

THERAPEUTIC VISUAL ART SESSIONS:

BACKGROUND:

My training is in Anthroposophical Therapeutic Art (the *Steiner or Waldorf* method) from Tobias School of Art in West Sussex, England, as part of a 3-year full-time training (graduated in 1997).

As well as being an active member of the Association of Anthroposophical Therapeutic Arts (AATA), and associate membership of BAAT (The British Art Therapy Association)

I also have an MA in Fine Arts from Camberwell College of Arts, London and a BA in Design from the School of Architecture & Design, PUCV, Chile.

Recent professional development training :

- *Arts-Based Counselling with Children using the Arts*, Institute for Arts Psychotherapy, Islington, London.
- *The Mental Health Seminar*- 3 year training run by doctors, art therapists, psychotherapists and child experts (completed 2021).
- *The School Health Practitioner Training*, part time/ modules, with paediatric doctor, Michaela Glöckler.
- *Uprightness*- StArt modular course on creative trauma work with children and adults (completed 2022).

In addition to this, I teach painting www.johanna-berger.com,

And set up a large art studio and gallery in Brighton, UK (BLANK, Studios, Brighton)

My own art practice is represented in New York by www.marisolfineart.com/artist.

I am an award winning painter and have sold and exhibited internationally for more than 20 years.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

I work as an independent Therapeutic Visual Arts Practitioner in private practice from my home and studio in Brighton, internationally via Zoom and part-time at Michael Hall School in Forest Row and Encounter Wellness (an NHS project in Brighton).

I specialise in working with children and their parents but also see adults.

My therapeutic work is supervised on a regular basis by an independent supervisor.

My working experience spans over different ages, conditions and family situations. Some examples of what I have worked with (children & adults):

- Eating disorders, including anorexia/ those directly affected and their families.
- Autism spectrum disorders.
- ADHD and ADD.
- Burnt out Syndrome and ME & Chronic Fatigue Syndrome.
- Depression, anxiety, and challenges with panic.
- Dementia & Alzheimers
- Down syndrome.
- Individuals whose imagination and emotions feel overwhelming or who may find creative work challenging.

- Individuals with a frozen will, or who find it difficult to do things in general.
- Individuals navigating bereavement, divorce, or major changes in family structure.
- Individuals recovering from surgery or managing chronic conditions like severe asthma, heart issues or cancer.
- Neurological conditions after brain injury.
- Suicidal thoughts, self harm and low self-esteem.
- Victims of abuse.
- Victims of trauma.
- Visual impairments.
- Children who are disruptive in class or at home because they find it difficult to concentrate or because they want everything perfect.
- Children who refuse to go to school.
- Children with an EHCP.
- Children with PTSD after traumatic experiences in early childhood or in pregnancy, including early medical interventions.
- Children who were born prematurely.
- Attachment spectrum related.

The work with children: Is as a whole, non-confrontational, profound and fun. Through exercises and the child's own ideas, we enter into an individual creative process together, addressing what comes up for them. The specific outcome will depend on the circumstances in the child's life and will range between immediate improvements to deeper seeded work that will manifest later in life.

The main tools I use are: art and creativity, imagination, conversation (especially with older children), play -sandtray, puppets, imaginative, etc- (carefully tailored to the child's individual needs), stories (fairy tales or therapeutical stories I create for them), but most of all laughter, humour, silliness and joy.

The work with adults: Can in some cases draw on any of the above but tends to focus more on deep listening, intuitive work and art. In some cases we focus more on the art itself and in others, on the therapeutic. The work is always individual, unique and often, with an element of magic.