with the co-ordinator in this capacity.

IV.6 Summary

Does the Holistic Arts Approach that I had developed empower the participants? Yes it does. Does it also enhance their quality of lives? Yes it does. When viewing the events that had created the quantity of data related to the participants in the group, it is almost an automatic reaction to say yes to these two questions. In other words the Conceptual Approach plus the Practical Approach to teaching art to adults with disabilities, plus the interaction of the Ability of the artists would deliver the artist to a place of empowerment. The same equation would also deliver the artist to a place of satisfaction with their lives.

However the findings call into question the automatic expectation that an empowered participant would automatically be leading an enhanced quality of life. Questionable too was the idea of what was meant by a Holistic Arts Approach with this population and the realisation that the approach was in a stage of development open to change by the co-ordinators, the Community Centre and/or the various needs of the participant artists. These are some of the points I will raise in the next chapter for discussion.

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Chapter V
CONCLUSION

V.1 Overview

There are several areas that have been identified throughout this thesis that are relevant to the discussion in this chapter. Firstly there needs to take place a comparison of the categories, properties and theory as discovered within the findings and the Quality of Life indicators as developed in studies done by the Centre for Health Promotion at the University of Toronto. These findings would then be related to this study's definition of empowerment and a discussion will ensue that would raise problematic issues inherent within both these models.

The Holistic Arts Approach will be presented in full with the discussion of the problem I experienced with regards to the popular culture understanding of the concept of holism. From this discussion there will emerge a recommendation to the field of education. Next the economic element inherent in the holistic arts approach will be discussed followed by a recommendation to the field of disability.

V.2 The Holistic Arts Approach and Quality of Life

As mentioned in Chapter IV, the findings have
ostensibly been separated into two general areas. The first area is defined by the Holistic Arts Approach, while the other area, is defined by the Empowerment and Quality of Life of the participants. The HAP as presented was found to consist of two core categories, the Conceptual Approach and the Practical Approach.

The Conceptual Approach essentially weaves together three different strands or theories that form the theoretical framework. These strands or properties are framed within the context of Art Aesthetics theory. They are the Expressive, the Pragmatic and the Formalist or Educational orientations.

A review of their meanings exposes the Expressive as congruent with the recognition of the natural healing aspect of art. Within the findings the Expressive property usually referred to the promotion of the use of art as therapeutic or expressive by the facilitators as well as the personal elements such as an individual's self esteem, and belief system.

The Pragmatic or Social Reconstructive orientation recognises that there are groups of people who continue to experience social inequality and recommends the reconstruction of the social environment and political policies as a solution. This orientation or property in this
particular study is congruous with the socio-political understanding of disability, and consequently recognises the discrimination alienation and infringement of rights that is experienced by people with disabilities.

In this study, this is the place of discerning what is the true limit to the abilities of people with disabilities by the attempt to lift the lid off socially imposed limitations and oppressive attitudes to their lives. It is the place where social expectations are challenged by the provision of opportunities to learn and grow. Within the context of making art this means making accessible the world of art by the creation of a group, the provision of supplies and the opportunity to experience a variety of art techniques towards the possibility of becoming an artist.

The Formalist or Educational property has at its crux a philosophy of learning. Firstly this philosophy promotes the concept that all learning comes from experience (Jarvis, 1992). In addition is the recognition that learning means personal change and transformation. Within the Aesthetic theoretical format the formalist position adheres to the learning of conceptual elements with art. Therefore within the study this pertains to the various technical aspects involved in making art.

The Practical Approach applies specifically to the
practical application and translation of the theory within the Conceptual Approach. Consequently the properties of the Practical Approach mirror the properties of the Conceptual Approach which are the Expressive, the Pragmatic and the Educational or formalist.

The Expressive property within the findings, refers to the promotion of the process rather than the product of making art. It also promotes the provision of an emotionally safe and supportive environment to develop one’s creative potential through the scheduling of breaks and the enforcement of limits and rules.

The Pragmatic property speaks to the promotion of making accessible the opportunity to create art. This means providing supplies, TTC tickets, as well as creating opportunities for people with disabilities to interact with the community based on their strengths as culture makers.

The Formalist or Educational property applies specifically to the learning of different art techniques such as water-colour and monoprinting. It also includes the training in learning to facilitate art workshops that the six artists experienced.

The next area for presentation is the Ability Category. This category applies specifically to the participants and their observed changes, descriptions of self, and their
difficulties as it relates to their Personal, Social and Artistic Learning properties. As noted earlier these properties are also associated with the Expressive, Pragmatic and Educational properties.

The Personal learning property pertains to the individual’s sense of self, identity, their beliefs and convictions. The Social Learning property refers to the individual’s sense of connection within the group, the Community Centre and the community. The Artistic Learning property refers to the individual’s progress in the learning of art and includes their development as a teacher or artist.

The Centre for Health Promotion (1996, p.4) defines Quality of Life as the degree to which a person enjoys the important possibilities of his/her own life, where “enjoys” refers to satisfaction and attainment and “possibilities” refers to opportunities and constraints, either by chance or choice. The Quality of Life measurement includes the examination of nine areas of life important to everyone as shown in Fig 4.

In comparing the Ability category with the Quality of life measurement there are similarities that appear almost instantly. The nine areas and three domains of Being, Belonging and, Becoming correlate with the three properties
of Personal, Social, and Artistic Learning generated within this study. The Personal Learning property corresponds to the Being domain in all aspects except for Physical Being.

In relating the data to the area of emotional well being and the development of beliefs and values, it is easy to say that during the six years the artist/facilitators experienced shifts of personal development. For many there was at the beginning a belief that they could not do many things. For example, Brenda was well known to resort constantly to a litany of "I can't do it" when she had to learn something new.
Fig 4. The Quality of Life measurement domains and areas.

**BEING**
Physical Being: Physical health and appearance
Psychological Being: Feelings and emotions
Spiritual Being: Beliefs and values to live by

**BELONGING**
Physical Belonging: The place you live in
Social Belonging: Other people in your life
Community Belonging: Access to your community's resources

**BECOMING**
Practical Becoming: Work, school and other practical activities
Leisure Becoming: What you do for fun and enjoyment
Growth Becoming: Learning new things and adjusting to change.
Three years later during the summer workshops she was recorded as saying “I’m going to go home... to experiment on something new, this time, that I’ve never done and that’s why I like it....” However as with Brenda by the end of 1998, all of the artist/facilitators were able to say that they were capable of teaching art.

The Social Learning property corresponds to the Belonging domain of the Quality of Life measures except for Physical Belonging. As mentioned earlier, the Social Learning property emphasised the relationships the group had to each other, the Community Centre and the community. Through the public venues of the six art shows it was clear that the artists began to be associated with belonging to the art group, and their affiliation to the Community Centre which continued to support them.

Throughout the years their connections expanded into the community with their recognition by local and provincial politicians. In addition they began to be recognised by the Arts community, not to mention other artists as seen when Bella and Brenda joined other art groups in the city.

The Artistic Learning property is associated with the Becoming domain in relation to art. All of the areas of this domain apply to the development of the six participants in their involvement in the learning of art. They first began
as art group members and then by their second art show they became known as artists and finally to the development of their teaching abilities. Each of them now has a preferred artistic medium of expression and has experienced facilitating art workshops.

As I was considered a participant I also measured my observed actions against the nine areas. I found that my sense of self-worth has increased to the point where I believe now that my ability to create has also expanded and shifted from the canvas into the domain of social systems. With respect to the Belonging and Becoming domains I am now recognised as an artist who has been appointed to sit on committees as a proponent for community arts in the City of Toronto.

Applying the Quality of Life measurements to the activities and expanded abilities of the participants in this study shows clearly an enhancement in seven out of the nine areas.

V.3 The Holistic Arts Approach and Empowerment

Empowerment is defined as the process of development in the areas of personal control, interdependence, where "knowing and relying on others for support did not detract from people's ability to take responsibility for their future" (p.18) and, the importance of involvement in
community life.

The research has revealed that empowerment theory has influenced the development of the Quality of Life model as described above. The similarities in definition are quite obvious where the sense of personal control resembles the areas within the Being domain and the involvement in community life corresponds to the Belonging domain while the area of interdependence is similar to the Becoming domain.

Therefore, it can be said that as with the Quality of Life measures, the Holistic Arts Approach empowers and has empowered the participants over the period of six years for some, three for others and one year for one. Fig 5 gives a visual description of the Holistic Arts Approach and its relationship to empowerment and Quality of life.

V.4 Empowerment, Quality of Life and the role of conflict

However, in looking at the findings of this study, I am struck by the realisation that an empowered individual does not automatically guarantee that they would be experiencing a sense of enjoyment at the important possibilities of their life. In assessing the data for the six years, I am aware that the growth the participants have experienced in their Personal, Social and Artistic Learning properties actually has brought about some changes and transformations in their personalities that have led to a remarkable amount of
conflict and strife.

Researching this area I determined that changes in personality brought about by learning can sometimes lead to the development of resistant behaviour in people who are being disadvantaged or oppressed by a social system. Tennant and Pogson (1995) point out that self-development has the ability to move the individual to resist social and economic conditions that lead to alienation and oppression. The role of self-development and empowerment in causing conflict was investigated in the data and I found that in some sense this was a truism. For instance Sheena instigated the conflict between Ron and herself. She was frustrated with Ron's abusive behaviour toward her. In her journal on the 7th August 1998 she writes "No matter what I have said, I talk back to Ron because I learn to become more assertive now and I am straight forward to argue with him with my sharp tongue."
Fig 5. The Holistic Arts Approach showing the properties of the Conceptual and Practical Approach, and their impact on the Empowerment and Quality of life of a participant.

Conceptual Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio-political or Pragmatic</th>
<th>Expressive</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formalist or Education</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Conceptual Approach

Practical Approach

Time it takes to learn

Holistic Arts → Quality of Life → Empowerment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PL</th>
<th>Personal Learning</th>
<th>Psychological &amp; Spiritual Being</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Growth Becoming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>Artistic Learning</td>
<td>Leisure &amp; Practical Becoming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SL</td>
<td>Social Learning</td>
<td>Community &amp; Social Belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal Control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Community life &amp; interdependence</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Another example includes Bella’s response to Ron when he began interrupting her class. In my notes of the 12th August 1998, I record a conversation with Bella who explained that “Ron kept interrupting them but Bella said she asked him not to interrupt and he continued. So they ignored him but after they finished speaking they pulled him aside and talked to him.” Usually Bella would not have talked to Ron directly; instead she would complain to myself or the other co-ordinator.

Kidd (1973) also states that there needs to be recognition of the fact that there usually is some pain associated with unlearning and reorganisation of what has been learned. An example of this is Brenda’s description of her struggle to accept my challenge for her to learn the technique of collage. In my notes on the 7th August 1998 I record Brenda as saying to Sheena “that sometimes she gets angry at me for challenging her. But like with collage she put that aside... and then she decided to take up the challenge, she practised and look at her now. People seeing her collage in the subway were asking to buy it for $25.”

It appeared to me that there certainly were changes brought about by a more positive sense of self and or strength whether personal or social, that made a number of the group members stand up and challenge the forces that
were oppressing or limiting them. During the training and teaching it was safe to say that Ron now had to share his leadership role in the art group.

Another note of interest is the group's interaction with the media. Over the years they had experienced a number of media interviews: however, it was not until 1998 that I witnessed a negative response to the media. In this year, there were two newspaper interviews one during the Project and another timed with their exhibition. Sheena was interviewed during the Project and she writes on the 4th August 1998 about the complexity of her reactions. She writes,

I don't like publicity. Even my own first family doesn't support me emotionally and cause me having emotional problems all these years. I don't know how [the newspaper] will present our group and how my family take in this matter for me being out in public - they don't want people know about my illness.

Her concerns were a foreboding of what was to come in the next article written about the group. The group had put themselves out by meeting an extra day to talk with the reporter so that a feature article could be done on them and their artwork to promote their show.
When they read the article they were horrified at the angle the reporter took and were surprised and dismayed that their artwork was not even mentioned. The article had begun with, “Ron has a beard and Bella has long hair. Brenda has a bad back... And Sheena and Ted came late”, and it did not get any better. Of the article Bella states on 9th March 1999, that “the article didn’t explain anything about our art... [it] was not judging us for what we are doing instead judging us because we are mentally handicapped.” I was shocked and pleasantly surprised at their response to the article, because it showed a critical awareness that was developing among them.

Additionally I found it interesting that within the Community Centre at the time the staff had moved into a strike position that was unheard of before at the centre. T-shirts were made that declared the workplace to be unfair and were worn by the staff. The strike did not happen but the feelings that were aroused still remained into the next year. Within the following year I realised that I had begun to play more of a leadership role in the union committees that were being struck to address the workplace issues.

After my research I began to see these conflictual occurrences within a context of learning and empowerment. Also I was aware that within the Quality of Life model that
conflict and dealing with it is identified as an area of measurement within the Growth Becoming domain. Although it is unclear whether it is seen as a central tenet or outcome to empowerment, struggling for one’s own identity in the face of the remaining vestiges of oppressive history must certainly yield some elements of conflict. Personally I did not enjoy experiencing any of the conflict while implementing the Holistic Arts Approach but in looking back I realise that change and transformation does not always come in pretty packages. I see this as an aspect that needs to be considered not just on an individual basis but systemically in the presence of the drive for an improved quality of life and empowerment for people with disabilities. For service providers, professionals, family members and policy makers within the field of disability, it is important to note that if learning is to occur within a system it may be necessary to be less resistant and to make certain provisions to allow the change and learning to manifest itself.

V.5 Holism and Education

The Holistic Arts Model, therefore, does promote empowerment and an enhanced quality of life. The journey I have taken with naming the model as holistic, however, has become one of discomfort. I realised as I was conducting my
analysis that my discomfort was due to the understanding that the use of the word "holistic" in popular culture has come to be associated solely with health professionals. In fact as we rush headlong to the new millennium the proliferation of all forms of holistic specialists and their promotion of holistic healing has positioned the use of the term holistic overwhelmingly in the healing and recovery professions.

My use of the term "holistic" I feel needs to be clarified. I believe that my definition is a broader one that includes healing and recovery that is also grounded in the understanding of power dynamics as it intersects race, religion, class, gender, abilities and sexuality. I apply this understanding in my model so that there is an area for personal as well as social transformation.

The various conceptions of aesthetic theory that are woven into the Holistic Arts Approach, include the Expressive, the Pragmatic and the Formalist perspective. They all come from various traditions of learning theories and ideological views as mentioned earlier but somehow they have been made to work within the context of a community based art group for adults with disabilities.

Effland (1995) argues for an eclectic model such as this for teaching art as an alternative to one that is
"holistic". He talks of this within a postmodernist context when he says, "A noneclectic curriculum is possible only when one model of art teaching is privileged as being true, a situation that cannot exist as long as the present pluralism is characteristic of the art world" (Effland, 1995, p.38).

Effland (1995) sees this arrangement as one that is idyllic for the delivery of an art education curriculum that has within it a critical perspective. However an eclectic approach sounds too disjointed and appears to have no real context to weave it together except for the loose label of postmodernism. So for now I continue to promote a holistic approach that within the context of the art group has been successful. However, I would also take up Effland’s challenge to the field of education and art education by pointing out that this thesis bears witness to the benefits of a more varied and holistic curriculum.

V.6 Economic Argument and Summary

In the application of the Holistic Arts Approach it became apparent almost immediately that it and in turn myself had at the outset ignored or overlooked the full impact of poverty on this population. This approach is one that relies strongly on the socio-political orientation to disability to provide a critical perspective. However, as I
discussed earlier in Chapter II, the socio-political approach is often criticised for its failure to include as central to its analysis an economic critique of the inequalities experienced by people with disabilities.

The Roeher Institute (1996) includes an economic critique when it emphasises the connection between socially disadvantaged groups and the barriers that limit their ability to find employment. For people with disabilities the Institute notes that because of the difficulties they encounter in finding employment they oftentimes have to rely on income support programs such as the Ontario Disability Support Plan which maintains its "customers" at a level below Statistics Canada's poverty line.

On the other hand, Ferguson (1987) argues for a class analysis. He states that for change to occur people with disabilities need to be seen as representatives of impoverished groups as opposed to representatives of minority groups. He felt that people with disabilities had more in common with poverty groups and recommended that the vision of social justice be expanded to include alternative conceptions such as "co-operative work" as opposed to competitive work (Ferguson, 1987, p.56).

I realise that I am not the only one within the field of art and disability to overlook the material gains
inherent in promoting an economic goal. For instance in Section B of a Toronto Star article dated 23 August 1996, the work of an artist who is deaf and autistic and who lives at Orillia Huronia Regional Centre was highlighted. In the article the columnist, Roberta Avery, states that "his work, however, is not for sale. Isolated by his autism and deafness, Sadgrove has no use for money" (Avery, 1996, p.B1). The operator of the art centre is further quoted as saying "I don't see the sense of his art being sold... It's very special. It should go to his family" (Avery, 1996, p.B1).

Our oversight renders invisible the true nature of the connection between economic usefulness and productivity and its relationship to the valuing of individuals within society. Supporting this assertion is the demographic information described in the random sampling of 504 people with developmental disabilities as reported by the Centre for Health Promotion (1997). The quality of life assessments revealed that among its participants, occupational services were wanted most often by people with disabilities, their families and service providers (Centre for Health Promotion, 1997, p. 30).

In this thesis the analysis in Chapter IV revealed the value that the artists had placed on their potential to earn money. As noted, economic gains was not a factor in my
proposal in 1993; however, in the following year, prompted by the requests of the artists in the group, I included opportunities for financial and earning potential. In 1994-95 in particular I note that the curriculum revealed classes dedicated to the creation of items for sale. As well, the decision to have a yearly art show with works for sale became the main source of revenue for the artists within the group.

From the data available I created a table that displays the revenues earned by the artists for each yearly art show. Table 2 reveals that the artists in the group went from entering 69 pieces in the 1994 art show that earned them a revenue of $600, to entering 150 pieces in 1998 and earning a total revenue of $2374. The number of artworks produced and sold increased steadily consistent with their revenue. Although no one artist could make a complete living from the revenue generated from the sale of his/her artwork, the ability and the opportunity to earn money that could supplement the Ontario Disability Allowance they all received is a significant achievement for these artists.
Table 2
Yearly Art Show Data

<table>
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<th># Artwork</th>
<th># Sold</th>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>31</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>$1037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>$2374</td>
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</table>

It is important to note that the holistic arts model was flexible enough to include the potential for generating income to the artists within the group by the selling of their artwork. Despite the fact that within this thesis the economic critique never actually became a core category, I will look at including this category in the Conceptual Approach as well as the Practical Approach in the future.

In addition, the Centre for Health Promotion (1997) through its study has found that the quality of life for a fair cross section of adults with disabilities is only "adequate" and needs improvement. In light of this, the role of the Holistic Arts Model in increasing the quality of life for adults with disabilities is an important one.
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<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mono Printing</td>
<td>Drawing with Conte (chalk) + Charcoal</td>
<td>Painting using Acrylic</td>
<td>Collage</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Water Colour Printing</td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>7</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Make painting look real by painting with Water Colour</td>
<td>Field Trip (to the Harbour Front Art Gallery)</td>
<td>Block Design + Styrofoam Printing</td>
<td>Open Studio say good-bye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sgraffito</td>
<td>Psychedelic Art</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in a study that wants to find out whether:

You have felt that belonging to this Art Group has been good for you
Your teachers share the same feelings as you

You will be asked to give the investigator permission to analyse;
A copy of your journal entries and notes as completed during the Facilitator Training Workshop
A copy of all your videotapes and audio-tapes, speeches, and interviews you have given since 1993
Slides of artwork produced during this time.

Your real names will be erased from your journal entries and transcripts and audio-tapes and you will be given a pretend name that will be known only by the investigator. There may be reason to quote you when this study is written, but your confidentiality will be maintained as we will use your pretend name at all times.

This study will tell us what in the Art Group works for you and what can be changed. It will also help others who want to start their own Art Group for and with people with disabilities. At the end of the study you will be asked to comment on what is concluded and your comments will be included in the study.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not make the investigator upset. If you decide to participate, you can change your mind at any time. If you have any further questions feel free to ask your teacher or the investigator, or contact Professor Wilkinson at the Ontario Institute for the Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (phone: (416) 923-6641 ext. 2491). Thank you.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep.
You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that,
    you understand the information provided above and have decided to participate;
    you were not pressured in any way to sign this consent form.

Note that you can change your mind at any time, even after signing this form.

---------------------------------  --------
Signature                      Date

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Witness                        Date
ADMINISTRATION CONSENT FORM

Six Art Group members and two Co-ordinators from this organization are being asked to participate in a study that wants to learn whether:

(a) The six artists feel that their active participation in the group has impacted on their quality of life,
(b) This impact is shared by their program facilitators.

You will be asked to provide the investigator with:

(1) Any stored copies of video, audio-tapes and reports written by the program facilitators and stored at your organization,
(2) Slides of art work produced by the students of the Facilitator Training Project- Implementation Phase,
(3) Any other documentation that you may find relevant.

All names will be deleted from the journal entries, reports, and transcripts of video and audio-tapes and replaced with code names that will be known only by the principal investigator. In any written reports or publications, no one will be identified or identifiable and their confidentiality will be maintained.

This study will tell us what in the Art Group works for the six subjects and what can be changed. It will also document the work done since 1993 and help others who want to start their own Art Group for people with disabilities. At the end of the study the Organization will be invited to comment on what is concluded and these comments will be included in the written report.

It is hoped that you will welcome participation in this study. Benefits to the Organization include raising awareness and status of the program as well as the profiling of valuable work that has been done. However if you have any objections to this study, please feel free to discuss these with the investigator or contact Professor Wilkinson at the Ontario Institute for the Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (phone: (416) 923-6641 ext. 2491). Thank you.

You will be given a copy of the consent forms, plus the completed Ethical Review Forms and thesis proposal. You will also be given a copy of the completed thesis.
You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that you understand the information provided above and have decided to participate. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice after signing this form, if you choose to stop participation in this study.

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Signature                Date
You are invited to participate in a study that wants to find out whether:
  the Art Group participants have felt that belonging to this Art Group have been good for them
  You as a facilitator share the same feelings as them

You will be asked to give the investigator permission to analyse:
  A copy of your journal entries and notes as completed during the Facilitator Training Workshop

All names including yours will be deleted from your journal entries and notes and replaced with code names that will be known only by the investigator. There may be reason to quote you when this study is written, but your confidentiality will be maintained as we will use your code name at all times.

This study will tell us what in the Art Group works for the six participants and what can be changed. It will also help others who want to start their own Art Group for and with people with disabilities. At the end of the study you will be invited to comment on what is concluded and your comments will be included in the study.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not make the investigator upset. If you decide to participate, you can change your mind at any time. If you have any further questions feel free to ask the investigator, or contact Professor Wilkinson at the Ontario Institute for the Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (phone: (416) 923-6641 ext. 2491). Thank you.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep.
You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your signature indicates that,
    you understand the information provided above and have
decided to participate;
you were not pressured in any way to sign this consent form.

Note that you can change your mind at any time, even after
signing this form.

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Signature               Date

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Witness                 Date