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UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

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# Older People's Perspectives on Therapeutic Creative Activities

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Laurea University of Applied Sciences  
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## **Older People's Perspectives on Therapeutic Creative Activities**

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Abstract

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The purpose of the thesis project was to research if creative methods are valid tools to be used in client work on the social field. The authors of this work believe in the developmental power of artistic creativity and its ability to maintain client's physical and psychological well-being. This thesis concentrated on the perspectives of older people as the client target group, and was carried out in collaboration with Aria residents of Villa Andante as a working-life partner. Villa Andante is an elderly care home in Nöykkiö (Espoo) and it operates under Mediverkko Oy.

In order to study the client's perspectives on therapeutic creative methods, a project was designed that allowed the evaluation of these activities. The final results were gathered by observation of therapeutic sessions, handing out written questionnaires, and also by implementing art, music and movement sessions in October and November 2011. The thesis project focus was to improve the social and physical well-being of the clients, to enrich the existing creative methods used in Villa Andante and to evaluate the validity of the project and its implementation.

Qualitative analysis was the method used for this project. In addition, SWOT analysis was conducted prior to the project's implementation, and S.M.A.R.T analysis served as an evaluation method of the achievement of the project's goals. Literature about therapeutic creativity (arts, exercise, movement, and music), older people's living conditions, and psychological disorders created the theoretical framework of this thesis.

The final results of this thesis project demonstrated that older people enjoy therapeutic creative activities. Clients perceived therapeutic creative methods as an important part of their care home lives since they receive physical and psychological benefits from them. Throughout these activities, expectancies for the future are created for older people as they wished for more related activities.

Key words: therapeutic creative methods, the elderly, art therapy, music therapy, dance and movement therapy.

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Tiivistelmä

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### Senioreiden Näkemyksiä Terapeuttisesti Luovista Aktiviteeteistä

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Opinnäytetyön tarkoituksena on tutkia ovatko luovat menetelmät käytettäviä työkaluja sosiaalialalla. Tämän työn tekijät uskovat taiteellisen luovuuden kehitysvoimaan ja sen kykyyn ylläpitää asiakkaan fyysistä ja psyykkistä hyvinvointia. Tässä opinnäytetyössä keskityttiin ikääntyneiden ihmisten näkökulmiin. Tutkimus tehtiin yhteistyössä Villa Andante asukkaiden kanssa. Villa Andante on palvelukoti Espoon Nöykkiössä, joka toimii Mediverkko Oy:n alaisuudessa.

Voidaksemme tutkia asiakkaiden mielipiteitä luovista terapeuttisista menetelmistä, kirjoittajat suunnittelivat projektin, jonka avulla he voisivat arvioida näitä toimintoja. Lopulliset tulokset kerättiin havainnoimalla terapeuttisia istuntoja, jakamalla kyselylomakkeita, ja toteuttamalla taide-, musiikki- ja liikuntaistuntoja loka- ja marraskuussa 2011. Opinnäytetyön painopiste oli parantaa asiakkaiden sosiaalista ja fyysistä hyvinvointia, rikastuttaa ja käyttää jo Villa Andantessa olemassa olevia luovia menetelmiä sekä arvioida hankkeen perusteltavuutta ja sen täytäntöönpanoa.

Tämän projektin menetelmänä käytettiin laadullista analyysia. Lisäksi, ennen hankkeen toteuttamista, tehtiin SWOT- ja S.M.A.R.T. analyysi, ja arvioitiin projektin tavoitteiden saavuttamista. Tämän opinnäytetyön teoreettinen viitekehys luotiin käyttämällä kirjallisuutta terapeuttisesta luovuudesta (taide, liikunta, liike ja musiikki), yksinäisyydestä ja psykologisista häiriöistä.

Opinnäytetyön lopulliset tulokset osoittivat, että ikäihmiset nauttivat terapeuttisista luovista toiminnoista. Asiakkaat pitivät terapeuttisia luovia menetelmiä tärkeänä osana elämässään palvelukodissa, koska he saavat fyysistä ja psyykkistä hyötyä niistä. Näissä toiminnoissa luodaan odotuksia tulevaisuudesta sillä ikääntyneet ihmiset toivoivat lisää edellä mainittuun liittyvää toimintaa.

Asiasanat: luovia terapeuttisia menetelmiä, vanhuksat, taide, musiikki, liike, terapia

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## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this thesis was to throw light about creative methods, and verify within a project if were valid tools to be used in client work on the social welfare work field. Since the authors of this paper believed that these sorts of methods might be beneficial for the well-being of clients, and people in general, it was the intention of the group to create a project that would help to find answers to such beliefs. In the following, the authors address the main ideas behind creative methods in practice.

As a component of the curriculum in the Bachelor's Degree in Social Welfare Services in Laurea University of Applied Sciences, creative methods well demonstrated to be valuable tools for the students. Creative methods' include the disciplines of arts and crafts, physical education, basics of music therapy, and sociodrama. The ideas behind the study of these methods are varied. For instance, the application of creative methods strengthens the student's self-confidence because the student is able to use his or her expertise in familiar fields. Furthermore, social work is a practical field therefore creative methods might help the workers to apply the adequate materials with different client groups and also build connections with them. Experimentation is important in this regard because it allows finding the right tools to be applied in different situations. Active creation allows finding the best-suited methods for particular individuals. In addition, these methods allow self-awareness thru self-expression, which are essential both for the professional and personal development.

To support the group's project, different literature has been researched. Beginning with the idea that creative methods are a compound of disciplines, the authors of this work have assigned parts of the subject to each member: movement, arts and music therapeutic approaches. In order to implement the project, the group took older people as the focus group, and cooperated with Villa Andante as a working life partner. The contact and interviews with Villa Andante's personnel assisted the authors of the thesis to gather information about the clients.

Villa Andante is a care home for older people; it provides a secure place to live for those who are no longer able to live by themselves. Independent of the age of a person, we all need a place where to live for comfort, protection and security, a place to call 'home'. An interesting idea about living arrangements comes about when analyzing the situation of older persons. What is the meaning of *home* for a person who has been living in the same address almost the majority of his life? How does that person feel when he knows his days are about to

end and might need to move to a service home? Are then the properties or the memories attached to that place that he takes with him? Therefore the concept of home is difficult to draw as it depends completely on the definition a person living in a residence may give it (Philips et al. 2006, 24-25). For one person it may mean the house where he grew up and lived most of his life, while for another person it could be any place where he was able to find the best services and have a great amount of mobility, such as a care residence.

Old age is often associated with health problems. Contrary to that, a high percentage of older people lead an independent and healthy life (Philips et al. 2006, 17). It is reasonable to think that the health conditions of clients may determine when these people do require special attention or services. Specific geriatric assistance such as mental health services is to be found in residences and hospitals. Dementia and depression are the most common mental problems among older people. However, for older persons living in residences the percentage of depression rate is of 40% in comparison to the 10-15% of the rest of the older people living elsewhere (Philips et al. 2006, 18). For these reasons, this study about the application of creative methods in a residence might shed some light about the effects that clients perceive in relation to their well-being.

Different activities and other out-of-the-routine events might help clients to deal with their personal difficulties. Therapeutic methods, such as dance and movement may empower - increasing trust and self-esteem- and encourage clients to achieve better conditions for their lives (Innes and Karen 2001, 56). Many care homes provide entertainment activities for their residents; these include arts and crafts, movement, or music sessions. Some of these activities may include other forms of counseling and therapy into their common schedule. The quality and variety of the activities offered in care homes depend on the considerations of their managers and the allocated resources.

The methods and services that include a personal kind of approach may not be available for all the older persons who might need them. For this reason it was believed that implementing varied activities would allow closer client-worker contact with a group. The authors believe that creative methods that include psychological and developmental movement components, when performed regularly either as a hobby or therapeutically, might be beneficial for any person.

The home therapists of Villa Andante have given material and information about the sessions and methods to the study group. With this information the group was able to design the creative sessions to be implemented as a project. The needs of the clients and the considerations

from the working life partner helped to plan the appropriate contents of the activities in a way that matched the contributions by the authors. The theory researched (art, music, and movement) was to be implemented in a manner that was adapted to the client's needs.

As recommended by Philips et al. (2006), social workers should challenge the idea that one method fits everybody. Instead, diversity needs to be considered in order to provide adequate services to individual needs and strengths (Philips et al. 2006, 47). This is the case of the Vitalia day centers in Spain where the Hoffmann Method is used. A diverse professional team analyses each case individually in order to create a personal treatment plan focusing in psychosocial, physical and cognitive areas (Los beneficios del Método Hofmann en las personas con Alzheimer, 2009). For the purpose of this study, the needs of the participants were researched in order to design a functional project.



## 2. The Background of the Thesis

Villa Andante is an elderly care home that belongs to Mediverkko Oy and is situated in Nöykkiö Espoo. Mediverkko Oy is a private company that offers services in social and health care. They operate, among other areas, in special health care, dental care, child protection, elderly care, childcare and occupational health care.

In Villa Andante there is capacity for 45 clients. Its aims are to support clients' individual needs and to encourage them in having an active life within the community. In Villa Andante the clients have lots of shared activities throughout the day. All the activities are optional and everyone's right for privacy is respected. In the centers' activities they emphasize social interaction with other inhabitants, physical and psychological well-being. Villa Andante has activities in reading, music, art, outdoors and indoors exercise. Each client has an individual care plan, which is formed based on the client's live situation and resources. The aim is that every client would be able to live with his or her own individual daily rhythm in a stimulating environment.

Villa Andante's objectives are: treat client as individuals, supporting the clients' well-being in an activity based environment and build the sense of community. In addition, the operation of the organization is built based on the goals of: a) empathy, warmth and genuine caring for the client, b) respecting the client by being present, c) empowering the client to find his own resources, d) giving independence to the clients, e) little emphasis on medication and f) available help 24/7. The operation in Villa Andante is based on researched information and on approved displays (Villa Andante, 2011).

The authors' interest on elderly as clients and creative methods led the group to Villa Andante. The operative methods, attitudes, and collaboration of the organization proved to be the most suitable for this project. Specifically, the idea of this thesis work was to evaluate the use of creative methods as means to develop the life quality of the elderly living in the residence. By performing sessions in a project-based thesis manner it was possible to get the clients' opinions and experiences about these methods. In addition, it was believed that giving the clients the space to express their thoughts and preferences current services could be improved if needed. In order to accomplish this aim, the project focused on planning, implementing, and evaluating creative method sessions.

The students believed that it is important to help older people to cope with aging and illnesses in order to support their social and psychological well-being. The performed activity sessions, which correspond to music, arts and movement categories, will be encouraging the elderly to participate.

After explaining in detail the general purpose of this bachelor's thesis, it is now important to point its goals. There are three proposed objectives. First, the group targeted to improve the social and physical well-being of the residents of Villa Andante. This was planned to be achieved throughout the enhancement of the client's well-being with the use of creative methods.

Second, with the implementation of these methods the group intended to enrich the existing creative methods used in Villa Andante. The intentions behind the second aim were the following: a) to improve the social participation of the residents in order to reduce possible feelings of anxiety about the future; b) to give positive experiences on their daily lives; and c) to encourage the clients by giving them tools to participate in creative manners.

In addition, another objective in this bachelor's thesis was to evaluate the validity of therapeutic creative methods within the project and its implementation. The intention for this goal was to prove the study group's initial ideas. By researching how creative methods work in action the group was able to structure a final conclusion about the experiences using creative methods. With the coming results the group was able to explore creative methods in an objective manner.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

#### 3.1 Description of older people in modern society

It goes without saying that aging well in modern welfare societies is related to the availability of senior citizens homes. These homes provide different services ranging from basic daily life needs to medical care. However, moving to a senior citizens' home can be a big change in the life of an old person.

Old age brings along different life changes and challenges. Communication with a person in his/her later life phase becomes more difficult in distance. Hearing problems can be isolating because they limit the possibility to make phone calls and keep in touch with family members and friends. Thus, relationships and social interaction become rare (Neno 2007, 20). In addition to these challenges, elderly people might face some illnesses and mental difficulties such as loneliness, depression or dementia and suicide in some cases.

Finland is considered to be a special aging society; according to the 2004 statistics of the Finnish center of statistics, Finland has the most rapid ageing society in the EU-15. Finnish population is about 5.2 million inhabitants, the amount of people aged 65 years and older is expected to increase from 17% in 2010 to 23% in 2020 and 26% in 2030 (Journal of Sociology, 2011). As a consequence, European countries and especially Finland had to increase awareness about how to support good health among older people so that health and quality can be promoted in later life (Healthy Ageing, A Challenge for Europe, 2011). Usually, the majority of health and wellness approaches have concentrated on physical health and only limited on mental health and well-being among elderly people (ibid. 6).

Therefore, concentrating on the psychological well-being as well as on the physical well-being by promoting therapeutic creative activities will improve the life quality of older people living in retirement homes in this especially aging society.

Moreover, today's societies have become increasingly individualistic and busy. In the past, the concept of family was different in the sense that there was a dependability bond between members of extended families. Nowadays, people think that promoting the wellbeing of society is the duty of the government, and no longer that of the family members. Therefore, the relationships inside the family have been affected. People became more individualistic because they do not need to think about their aging individuals anymore, the state does.

Older people used to be the center of attention and the source of knowledge. They used to be the storytellers whom the children wait for, and the grandparents who share history with the younger generation. Nowadays, however, the elderly are no longer needed because they are no longer a valuable source of information. The feeling of being needed creates a strong connection of trust and love.

Social relationships are different from one country to another, from one cultural and economic environment to another. Comparing Finnish, or any western culture; with an African or Asian helps to understand the cultural differences. Aging in Africa or Asia is understood differently. Steve Gurney mentions in one of his articles that:

*“The ageism of many Western societies, where seniors are regarded with pity and often patronized – in contrast to the respect given them in places such as Mexico and Asian nations – makes things tough as well”* (Western Societies Views on Aging Can Be Negative, 2011).

The lack of social relationships may lead to isolation and loneliness. Building new relationships can be difficult in older age because of the disabilities one may have. For this reason, the nurses in retirement homes play a major role in promoting a good social environment for their clients; and can help them to create a social interaction amongst each other's (ibid. 17). Therapeutic creative activities, where the clients can be together and share the same experience can also be considered as a good tool to promote social interaction and create relationships between the clients inside retirement homes.

There are a number of important factors, which can prevent the risk of falling into depression or social isolation. These factors are, among others, intimate relationships, strong bonds, and reciprocal relationships inside retirement homes and inside the community (ibid. 23).

It is said that mental health in earlier life is influenced by a multifaceted of social, psychological, and biological interactions. Each of these influences may affect the needs of older people with mental health (ibid. 17). Mental health problems may occur in any stage of life. However, several researches have argued that mental health challenges, mostly depression and dementia, are more likely to affect older people (Mental Health information, 2011).

An interesting study made about “Suicides Among Older Persons in Finland and Time Since Hospitalization Discharge” has showed that suicide amongst elderly people is a result of psychiatric disorders such as depression (Psychiatric services 2011).

Since depression is the first common cause of suicide in old age, health care and elderly care services have to increase the social well-being in the elderly daily life because social isolation, lack of daily activities and physical or mental health problems are risk factors for depression.

As it is mentioned above, the major and the most common psychiatric disorder is depression. As far as elderly people are concerned, they may suffer from different types of depression, which causes differ. Depending on the causes, depression generally ranges from clinical, dysthymic to manic as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. However, what can seem to be depression might be no more than symptoms of dementia—the similarities are considerable.

Firstly, Depression according to Hamilton (1989) may occur as a normal human reaction when it is related to an event that has created it. In this case depression is considered as a *“particular mood associated with a reaction to a real loss or failure.”* Secondly, depression refers to a pathological mood existing in other mental disorders and as a result of somatic illnesses. Finally, depression may indicate a syndrome, *“It has an identifiable, usually recurrent course, and distinct intervals between each phase. It is known to have a genetic component, and there is reasonably good evidence of an underlying biochemical disturbance”* (Mortality of the depressed elderly, 2011).

Another common illness among elderly people is dementia. According to Mental Health Information website 2011, Dementia is described to be *“a decline in person’s mental ability; it disturbs thinking, memory, concentration, solving, comporment, and perception.”* Dementia has different types; the most prevalent type is Alzheimer’s disease, other types like vascular dementia, and categorized as a second common type of dementia after Alzheimer. Vascular Dementia diseases are considered non-degenerative contrary to Alzheimer, which worsens with time. The causes of these different types of dementia are a series of strokes that constrict the blood oxygen movement and the death of the neurons in the brain. Dementia is characterized by confusion, memory loss, and disorientation. Dementia patients can easily develop depression because of the frustration they experience.

Indeed, there is a connection between depression and dementia, according to mental health information, dementia and depression share similar indicators like isolation from social activities and feelings of apathy. “An elderly with severe depression can be misdiagnosed with dementia and vice versa” (Mental Health Information, 2011).

Furthermore, there are some other mental health concerns such as delirium and psychosis. Although old age does not necessarily mean being susceptible to dementia or depressions, the following statement of Health in Finland 2011 is worth mentioning:

*“Dementia increases steeply with age and in the age group over 85 about one third suffer from moderate or severe dementia. With the growing number of older people in the population and the improving survival of patients with dementia, the number of dementia patients is set to increase very rapidly”*

Different aspects of clients’ well-being can be addressed through creative therapeutic sessions, which deal with a diversity of mental, physical, emotional, and social needs. In some cases, these different needs are approached directly through music, art, or movement therapies. In others, they can be addressed through different kinds of psychotherapies or physical therapies. The interpersonal relationships that can be developed between the clients and the therapist on the one hand, or within the group on the other, can also address some of the elderly people’s needs (Bruscia 1987, 5).

In order to support older people with mental health, one has to provide them with a safe and understanding environment. Expressing understanding and sympathy, maintaining home care and family life are important elements for sustainable stability and prevent further difficulties for older people with mental health problems.

Older people tend to feel embarrassed by their dependency on other. Dependency is multifaceted, which can be physical or psychological. They might associate dependency with low self-worth in a society where independency is overrated. It is highly important for older people to help the elderly go through their loss of independence without the feeling of loss of self-worth, which usually comes by. This will help them to come into terms with their limitations and frustrations

## 3.2 Creativity

In a world with all the rules and regulations self-interpretation is not given much room. A creative activity can work as a channel to express one's feelings, to give opportunities to memorize things from the client's past and to experience self-mastery when being in control of one's own actions. Creativity has a big value in empowering because a client cannot perform a creative activity wrongly. The only person whose level and expectations the client needs to meet is himself. The result of the creative process is not emphasized as much as the process itself, what happens during it is more important. An artistic process has meaning to the person who is experiencing it and therefore its main feature is what he gains from that.

Humans are psychophysical beings and therefore the effects the person receives from an artistic experience are seen on the person's body as well as on the mind (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 32). This connection between body and mind is clearly seen when the effects on the mind come out as bodily functioning. A chance to get the mind refreshed is to get engaged with an artistic activity. For centuries people have believed in the healing power of arts. For example, flute music was considered to heal from depression and a theater show to create strong emotional feelings, which were believed to help with neurosis. Creative practice is based on the belief of the art's ability to heal. In this type of thinking, artistic expression has an instrumental value (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 27). In this project, it is hoped to find results that support this thinking and give more findings on the healing power of artistic activities.

The great thing about artistic creativity is that everyone can be an artist. When doing creative activities older people can feel that they are doing something productive. A person can also feel that he has a chance to participate in life and not only to follow other people. However, according to Hohenthal-Antin (2006, 134) the purpose of artistic activities with older people is not to create productive outcomes. Art can be considered useful enough if brought simply joy and meaning to the person's life (ibid, 134). When most of the cognitive capacities in a person fail, the ability to feel and experience joy still remains. Art is a suitable tool for encountering those abilities. In the next chapter arts used in a therapeutic manner are discussed in depth.

### 3.2.1 Results from previous studies on creativity

It is important that the professionals in elderly care centers concentrate on the communal art activities due to the added value of well-being they offer. This can be explained with the re-

search done about relations between community and psychophysical well-being by Hyypä and Mäki (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 136). Markku T. Hyypä and Juhani Mäki are researchers who have worked on the topic of creativity. In their research they have come to the conclusion that *“participating in artistic sessions effects on your state of health as efficiently as other factors that promote health”* (Hyypä 2002, 123; Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 30-31). Art offers things that can bring more light to the person’s psychological well-being and in that way to compensate the balance between the negative and positive features the person got in his life situation. From previous research, art can promote the following: prevent isolation, attach the older person to the society, strengthen one’s identity, increase well-being, work as the link that connects generations and provide working methods for memorizing (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 123). Theories that support art with older people are discussed in the following chapter.

### 3.2.2 Theories to support creativity at the old age

For long there was a belief in a so-called decline model. According to this model, creativity decreases once the person gets older (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 38). This together with the lack of capacity and resources can explain why some residential care homes do not provide creative activities for their clients. The life experience the person has gained over the years gives resources for creative actions. Some elderly people have many good qualities in their beings that are suitable for creative action. Once people get older and retire from their work roles their need to perform decreases. That gives space for other qualities within the person. When the pressure of reaching other people’s expectations and work related goals are not relevant anymore the person has a possibility to become more brave, real and spontaneous (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 161). Cohen, 2000, (Hovila 2004; Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 39) explains this as a part of his lifespan theory with the qualitative change that happens in a person once getting older. Cohen refers to this time in a person’s life as a liberation phase when the person is free from the roles of his adulthood life.

*“Cohen’s theory supports the idea that very old artists can possess great creative resources and that age brings depth to expressing”* (Hovila 2004, 49-51; Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 41). The students have seen the following when observing the art sessions in Villa Andante; strong self-expression, movements combined with singing, participating with visible emotions, participation in discussions on the topic, asking questions on the topic from the instructor, interested to “take home” session material and to practice on their own time. The observation results support Cohen’s theory of the liberation phase and the changes it brings which will stay in the person for the rest of his or her old age.



Erik. H. Erikson's theory of life span considers the psychological crisis that happen in a person's life. These crises are in a state form and in order to proceed to a following phase the crisis at hand needs to be resolved. When a person has resolved all the previous crises he/she is more equipped to resolve the upcoming one. This is essential for the psychological development of a person. Erikson has listed eight different crises, which are in a life span form starting from the childhood and proceeding all the way to the old days. As number seven, Erikson has listed adulthood, the crisis of creating and paralyzing. In this phase the person feels pressure of creating a family and being productive in his work. The person should have something stable in his life which should also be socially meaningful. As number eight, Erikson has listed old age, the crisis of integrity, despair and self-integration. In this state the person evaluates the lived life. The person considers if the life met the expectations and if one can say that he/she is satisfied with the way his/her life went. If the person is not pleased with the way his/her life went, despair follows. The goal at this point is to achieve the inner peace (Eriksonin Teoria, 2011).

In Lars Tornstam's theory of gerontranscendence a person experiences a qualitative change once getting older. These changes modify the relationship between the self and the world, and it is called the shift towards meta-perspective, which brings a new life view to the person. Achieving goals is no longer important since the person is more interested in the peaceful being brought by the change (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 157 and 161). Lars Tornstam criticizes Erikson's theory of life span and especially phase eight. Erikson says that when a person reaches the eighth phase, happens a summary of the lived life. This type of thinking does not support the continuity of life in the older days. Tornstam's stand differs completely from Erikson's as he argues that a person experiences a qualitative change of self, in this stage of life, and releases the creative abilities from within (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 127).

Tornstam's perspective is that this new change of self also gives the person an ability to break social conventions (Tornstam 1997, 152; Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 162). This can be explained in the way of thinking that the person no longer needs to answer to any one of his/her actions and sayings. The person is no longer dependent on the people that were needed to please before. These types of changes in life bring huge feelings of freedom to a person. Tornstam also describes this phenomenon as a gradual withdrawal of the stages determined by the culture (Tornstam 1995, 284; Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 162). The working culture and the western culture in general make people to act in certain ways that are expected from everyone depending on their different roles. An older person is no longer tied to these roles and expectations and is therefore free to be as he wishes. According to the interviews

made by Leonie Hohenthal-Antin the elderly associated with art activities have described increase in being spontaneous and to have the courage to get involved, playfulness and humor, openness for interaction with others, the courage to be yourself and self-confidence. Also losing one's face is not frightening (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 162).

The two changes of self-listed by Tornstam that are connected with good precondition to art activities are the following:

1. *The process of transcendence of the inner self*: the person separates himself/herself from the old self. Tornstam calls this an individuation process in which the person integrates the forgotten and rejected sides to himself/herself. As a result of this process the person will feel himself/herself whole with an inner harmony.

2. *Emancipated innocence*: with this character the person is able to eliminate social conventions. As a result of this process the person will become spontaneous and innocent (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 170).

As an argument to Tornstam's theory of gerontranscendence, Hohenthal-Antin (2006) presents that everyone do not go through the process of gerontranscendence and that this process can be kicked off earlier in a person's life due to not development related reasons for example a crisis. Hohenthal-Antin also refers to the same creativity that the person already had when he/she was a child and that same creativity is brought back into this process of the qualitative change in self (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 177). Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs* (1943) can be connected to the creativity in older people (Maslow'n tarvehierarkia, 2011). The fifth phase in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, self-actualization, supports Tornstam's thinking on the creativity in older people. He underlines the importance of the opportunities to be given to the older people to actualize themselves (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 159).

It was pleasing to come across theories and research that supports creative activities on the old age. Older people do receive positive experiences from creating and experiencing art in a group with their peers or on their own. The journey itself is more important than the result they achieve with their work. Re-experiencing the lived life through their artwork and relating to others with shared experienced can be very therapeutic for an older person. In professional positions, just to have the opportunity to offer joy and meaning to a client's life alone makes the job appreciated and valuable in addition to all other benefits that can be offered through art activities.

The authors share the following thought with Hohenthal-Antin (2006):

*“Art is a strong area for self-actualization. It is a path to empowerment. When an elderly person creates art from his own life experiences, at the same time he makes his own life valuable”* (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 178).

Art activities can give a lot to a person. The person may experience feelings of freedom, attention and appreciation from others. Art can bring moments of happiness when a person experiences joy and exceeds one’s own physical or mental limitations (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 134). An art group, which is signed for residents of an elderly care center, does not create performance pressure since the group members are cognitively on the same level with their abilities to do art (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 47). Just as all the other age groups, an older person also needs support from his peers. Elderly people can understand their peers better since they have experienced the life in the same generation. A like-minded group provides great support for its members and with the help of this support; an individual can perform better in their activities (ibid. 47). After discussing creativity, next follows arts.

### 3.3 Arts

Human beings are artistic by nature; inside us there is the potential to express ourselves through different methods for example music, dance or paint, to name a few. Since millenary times, people have used art to communicate with others or to help themselves to make sense of their experiences in the world. It is possible to find artistic creations such as paintings among other artifacts in prehistoric remains. During our presence in this planet, the human ability to create has been proved unlimited; whether the case ranges from new inventions to artistic design. From past civilizations to the present era, the world will never lack the opportunity to witness art.

The reasons behind artistic expression are as varied as their creators. Some people enjoy painting for the pleasure of combining colors together while others for the capacity to capture a moment in eternity. Some prefer to knit or manufacture for the pleasure to design clothes for others or themselves. Others draw caricatures to express ideas, and some other people like molding clay to create sculptures for decoration. Whatever the tools -paper, canvas, rock, metal, poetry, storytelling or public scenery- artistic expression helps people to

exteriorize their inner self, or simply decorate in order to make their life experience more aesthetic.

Historically speaking, art therapy is a relatively new discipline. Changes in the meanings of art during the nineteenth century are noteworthy. It is from Romanticism to Expressionism, which is from irrational emotional states to be explored to the exaggerated expression of emotions, that artistic disciplines have evolved (Edwards 2004, 19-20). Under this light, the work of art historian and psychiatrist Hans Prinzhorn during the beginning of the twentieth century reflects the analysis of human expression with the use of arts. With the publication of the work *The Artistry of the Mentally Ill* in 1922, Prinzhorn was able to open new doors for the study of psychiatry and its connections with art as well as influencing European artistic circles (Esman 2006, 647). His interest focused on the artistic motivation and the creations of psychiatric patients that he thought were able to produce quality art. Prinzhorn collected the patient's work creations during forty years prior the publication of *The Artistry of the Mentally Ill* (Edwards 2004, 21).

Prinzhorn understood that the 'pictorial configuration's' nature was determined by six basic psychological drives. He identified them as drives or urges for expression, recreation, decoration, tendency for order, imitation and symbolic needs, which its characteristics when produced them in the psychotic process, were not different from the art exposed in museums (Edwards 2004, 21 and Esman 2006, 647). Instead of studying the creations from a medical perspective but an artistic one, Prinzhorn was able to give an optimistic view not only to the creations but its creators (ibid.). Other authors have used Prinzhorn as inspiration to advance in the field of artistic research or therapy such as MacGregor or Lombroso.

Aside from the analytic content that the famous psychotherapist Sigmund Freud gave to the interpretation of images and figures created by patients, other important researchers have given light to the work with mental patients. Art historian MacGregor described Italian anthropologist and psychiatrist Cesare Lombroso as "*among the most influential and prominent figures in psychiatry in the generation preceding Sigmund Freud*" (MacGregor 1989, 93 in Hogan 2001, 57). In Lombroso's work, *L'uomo Delinquente* (1879), art created by the mental insane was given value since it was regarded as evidence of pathology (ibid.). The person's interior is a reality that offers the opportunity for interpretation when exposed outside its boundaries. Whether the subject is insane or not, the artistic work done by the mentally ill could be regarded as the beginning point of artistic therapy approaches. When used in therapy, art is another method to reach the patient's inside world. Thru different techniques, the

therapist is able to comprehend the person better and thus to find adequate solutions for them.

### 3.3.1 Therapeutic Art Applications

In the era of advance medicine these artistic processes have found a therapeutic application. Many diseases, for example poliomyelitis or smallpox, have been eradicated from the world; however other acute problems such as depression may find something as old as painting beneficial although it has an existing pharmaceutical treatment. Arts have been used more recently to assist in medical rehabilitation or in psychotherapy. Lofaso et al. (2010) states that creative arts can help to assist and understand patient's experiences, which medicine often lack (346). Building rapport is an essential skill for those working in service sectors, therefore creative methods such as therapeutic art may act as a bridge between the professional and the client. Helping clients to express their emotions and ideas or to deal with illness may benefit students of different disciplines to orientate in their careers (Lofaso et al. 2010, 346-347).

The applications for artistic creative methods are unlimited. From children to older people, all ages are able to enjoy and benefit from creating. There is a sense of empowerment in doing arts because it is a free discipline. The creator is always right about his creations since there is no "wrong" in expressing what is inside of him: all that comes from within is right in this sense. Its manifestations may be appreciated from others in different ranges but the power that has on the artist is what matters, as he is able to relief emotions and to construct them into aesthetic productions. Painting helps children to perfect their fine motor skills and handwriting (Christy 2010, 15), with older people may have the same qualities however in physical rehabilitative or psychological purposes.

Art therapy can also help to deal with anger processes since it has the qualities to relax and facilitate feelings to flourish. It is possible for clients to express irritation in drawings or clay molding instead of harming other people's feelings or physical being. For adults, working with arts as a treatment for anger allows them to experience different attitudes. Therapeutic approaches using art give context to anger, which is a defense mechanism against painful emotions (Liebman 2008, 170). These expressed conducts or behavior are analyzed and discussed together with the therapist in order to find methods to cope with anger. Following this idea, art may also be seen as a tool where to channel someone's fears or painful emotions such oppression or anxiety.

*“The art therapy part explores feelings, gives anger a context, examines patterns of behaviour and accepts some of the painful, shameful emotions which anger defends against”* (Law in Liebmann 2008, 167).

There is vast documentation and literature about the different artistic therapeutic approaches in practice. In early education the main considerations are the development of the brain and physical skills of children with the use of creativity. However, in adulthood, where art finds either a professional, hobbyist or therapeutic place there are almost unlimited categories for fields. Drawing, painting, sculpture or handcrafts are the most common fields used for art therapy. It is the therapist role to find which techniques are more suitable to work with the respective group or individual in the session. Since it might not be appropriate to suggest a specific category to a certain person, i.e. some might have issues with tactile or molding materials for representations, it is important to consider an initial assessment of the goals to be reached. In addition, art may not be the most appropriate form of therapy that a person might need (Edwards 2004, 74).

Painting and drawing are one of the most common techniques used in art therapy because the materials needed are easy to access. It allows the client to express freely and spontaneously. Clients are able to be in charge of their creations (Buchalter 2004, 75), which can also empower them to make decisions, however, for those whom deciding is difficult, drawing may provide them the opportunity to develop these necessary skills (ibid, 26). Sculpture adds a third dimension to explore; these techniques allow abstract thinking and provide clients to see different perspectives (ibid, 97). Other techniques that use costumes, masks or puppets open the doors to role-play and projecting ideas into their creations (ibid, 91), this may allow participants to explore interior feelings from outside perspectives of the person that the used object represents.

Humans have been using earth materials from prehistoric ages either to build shelter, home utensils or designing artistic manifestations. The use of molding materials is primitive and rooted at the origins of civilization. As stated in the Bible, the first man was created from “the dust of the earth”. This ancient material and its use are able to open different grounds in the work with patients. In addition, due to the special qualities of plastic materials, such as clay, its use assisting psychotherapy is extent. Because figures are representations of the inner realm, the connection between the material and the mental world is essential in art therapy (Sholt and Gavron 2006, 66).

There are different ideas about the significance of clay. According to Woltmann (1993), three-dimensional representation comes from early years when discovering the plasticity of the first materials available to touch (Woltmann 1993 in Sholt and Gavron 2006, 67). While other theory states that children develop from drawing lines to two- to three-dimensional representations (linear-graphic hypothesis), the global-modeling hypothesis demonstrated that, as children develop their products refine but at around the age of eight they move to two-dimensional forms due to their ambitions for complex representation (Golomb 1972, 1974 and Golomb and McCormick 1995 in Sholt and Gavron 2006, 67).

Modeling objects out of clay helps to produce thinking and allows client's to give meaning to the creations (Case and Dalley 2008, 69). Clay gives the opportunity to add another perspective in the creative process, as it is a three-dimensional matter the clients gain from developing thinking and problem solving mechanisms (Buchalter 2004, 104). When using clay or similar plastic materials the client has the opportunity to elaborate ideas during the process of creation. It is possible to shape and reshape the production by watching how the imprints affect the material. Under this light it is important to mention also that clay work allows elements of regression to earlier stages. People may mold food or early developmental sexual themes, which is common in past life phases'; adults can also represent different perspectives of the inner self (Sholt and Gavron 2006, 69).

As mentioned above, the nature of art as an agent for personal design and interpretation offers excellent qualities for this discipline. Used as a creative method, art gives almost unlimited opportunities to be explored; it is in the hands of the session manager and the participating 'artists' to provide different inspirational resources. Working in partnership with clients allows innovative forces to be nurtured because art is boundless and only limited by the participant's imagination. Art therapy, when performed in groups, facilitates the interaction of the participants and it is more appropriate for those persons who may have issues with one-on-one therapy (Edwards 2004, 79). Bi-directional feedback provides the art sessions with the right tools for improvement of current activities but also for future development. This can be seen also as a method to build rapport between people.

In addition, artistic methods used therapeutically allow undergraduate therapists such as social workers to put in practice creative thoughts for the improvement of client's well-being. Artistic activities have also the quality to provide the tools that may attract people to work together, which in essence create a positive atmosphere for communal participation. Social workers may benefit from these techniques since those can be used in different contexts and client groups. Whereas art therapy may involve figurative interpretation and imagination, the

manager has to be careful not to mistake the discipline with socio-drama, which is a separate category that does not rely particularly in the use of artistic techniques (i.e. painting, sculpting, handwork, etc.) but role-play and acting. Combination of techniques and approaches may be taken with caution and the social worker needs to review that the theory to be combined matches and serves the benefit of the clients and the session.

Connecting with others is not always easy, especially for those with verbal communication limitations. Communicating through arts may ease these barriers. When the verbal expression is not enough, delivering a message in other forms can be more effective. People look for meaning or messages behind a work of art; many are also interested in interpreting other's work and prove their understandings. Besides galleries and museums, art is exposed in the streets. Some people might consider public exposure of art as vandalism; however graffiti is a result of the modern society and culture. Often it is young people who may choose to paint in forbidden walls, but such manifestations are none other than expressions of creativity and capabilities in a rebellious manner. Artists such as *Banksy* use their creations as a method for self-expression and to expose the contradictions of the modern western society. Similar representations are common in America, particularly in South America where artistic murals can be seen in different cities. These creations represent the struggle of the people throughout their history, and may serve in a therapeutic way in the hope for a better future.

### 3.3.2 Art Therapy sessions in Villa Andante

In order to understand how arts are used therapeutically, the authors of the thesis assisted to art sessions conducted in Villa Andante. Regular observation material from art therapy was gathered during a period of almost three months in 2011. Throughout these observations it was believed on the possibility of familiarizing with arts as a therapeutic discipline in practice. Furthermore, building rapport between the students and the residents of Villa Andante was seen as the most relevant value. Assisting to the art sessions allowed also the clients to become familiar with the students, which would facilitate the future art session performed by the author of the thesis.

In addition, regular assistance to these sessions would also help the student to design the therapeutic art session to be performed as a part of this project. With the help and guidance of the local therapist it was possible to receive information about the discipline and its applications with older people. The opportunity of having a professional assisting the author was



remarkable; the therapist would help to compensate the lack of experience of the students in the field, which can help to achieve a greater success than working alone (Kapitan 2001, 23).

Participant-observation was the method used during the art sessions. It entails interviewing, group discussion and informal observation among other techniques (Kapitan 2001, 96). It was believed that using this method would provide useful and reliable information for the authors of the thesis: by observing the art therapy session from an outside perspective it is possible to leave its natural dynamics unaffected, therefore making the gathering of information reliable. Because the authors did not want to interfere with the session, the therapist reserved some time at the end of it in order to allow the observer to ask few questions to the clients about their experiences.

Even though there were abundant and varied comments throughout the art sessions, for the purpose of this thesis project the authors would limit to the insight given by the clients in relation to their experience with creative methods. While the clients experienced a positive and relaxed atmosphere in general during every session, they also opened themselves to share personal information that allowed the therapist to work with. During these observations the clients expressed different ideas and emotions. The observations expressed by the participants during the art sessions in Villa Andante provided valuable insight about their perspectives on this creative method. The relevant comments for this thesis project are detailed in chapter dedicated to results.

To conclude this section about art therapy it is important to mention the power that art has to provoke as well as serve for inspiration of appreciation. It may divide people; between those who might view Hieronymus Bosch as a fantastic artist, or the paintings in *Artistry of the Mentally Ill* (1922) as depictions of sick minds. It is not only a matter of taste. What is remarkable about art is that it triggers something within the person's mind or soul: it touches something inside of us, and that is what makes art therapy particularly interesting as a method for creative construction. It seems reasonable to believe that as long as human beings are able to create things (i.e. art, literature, inventions, etc.) and suffer from mental or physical struggle, art therapy will be a technique in use for future generations.

### 3.4 Exercise and movement

Exercising is not only a bodily function but it is also in the mind. Sometimes it is more important for the psychological well-being to exercise and that desire can be stronger than what

the body needs. When a person gets old the needs of the mind to experience exercising can remain. Therefore, elderly people living in care homes should still be provided with possibilities to move.

There are lots of research done on why old people should exercise and how do they benefit from it. There are many physical features that exercising supports and is able to even improve and heal. As much as there is research done on the physical benefits of exercising in the old age there is also research on the psychological benefits of exercising. To argue which one is more important to a person is not relevant but to point out the positive consequences an older person can have when exercising in a care center together with other inhabitants is one of the main features of our project.

Kaisu Pitkälä (2004, 27) refers to Paluska and Schwenk's (2000, 167-80) idea of distraction theory in which *"the exercising takes the mind out of unpleasant thoughts and bodily symptoms and it stimulates with positive thoughts"*. In other types of activities a person can get distracted to their own thoughts but when doing something physical, achieving this type of distraction becomes more difficult. In the same source, Paluska and Schwenk also present the hypothesis of social interaction. According to the hypothesis the people you become friends with in an exercising group have the most chances in raising your mood (Paluska & Schwenk 2000, 167-180; Pitkälä 2004, 27). This is an interesting argument that backs up the benefits of an exercising group.

### 3.4.1 Reasons for Exercising

There are many reasons why people exercise. Some people may exercise because it supports the importance of being healthy and feeling good. Other people do it just because it brings joy to them. People should be able to have fun at every stage of their lives. When a person gets older, the importance of having fun should not be minimized. The project group considers offering chances to experience "something fun" as a responsibility of the care professionals.

One big factor with taking up a physical exercising hobby in a team or group is the hope of getting friends. This idea still remains in the old age. It is commonly believed that old people are at risk of loneliness. Individuality is a strong feature of a Finnish society. A strange feature is that even when old people are living with each other's in care homes, they still do not socialize too much. In order to help the elderly people of forming friendships they should be

offered with group activities. In these activity groups, a person is given a chance to approach other people, socialize with them, and get to know them and to share his/her life experiences. According to Csikszentmihalyi (1992, 193, 213-214) people are the happiest when with other people, and the elderly people are happier when with their friends (Csikszentmihalyi 1992, 193, 213-214; Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 139).

The interest one had in exercising when they were younger still shows in their older days (Lehr 1992, 51-62; Suutamo et al 1999, 223). At the old age, the person will tend to continue with the chosen form of exercise that he/she has had previously in life because they are most familiar with it and it is a safe choice to go with.

Dance and movement activity was chosen as an exercise form to be implemented with the assigned clients. The authors made the decision on the exercise form without asking the clients preferences but consulted the working-life supervisors on the matter. It was assumed that most of the clients do have some type of experience either from dancing or moving during their earlier years, as it was popular to go to different types of dances in the 1950's in Finland. An approval of the exercise form was given from the project supervisors as they considered it to be a good creative activity for the clients. The biggest reason why movement and dance activity was chosen as the exercising form is its creative content.

*“Exercising in an instructed group creates opportunities for social interactions. One of the most significant reasons for a client to participate in an exercise class can be the possibility of meeting one’s friends in the group”* (Suutamo et al 1999, 241).

Important reasons that make people committed to attend an exercise class week after week are the enjoyment they get from it. When being associated with people whose company one enjoys, in the end it does not matter much what type of creative activity the people are engaged with. Sometimes the actual physical doing might not be as important as with whom it is done. For some people the results of the session attended remain as the main motivator factor but that combined with an enjoyable company is a double win.

Exercising is a good working method to be used with the elderly. It brings different physical and psychological benefits for the client’s well-being. It helps with depression, anxiety and social interaction. It empowers the client to have the self-mastery and the belief in one’s own abilities to move. It can make the client feel belonging to a community and as a member of a group. Many people would like to be social but they may need a reason for that. Attend-

ing an activity group is a perfect excuse to associate with people and to create connections with them. Exercising is a life-style choice, but even tough, if the person has not made this choice in his/her life before he/she can still be encouraged to move in the old days. Even a small amount of exercise can improve the clients' health and make them feel better mentally as well.

Exercising is a way to escape one's problems and worries. Once the person returns from the intense period of moving and exercising, a completely new view to how issues look can be achieved. Dancing and moving at its best is about letting go of the situation and allowing oneself to get sucked in to the moment and to the creative flow. Expressing one's own feelings and emotions through movement is liberating, and once they are delivered out from the psychological being the person can feel better. Dancing and moving is all about the person. It does not matter what is done and how it is delivered, as long as the person experiences the feelings and shows how these feelings guide the movement.

#### 3.4.2 Dance and movement

*“One of the confusions that abounds in many people's minds concerns the overlap between therapeutic dance and dance movement therapy” (Meekums 2002, 4).*

The authors would like to clear out the difference between dance movement therapy and therapeutic dance and movement. These two practices are completely different and sometimes they get mixed up with each other. The students are not going to refer to dance movement therapy as a practice since it is done only by qualified therapists. People who believe in its power to empower clients developed therapeutic dance from dance movement therapy. Those who practice therapeutic dance do not have the qualifications to practice DMT (Dance Movement Therapy) but they see the positive features of the art therapy and want to benefit it in their work with clients. Many of the elements in therapeutic dance are taken from DMT.

Due to the physical states of the clients the session will be conducted by sitting in a chair. German folk dance pedagogue Ilse Tuttin, established senior dancing around 1970, and she was also the person who later created sitting in a chair dancing. *“This dance form is especially designed for elderly people with weak abilities to move”* (Byckling 1998; Karvinen & Salminen 2004, 51). The space where the movement session is held has lots of chairs. Instead

of removing the chairs from the space they are made use of by making them part of the dancing.

Sherwood and Jefferey (2000, 21-44) discuss in Routasalo, Pitkälä and Karvinen (2004, 40) about the courage and self-esteem needed in physical exercising because a person needs to be able to accept mistakes and weaknesses in him/her. Dancing and movement require courage to follow the instructions and not being afraid of performing incorrectly. In artistic movement there is no correct or incorrect way to do exercises because everything is a reflection of how one interprets their understandings. This can be an odd concept to clients who are not familiar with artistic performing. Making them understand this may require several sessions.

*“Giving an individual self-mastery through being in charge of the body: and that this self-mastery can contribute to positive self-perception, body image, and self-esteem”* (Hanna 1988, p.19; von Rossberg-Gempton, Dickinson & Poole G 1999, 313).

When moving, the person is completely in charge of the movement produced. The instructions the instructor gives are guidelines and in the end the client can perform them as wished. The client will not be prohibited to move in the chosen way if it does not create danger for the client and others around. The elderly clients are not often given this type of self-mastery of their own bodies even though some of them may have strong desires for it. Through the movement exercises the clients are able to gain this mastery for a while, which supports their psychological well-being.

In medical terms the body needs exercising. In order to proceed to the wished direction one's body needs to have the conditions required in balance, muscular strength, and senses in the central nervous system, which coordinates everything (Hietanen & Lyyra 2003, 108). Dancing and movement exercises are a great way to improve one's level in balance. They challenge a client to use all the balance capabilities. Overall body control is very much needed in order to perform the exercises. By repeating challenging exercises which require an adequate level of balance a client will eventually experience an improvement in it.

Moving in a group makes one aware of himself/herself and also of others. Understanding the limitations, opportunities of space and the presence of other people makes the persons to

practise their senses. If being in a condition in which these abilities are inaccessible, the person can still benefit from the sessions in psychological ways.

### 3.5 Music

*“Music is enough for a lifetime, but a lifetime is not enough for music.”*

These are the words of Sergei Rachmaninoff, the Russian composer and pianist. (Sergei Rachmaninoff, 2011). Music, as it is described in dictionary.com is *“an art of sound in the same time that expresses ideas and emotions insignificant forms through the elements of rhythm, melody, harmony and color”* (2011).

Music plays a big role in everyone's life. Some people, however, benefit from it more than others. Music is experienced in different ways. Some recognize its benefits and others underestimate the importance and the influence it has in everyday life. Music is everywhere we go. It is listening, learning, dancing, relaxing, sleeping, and shopping. At an early age, music appears and is used for relaxation and can help people fall asleep. When a mother sings a lullaby, her voice helps the baby to relax and creates a safe atmosphere. In this way, the mother's emotions are transformed through singing. The child then learns how to sing in kindergarten and primary school and learns all sorts of children songs. One grows up and continues to hear music everywhere. Sometimes one relates to a song and sometimes just relaxes while continuing the daily life routines.

Scientists have studied the power of music in setting the mood and atmosphere in all kinds of situations. Music therapy is one of the best-known creative therapies that promote clients' wellbeing as it is considered a science and an art at the same time. According to Music Family therapy organization, music has been used as a healing tool for over 30,000 years.

Defining Music therapy can be very challenging because its definition differs from one therapist to another. The material read for this project shows that the definitions are all similar but different at the same time, especially, when it comes to one's own cultural and musical history (Bunt 1994, 8).

Therapists from all over the world have a tendency to agree that music therapy is the use of music to reach therapeutic aims with different target group (ibid. 8). In his book, Bunt mentions some of the best known definitions of Music therapy and introduces his own: *“Music*

*therapy is the use of sounds and music within an evolving relationship between client and therapist to support and encourage physical, mental, social and emotional well-being” (ibid. 8).*

Music can have a deep effect on elderly people’s life quality. According to Katariina Ronkainen, the director of Villa Andante, music is a significant tool to encourage the residents of Villa Andante to participate in important activities when other activities are limited or challenging for them. She also said that music has the power to motivate and relax, and it can be the means of communication for people, who are no longer able to communicate through language.

*“Creative Music Therapy is the art of creating music and rhythm in the moment” (Music Therapy Family Organization. 2011).*

Music can be very flexible. It can help the therapist build a relation with people of different ages whatever are their disabilities. It is an opportunity for the therapist to get closer to the client and build a relationship of trust inside which, he/she can deal with all sorts of problems and difficulties (Blunt, 1994, 24). The greatest part of music therapy is that the client does not need to be a professional artist in order to enjoy music, since the purpose of music therapy is not to teach people how to sing or how to play an instrument; it is more about reaching the well-being of the client.

In the past, music therapy has not been very frequently used with older people in Finland because of the limited number of research in the area. Another reason might be that the elderly people with psychic disorders were taken less seriously than younger people suffering from the same problem. Fortunately nowadays, it is becoming more known and more accepted as a new discipline worth trying in senior work (Some Ideas About Music Therapy for the Elderly, 2002).

Bunt states: *“Music helps us feel more human. It brings us into very close and immediate contact with the people around us and at the same time, connects us both with images from the past and predictions of the immediate future” (Bunt, 1994, 1).* Persons who suffer from dementia or Alzheimer for instance, using music in a therapeutic way can help stimulate cognition, enhance interaction and promote reminiscence, reduce anxiety and agitation. The biggest concern for elderly care center caregivers is the agitation and confusion among older people with dementia (Music therapy association of Columbia 2011).

Dementia makes communication ‘difficulties to the clients, but in many times some cases have shown that the people having dementia are still able to communicate via music by showing their body expressions, doing sounds and movement. An interesting case in Villa Andante, a client having dementia, does not speak to anyone in the residents and always by her own justified this approach. During one of the music therapy sessions, the therapist started to sing an old traditional Finnish song, the whole group followed him and suddenly this person came and started singing with a lowed voice, knowing the lyrics by heart. This case shows how music therapy has a profound effect on people with dementia, and how much it is important for people with memory problems, it brings their memories back even for a short time but still is effective in bringing back their memories related to their feelings.

Music is usually associated with some known experience, for instance, church song that can be known by heart as a person may learn it since a very early age and continue singing it during the whole life, this kind of popular or known music can be very easy to remember for a person with memory illness.

Communication is an important thing in order to live and communicate with others. For some reason or another, one may lose the ability to speak, thus the communication becomes ‘more difficult to establish. Most of the people who are not able to speak and cannot make others understand them are highly attempt to high levels of frustration and usually complemented by isolation and loneliness. Music therapy is a positive method for emotional and communication difficulties, according to a German poet called Heinrich Heine:

*“When words leave off, music begins”*

(Heinrich Heine 1797-1856, From Music therapy new discipline video YouTube)

Berlyne (1971) states: *If a work of art can be regarded as a system of symbols, we can go farther and conclude that art fulfills the additional criteria for being classed as communication”* (59). The use of music therapy with elderly can ease communication, especially for those who do not always feel comfortable expressing feelings. As language is a tool for communicating, music is also a form of communication through, which people can express themselves. Music is a form of auditory information, which is often compared to speech and language (Unkefer 2002, 43), according to Unkfer and Thaut 2002, the most remarkable difference between spoken and musical communication is lack referential meaning in music (ibid. 45).



Gaston states: *“Music is not needed if it communication could be made verbally”*. During any kind of music session, one does not think about the way the brain functions. Clients may not be able to think about it either. Some people use only one side of their brain, either the left side or the right. This depends on the activity one practices, but most people tend to use both parts of the brains all the time. Some of the activities like music involve the use of both parts of the brain, especially when playing an instrument or singing a song. Using the whole brain capacity helps one make the best of the learning activity and makes information retaining easier. Different clinical studies have shown how music is processed by different parts of the brain, not like language, which is centered in one part only. Music can be a pre-verbal or a non-verbal brain function.

Old people are referred to therapy for different reasons. The therapist will concentrate on improving the quality of their life by setting positive goals. The goals are many and depend on the different needs of different people. Diverse sample goals are mentioned in B. Hanser’s book and which are the followings: *“improving behaviors to meet communication, cognitive educational, physical, psycho-social, emotional, daily living musical, leisure, vocational, spiritual, and quality of life needs”* (Hanser 1999, 168).

Music therapy sessions can be planned for individuals or for a group. After getting to know the client or the clients, the music therapist designs a session according to the needs of the person(s) in question. Music therapy organization has set some examples of objectives for music sessions: to manage stress, to alleviate emotions, to express memory, to improve communication, to develop self-esteem, and/or to promote physical rehabilitation and social interaction, which can play a big role during the therapy.

A music therapy session is planned depending on the clients’ needs. Therapists may plan an activity that involves the individual’s stories to motivate the client. For instance, a familiar song taken from the client’s family collection would not be threatening for the client. This way, the therapist can help the client to be more open for emotional stimulation.

Many studies have shown that listening regularly to similar types of music can help reduce chronic pain, high blood pressure and stress. It can also facilitate relaxation and concentration. Music therapists have different types of approaches like singing, playing instruments, etc. Sometimes, movement is used as a warming up session and also lyrics discussion during the sessions. B. Hanser states that there are ten stages that a therapist usually goes through in music therapy sessions, these stages may occur in the following order:

Referral to Music therapy:

- A first Session: Building Rapport
- Assessment
- Goals, Objectives and target Behaviors
- Observation
- Music Therapy Strategies
- The music Therapy Treatment Plan
- Implementation
- Evaluation
- Termination

Hanser called this model the data-based model as it focuses more on how to build a session therapy according to clients' needs and how to concentrate on planning, implementing, evaluating and terminating the treatment (ibid. 169).

In conclusion, music therapy is evidently an active approach in the care of older people, Kirkland states in *Music Therapy in Alzheimer and Dementia Care* article:

*“Music is often an enjoyable art for most people, which makes it a medium of therapeutic value”* (Music Therapy Association of British Columbia, 2011)

Even though music therapy is still a young field and many strategies and skills still have to be discovered in order to promote more benefits of music therapy as a treatment, still, music has its own unique value. It is the human spirit's voice as Frohnmayer (1994) called it in his article “Music and Spirituality” in the *International Journal of Arts Medicine* (26-29). Music is better than words when it comes to expressing one's self, it is “...*the passions and emotions that inexorably accompany human life*” (Music Therapy Association of British Columbia.2011).

#### 4. Evaluation Methodology

Observation based research, guided self-completion questionnaire “survey”, participant observation, informal discussions with employees and clients (Bryman 2008, 257) and translation theory were the different methods used for gathering and translating the data, which enabled the students to describe and evaluate the whole project. The three main project goals, S.W.O.T. and S.M.A.R.T are the key evaluation methods.

Guided self-completion questionnaire is the type of survey that the client can fill out on his/her own pace. The answers chosen as significant to the client are also the most important to the interviewers. Some questions are asked in a way that gives the clients plenty of freedom to express their opinions (Bell 1987, 138). The authors of this thesis believe that this method applies the best in this project. There have been many discussions around the advantages and disadvantages of these methods. In this case the group has consider the client’s sides and, hence, managed to select the most valuable questions for this specific target group. By using this method the client will avoid getting tired from the interview. Respondents may preview all the questions before answering; they are free to choose the questions they prefer to start with. According to Bryman (2008), the order of the questions has an effect on the respondents’ answers (218). For this reason, the questionnaire was made in a way that it is possible to be filled out in any chosen order. If needed, a nurse was involved to assist the respondent’s participation. The nurse’s intervention role was of a facilitator in this interview method. The convenience of guided self-completion questionnaire was seen as the best choice to receive sincere answers, as the students’ presence might affect the client’s answers (ibid.).

According to Denscombe (1998), there are essential routines in order to design a questionnaire. The students defined the purpose of the thesis questionnaire on the basis of what they learnt from his book. To put it brief, the purpose of the questionnaire is to get as much information as possible from the target group in order to be able to evaluate the creative methods sessions in Villa Andante. The student group evaluates the information gathered from the questionnaire and uses it in the process of project evaluation.

The authors of this thesis project have chosen qualitative methodology since the aim in this stage is to describe, understand, and through the subjective descriptions of client’s participants, they will arrive at a meaning contextualized in time and space (Research methods Knowledge Base, 2011). It is said that the qualitative methodology looks for the “why” than

the “how” of its subject through the analysis of the information gathered. This method is used to better understand the people’s attitudes, motivations, concerns, culture etc. It is also said that the major reason for researchers to use this method is to become more familiar with the topic interested in. Among many formal methodologies used in qualitative approach, informal materials are also involved in the analysis (QSR international, 2011).

The qualitative method used is the phenomenology approach which focuses on the individual perceptions and conditions of participants with whom the project is engaged with. This approach is occasionally considered as a philosophical perspective after its extended history in different social research fields as psychology, social work and sociology. It is described as: *“Phenomenology is a school of thought that emphasizes a focus on people’s subjective experiences and interpretations of the world”*. By using this approach the students will is to define the clients’ perspective of creative methods in Villa Andante (Research methods Knowledge Base, 2011).

The authors used the qualitative methodology because it was believed that it allows more detailed analysis by including a real life experience of the clients of Villa Andante. As it is described in the article *“Comparing quantitative and qualitative research”*, qualitative approach gives the researcher a clearer image of what to expect in the research compared to quantitative approach (Experiment-Resources.com, 2011).

The students assume that the project is functioning according to the normal code of ethics in social research; the information collected will not be published. Furthermore, names and identity numbers are not written, as questionnaires are anonyms. The participants’ names will not be written in this thesis report and if needed the information gathered can be showed to the participants and the working life organization.

It was thought that participant observation could be one of the most useful methods in one part of the project as well, since getting familiar with the clients was a required option to take in order to plan sessions for them. To participate in their activities during an extended period of time and to involve group discussions (informal interviews) has helped the process of direct observation. Through the observed activities, it is possible to collect discussions, opinions and few personal stories. After implementing the scheduled sessions, the students will receive empirical data on which the results will be based.

*“By participant observation we mean the method in which the observer participates in the daily life of the people under study, either openly in the role*

*of researcher or covertly in some disguised role, observing things that happen, listening to what is said and questioning people, over some length of time”* (Descombe 1998, 200).

It was also said that participant observation could produce better information than other methods to reflect the details (202). Gathering data by observing and interviewing participants allowed the authors to screen the answers. The authors selected the relevant data in order to have clear and significant results. The method used was a written document, which included the answers and comments of the participants.

As mentioned previously, one of the data gathering methods used in this project is the qualitative data gathered from the questionnaire, which has nine questions. The questionnaire was given to all Aria residents and 12 out of 15 questionnaires were returned. After each question, there is a large empty space for the answers. The interviewees are free to write whatever comes to their mind. The last question is designed for further suggestions or free comments about the current creative methods sessions.

The first three questions were designed to make the evaluating part easier for the students; since the data collected after the interview will help the students to divide the responses in two groups: the residents who are interested in participating in the sessions, and those who are not.

1. Are you interested in therapeutic or creative activities?
2. Do you participate often in these therapeutic or creative activities?
3. What type of previous experience do you have with therapeutic or creative activities?

The following two questionnaire questions deal with the respondents' awareness and familiarity with therapeutic activities. It is important to know if the participants are familiar with the sessions and their potential benefits.

4. What motivates you to participate in therapeutic or creative activities?
5. What do you like about the therapeutic or creative activities in general?

The next questions were designed to guide the respondents to express their feelings and to tell about any possible changes they experiences.

6. Could you explain how the therapies are affecting your life?
7. What does the therapeutic or creative activity make you feel?

Through the last couple of questions the authors wanted to know which of the sessions are the most enjoyable for the elderly group, from the answer, they can evaluate the effectiveness of the sessions.

8. From the different sessions (music, movement, arts) which activity did you like the most? Please explain why.

The last question is an opportunity for the respondents to give on the therapeutic creative methods sessions. The authors want to give the participants an opportunity to express their ideas spontaneously, thus further expectancies could be forwarded.

9. Is there anything else you would like to comment on about the present activities or any suggestions for future ones?

As it is shown, open-ended questions were used to allow the respondents to decide on the length and the sort of matters they wish to raise in their responses (Denscombe 1998, 155).

In the project, the authors decided to plan, implement and evaluate three different creative method sessions: art, music and movement. As all of the sessions were planned and described (see appendixes), each session had different aims and goals related to the main project objectives. Every student planned a therapeutic innovative session to implement with the target group. During the sessions, varied information and data was gathered.

Translating qualitative data is demanding and it needs special attention and skills in order to keep the same answer the respondent wrote. Translating is not a straightforward procedure since it is not possible to be sure that there is an official correspondence between two or more different languages. According to Gordon (1985) translation theory, or also called communication theory, includes observation as an important factor for translating, since every communication act has three dimensions, which are: speaker, message and audience (Translation Theory, 2011).

By using the previous three dimensions of the translation theory's one may not lose so much time. In this project the students were aware of the three characters of communication: the

participants in Villa Andante are the speakers, the answers written in the interview sheet are the messages and the audience is the students.

Semantic or sometimes called lexicon approach is used when working with the words and their individual meanings. It is known that in many languages one word has number of different meanings. Semantic theory has two components: semantic field and semantic context. He stated:

*“By semantic field, we mean the full range of ways the word has and can be used. By examining the field of possible meanings, we begin to narrow the options”* (Translation Theory, 2011)

Considering that the questionnaire replies are in a written form, its interpretation of semantic meaning allowed the group to discuss the answers in a precise context. Since the authors are fluent in Finnish language but not all are native. This required a meaningful understanding of Finnish older people’s motivations and involvement for example with nature or their activities preferences.

#### 4.1 SWOT and SMART analysis

Albert S. Humphrey developed SWOT analysis in the 1960-1970 as he led a research group at Stanford Research Institute. The background to SWOT arose from the need to find out why project planning and implementation failed (SWOT Analysis, 2011). SWOT is the first stage of planning and it helps the planner to focus on key issues.

*“SWOT stands for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Strengths and weaknesses are internal factors. Opportunities and threats are external factors”* (SWOT Analysis, 2011).



Source: SWOT Analysis. 2011.

The implementation of the sessions followed a self-evaluation and SWOT analysis because assessing the outcomes of the sessions and the feedback gathered from the clients was necessary. SWOT method of analysis was employed to specify the process of the project as a whole in addition to other evaluation methods.

#### Strengths:

- Three different areas of expertise and responsibility (art, music, movement) for each student, therefore deeper theoretical work could be possible.
- Varied perspectives about how to achieve the project goals. The students believed that compromising their different views would give wider results.
- Good team work when preparing the project. Work relations were based on trust and understanding.
- Good partnership with the working-life partner: The working life organization has found to be as interested on the topic as the students.
- Clients were friendly, willing to work and easy to approach: A target group that is easy to work with and looking forward to have the sessions was assigned to the students.
- Personal interest about the main topics (personal knowledge and background on creative method's fields): the students have chosen the project parts according to their personal interests, and therefore they can benefit from previous experiences.

#### Weaknesses:

- Not enough working experience on older people as a client group.
- None of the group members is a native English-speaker: this might be an obstacle making the project's writing process fluent.
- Only one student is a native Finnish-speaker: it required extra attention during the session's performance for those who are not native.

#### Opportunities:

- To develop Villa Andantes services by giving feedback and project results: this project gives the opportunity to provide results and clients feedback to the working life partner so that their services can be ameliorated and developed. Also, new ideas for the future therapeutic sessions could be promoted.



- To improve the authors' skills and professional competences: thru this project, the students would improve their personal and professional skills.

Threats:

- Lack of professional experience and practical skills needed to work with clients with mental difficulties: no previous experience, lack of knowledge of the project client's diseases and their behavioral patterns.

S.M.A.R.T analysis assists on setting objectives to the actions that one is launching. With these objectives, S.M.A.R.T. will help to measure what the planned services hope to be achieved (Smart Objectives, 2011). These objectives are mutual agreements between the group members about specific work outcomes to be achieved in a certain period of time (Management For Performance (MPS), 2010). In addition, *"SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time"* (Smart Objectives, 2011).



Source: Smart Objectives 2011.

S.M.A.R.T Objectives for the thesis project:

Specific: To prove the validity of therapeutic creative methods.

Measurable: The client feedback gathered by performing and observing sessions.

**Achievable:** Based on the theories and previous studies from the field, the students believed that the application of creative methods will provide the answers needed for this project.

**Realistic:** Even though there were limitations, the authors of this thesis knew their own capabilities and skills in applying creative theories.

**Time:** The student group initially planned to achieve these goals by the end of 2011.

In order to evaluate the achievement of the thesis project's objectives, the components of S.M.A.R.T. analysis assisted the authors to confirm personal perceptions of SWOT analysis results. This evaluation is described in detail in chapter five.

#### 4.2 The process of the project

Choosing the thesis topic on creative methods is due to the fact that the authors believe that these approaches have a healing power. The interest of this study group is to prove the positive outcomes of creative therapeutic sessions. The reason why older people were selected as a target group was because they had enough time and interest to participate in these sorts of sessions. The researchers believe that by doing this thesis project, experience and knowledge about elderly care will be gained.

After choosing the topic and client group, several elderly care places were contacted. Villa Andante Espoo was interested to cooperate with this project idea since it shares the same views about the benefits of creative activities. The elderly care home has active creative art groups in their weekly schedule. They also look to improve their current activities and to promote better services with the help of the project results.

The project group members began the process by familiarizing with the organization. Afterwards the need to identify the client group became relevant. And after several meetings and discussions held in Villa Andante, information about specific target group was received. The students attended the already existing art and music therapy sessions in Villa Andante and by observing the sessions, gathered information about the clients and the session contents. This information helped the researchers to plan the content of their own sessions and the research methods to be used.

Aria is one of the living sections in which Villa Andante building is divided; it was assigned to the project group by the working life supervisors. This group consists of regular residents of the care home. There are 15 rooms in the section but at the moment there are only 13 inhabitants. There are two short-term rooms and one room for couples. All the group members are women and the oldest of them are 101 and 103 years old. Half of Aria members participate weekly in the art activity groups.

The third step, after analyzing the opportunities and the group to work with, was choosing the research method and performing interviews. A questionnaire form was designed in order to know the perspectives of the clients in therapeutic creative sessions. In addition, informal interviewing techniques are used such as group discussions. Based on the data gathered from the questionnaire results are presented to prove the group's hypothesis on creative methods.

The following and third phase, observing the art activity sessions was relevant. From the knowledge gathered at these sessions the group was able to plan the contents necessary for the sessions to be performed. Necessary background theory of the subjects was researched. From discussion with the working life partner the students were able to draw the plan objectives for the sessions to perform. Some practical considerations about the materials needed, scheduling, securing the safety of the clients and their access to nurse's assistance. The reason for planning the session's content is to confirm the validity of the client's feedback.

The authors' task for the fifth phase was the translation from Finnish and Swedish to English, of the data gathered. Despite the fact that all of the students are talented with languages, the translation seemed different than what they were used to previously. The final decision was to work together as a team and translate the answers without involving others. Different literature has been researched in order to find a simple and useful theory. This step, which the students have called Informal translation, has taken enough time to be done. An important aspect done in the translation process was its validity; by comparing the original answers with the translated ones the students became sure about the accuracy of the translation.

The last phase in our process was to evaluate the project as a whole and its components. In this part the group have evaluated the achievement of goals in the individual sessions as well as the goals set of the project. The evaluation methods used are S.M.A.R.T., SWOT, and evaluation of the project goals, as well as presenting the results of the feedback.

## 5. Project Evaluation

### 5.1 Project goals, SWOT and SMART evaluations

As explained in the second chapter, the background of the thesis, the project had three main goals:

1. To improve the social and physical well-being of the residents of Villa Andante
2. To enrich the existing creative methods used in Villa Andante
3. To evaluate the validity of therapeutic creative methods within the project and its implementation

To begin, the students aimed to improve the social and physical well-being of the residents throughout the process. To evaluate the achievement of this goal it was important to think about the project's phases: getting familiar with the working life partner, getting to know the residents by assisting in their daily activities, planning the student's sessions by considering the theory and client's needs, and finally, implementing such sessions. This goal was also included in each session objectives list. From the student's point of view, this goal was achieved. The feedback from the clients, their signs of enjoyment and social interactions during the sessions conducted confirmed this.

In addition, the authors were able to add variety to the existing creative sessions of Villa Andante. Thru the student's performance of therapeutic creative sessions, it was possible to give the clients variation to their schedules. The group achieved this goal by enhancing the contents of current physical activities by introducing movement therapeutic approaches. The client's feedback about these methods indicated their interest; they wished for more movement sessions in their weekly timetable, and some even asked more physically demanding exercises. Furthermore, as innovative themes and ways to conduct music and art therapeutic sessions were introduced, such as clay work, positive feedback was received from the clients. The students recommended the session's participants suggesting Villa Andante's supervisors to repeat the activities they enjoyed.

In order to evaluate the validity of therapeutic creative methods and the project's implementation it was necessary to gather together all data collected. This goal was achieved at the final phase of the project process since the authors were able to have the evaluation

only after the individual implementations. Evaluating the project as a whole and its implementation as a part of the entire project was not a simple task. The students had to put a considerable amount of effort doing this evaluation by considering the questionnaire data analyses, the participant's feedback of the sessions and observing the clients. The students recognized that the author's individual self-reflection and self-evaluation, even though more demanding proved to be quite efficient for the achievement of this goal. The authors believe it was possible to validate therapeutic creative sessions performed in Villa Andante. As mentioned previously, the feedback from the clients was essential for this. They demonstrated that the project's theme (the application of creative methods) and its therapeutic components (arts, dance and movement, and music) allowed them to improve different aspects. The client's perspectives about these methods indicated that they enjoyed them and remarkably, they expect therapeutic creative practice to still be implemented in the future. For the authors, it was pleasant to see that these methods still give hope to people at their final life stages.

Moreover, as mentioned in chapter four, SWOT and S.M.A.R.T. were the main tools for planning and supporting the focus on the project's key matters. The authors agreed that such methods were the most suitable in order to understand and make decisions before and during the project's implementation. With the assistance of these methods, the authors were able to grasp the progress of the project, which would have guided them to its evaluation.

SWOT evaluation analysis was the principal method used at the beginning of the project; with the assistance of the template and the group reflection on these ideas, the students were inspired to have a proactive approach instead of depending on habitual reactions. These methods were followed from the first students' project plan. For instance, the strengths and weaknesses were proposed in a way that allowed room for reflection about the opportunities and threats within the project. To understand each component included in SWOT analysis in depth, the students required plenty of time for individual reflections about those components as applied to the sessions organized as a part of this project.

The strengths and weaknesses content allowed the group to evaluate not only the personal working methods with older people, but also the individual skills that were applied to this project. For instance, even though designing sessions with therapeutic contents was familiar for the authors, implementing certain themes with older people was new for the group. All these factors supported the planning process and encouraged the students to acknowledge which possibilities may negatively affect the assessment of the sessions, and most importantly its implications of the project. Another inconvenience confronted by the authors was the lack

of physical presence of all students in the same country; it was possible to overcome this using modern communication technologies. Furthermore, after recognizing eventual weaknesses and possible threats throughout the project, the author's intention was to focus on the positive aspects of the project. This intention was seen more relevant by the authors since it allowed concentrating effort on what can be done for the benefits of the clients and the learning process. It was also possible to have a fresh and enthusiast attitude for the project from these reflections.

The evaluation of this project has been a complicated task. For this matter, the ideas explained above are corroborated for coherence with S.M.A.R.T. analysis:

'Specific': The validity of creative methods could be proved since the participants showed a good interest for creative activities. Moreover, in the sessions implemented in Villa Andante, the students were able to improve the social and physical well-being of the target participants: Aria residents. Also, the existing creative methods were enriched with new propositions, and at the end proved through the evaluation.

'Measurable': The client's feedback gathered from the questionnaire, the session implementation and the participant observation provided assessable data for the students. Regarding such information, the authors were able to determine whether the project outcomes were valuable. For example, during the implementations, the number of clients assisting to the music and movement sessions was higher than in the arts session, which allowed the authors to understand the interest of older people on such activities.

'Achievable': Based on the theories and previous studies from the field, it was believed that the implementation of creative methods would provide answers to the project aims. Supported by literature and previous studies, creative methods' goals have been previously achieved. For this reason, the students believed in their capabilities to achieve the goals set for the project.

'Realistic': Limitations were acknowledged at the beginning of the project. Other limitations that appeared during the process demanded the students to find methods to work with. A realistic inconvenient the students came across during the implementation stage was the impossibility of affecting the clients willingness to participate. However, the authors were optimistic that the project would provide useful quality data and insight about older people's perspectives either from observations or session implementations.

'Time': The authors structured a timetable for the project and the achievement of its goals. In addition, the student's time management did not always succeed due to lack of physical presence in the working life partner's country. Therefore, time-consuming long-distance communication and co-ordination was needed. This was a challenge in the beginning of the process.

## 5.2 Author's evaluations of the project sessions

In the following, the authors of this study self-evaluate their performances in the implementation of this thesis project. The evaluation and assessment of the goals achieved during the independent sessions complement with the experiences gathered from these sessions.

### 5.2.1 Arts session by Santiago Morales Coscio: October 28, 2011 at 10.30.

In order to evaluate the Art session performed as a part of this thesis project it is important to keep in mind the goals set to be achieved. These include development in different categories (mental processes, spatial imagination, and hand-finger movement), relaxation, positive group bonding and empowerment. After the session, the author evaluated the achievement of these objectives using the observation notes from fellow authors and the personal experience of conducting the creative session.

It is the opinion of the author that the key objectives proposed for the session were met: In consideration with the demands and suggestions from Villa Andante's personnel, the activity of molding with clay helped the clients to activate and develop their hand and finger movement. Comments from the session's participants such as "*it's nice in here*" or "*very nice to use the fingers*" help to corroborate this. In addition, feelings of achievement and development were experienced during the session and expressed by the clients; artistic expression belongs on the inner-self realm so deeply that whatever the artist creates is always 'right', therefore, the client's creation could produce a sense of achievement as the materialization of their own ideas. This idea is linked with the notions of empowerment as the client is given the tools for his own development.

According to the ideas of good practice the session was conducted in a client-centered manner. This principle was considered in order to bring the client's personal ideas into

action, and also to increase the rapport between the group and the student conducting the session. Regarding this idea it could be mentioned that the objective of creating a positive and relaxed atmosphere was achieved as the participants in the art session showed interest and enthusiasm in molding clay. Some persons mentioned this was a new and encouraging activity for them. They were given propositions about the possibilities for their clay creations but ultimately each participant had to decide freely what to create. The clients demonstrated a positive reaction after deciding what they would do. Further, the author encouraged the participants to propose Villa Andante's art therapist to have more clay molding sessions or related activities.

Because the activity followed the methodology of artistic therapeutic sessions (which includes warm-up, performance, appreciation and discussion) it was logical for the clients since they had followed the same procedure with their art therapist. This was possible thru continuous assistance and observation of the art therapy sessions offered in Villa Andante, which allowed the author to get familiar with the theoretic methodology in practice and also with the clients. However, it is the opinion of the author that a specific finger warm-up should have been suggested to the clients during the clay molding session, which could have activated the blood circulation of their hands, instead, the warm-up was conducted by discussion, introductions and getting familiar with the material.

Furthermore, among the many creative and therapeutic opportunities offered by the activity, the use of third-dimension artistic tools such as clay presented the chance for mental processes development. In this part it is notable to mention that aims about spatial imagination and mental associations were achieved. As described in the theory, clay allowed the participants to create artifacts in a spatial context that allowed them to exercise their brain by observing their creations from different angles. In addition, the participants were able to explain some ideas and associations of their creations: a client gave meanings to the creation and invented a story about the figures she designed, while another person associated the created clay animal with ideas about Africa and traveling far away.

All these achievements for the arranged art session were possible first of all due to the kind participation of the Aria's section residents, and also by the review of art therapy literature and theory. Designing an artistic creative session was equally educational for the professional development of the author as it was motivational and pleasant. Conducting the session was a challenge in itself as the topic of clay molding was new to the author. Nevertheless, the guidance of Villa Andante's art therapist and the observation of her sessions helped to achieve all client-related objectives. Besides that, the personal objectives of the author and



the aims for this thesis as a project were possible to achieve. In other words, by conducting the arts session it was possible to gather information about the experiences of older people with creative methods that would provide the data for this thesis evaluation. In addition to this, it is also important to mention that valuable knowledge about the author's abilities were learned: regarding the skills necessary for leading groups or putting creative methods in practice it can be said that even though it was a positive experience, more training is needed. In the process of conducting this project the author also reaffirmed his future interest for academic specialization in the fields of therapeutic methods of music and arts. The deepest interest for further education of these fields is what has motivated this thesis project.

In sum, the author is confident that the therapeutic art components of this project have given valuable insight about creative methods and the perspectives of older people. The achievement of the objectives set for the art session, the valuable feedback received from the clients and the observations of fellow authors in addition to the personal experiences earned after its arrangement help to confirm this. The author, due to such positive experience, is optimistic to continue his personal and professional development in the study of therapeutic client work approaches.

### 5.2.2 Movement session by Mervi Kupila: November 9, 2011 at 10:30.

The session was implemented according to the plan and it covered all the activities planned. The time when the session took place was not the best possible one. It was too early since some of the clients felt tired and were sleeping in their chairs. Also since the session was right before their lunch, some clients were already hungry and were eating fruits. Some of the clients and members of the staff were already familiar with the idea of sitting in a chair dance. Those who were not familiar with it were introduced to it and the others received a wider understanding of what it can be. The instructor used scarves and a dance built on a story to give a bigger picture of all the types of movement one can do while sitting in a chair.

The session planner did not reach this flow-effect with our activity since the clients had to concentrate too much on following the movements. The fact that the movements can be executed in a more creative way from the participant's own vision was not emphasized enough. The outcomes would have been different if the dances had been repeated more as a result of them becoming familiar to the clients. When the movement routine is familiar it becomes easier for a client to concentrate on the feelings in the body and in the mind and

that is when the flow-type of effect can be reached. When doing the scarf-dance, all of the clients wanted to have a scarf and to participate. This tells about their desire to be involved with the activity. The participants were following the instructor with signs of enjoyment, apart from one client who decided to take the scarf and put it around her neck. All the clients were encouraged to participate in the activities as they wished. The client, mentioned before, was being initiative and following her own decision of how to express the dance. Some of the clients were laughing while doing the dances and others chose to do the routines in their own creative ways without following so much of the instructor. This action was supported and wished as an outcome as it supports the creative being in a person. The story dance was too difficult for some of the clients to follow but repeating the routine helped the clients to understand the connection with the movements and the story better.

The session did succeed in supporting the physical, psychological and social well-being of the clients. The exercises made the clients move and to use their physical abilities. Not everybody wanted to move their body parts and therefore the physical goals were not met with these clients. However, it was voluntary for the clients to participate in achieving the physical goals as it was with the other goals as well. The responsible student says that the session was able to succeed in achieving the psychological goals the most. Even though many of the clients did not participate in the moving it was still visual from their appearances that they were enjoying the session. Also their feedback given afterwards confirmed this. The social aspects were left with the most little support as most of the clients sat still and quite in their chairs and did not interact with each other's. Yet, the session planner believes that for some clients, just to be around with other people in a shared activity situation is a social happening.

In the physical goals the session planner only partly achieved the "knowing one's own abilities to function". Since not all the clients even tried to participate in the movements, they could not have known their abilities on how much they could do. Yet, there was an example of how exercising is proven once again to be independent of age and on physical condition. The willingness to participation can be one of the biggest factors. This was seen when a one-armed lady participated and followed the exercises and session along.

"Bringing joy and refreshing experiences" was achieved with most of the clients. With some clients this was visually seen and with some it came out in the feedback after the session. The session did not directly prevent the clients from depression but gave them tools to engage themselves in activities that can prevent them from getting depressed. With those clients who did fully participate in the activities, the session was able to strengthen their

emotional expressions and to make them experience individuality and creativeness. Achievement was also reached in alleviating physical loneliness since the clients who participated were surrounded with other people. Emotional loneliness was also alleviated with those clients who participated the session on the cognitive level as well. The session gave opportunities to act in different roles as the clients were provided with the story dance.

However, the clients were not able to get into the roles of the dance, as they had to concentrate on following the movements. Repetition of the routine would have brought better results in this goal. The responsible student believes that all the clients who participated in the session experienced belonging to a community just by taking part to a joint activity in their care facility. Those clients who did fully participate in the session created contact with other clients and by doing that their relationships with each other were strengthened, at least for that moment. If repeating the sessions with the same participants they would be able to create stronger connections among them. The session supported the clients' initiative and independence by giving them the choice and ability to participate in the session as they wished. The clients were also given the permission to leave the session at any point. With this approach the clients were given self-mastery and decision-making power of themselves.

Some clients were more energetic than others, which say that age should not be overlooked. Few clients even demanded harder exercises saying; *"I would like to raise my arms more. The exercise could be harder so I can feel it but it was still very nice!"* and *"these exercises where good for all the body parts"* ("Haluaisin nostaa käsiäni enemmän. Liikkeet voisivat olla haastavampia, jotta ne tuntuisivat mutta oli kuitenkin oikein mukavaa!", "nämä liikkeet olivat hyviä kaikille kehon osille".) Since the group who participated in the session was not coherent the dances were too easy for some and too difficult for others. The designer of the session was not able to create the type of session, which would have served both the advanced participants and the less experienced ones.

After the session ended the clients stayed in their chairs, waiting for something more to happen. This can tell that they liked the session but there could have been more to it. As one client said *"it was very good, but a little bit short"* ("Oli oikein hyvä, mutta vähän liian lyhyt"). Another client commented, *"So many movements and I always had to think about the next movement before I understood the first one"*. ("Niin paljon liikkeitä ja minun piti aina ajatella seuraavaa liikettä ennen kuin ymmärsin ensimmäisen liikkeen"). A client was asking if we have something more planned for them. This question communicates their interest to participate in more sessions of creative methods. Another client was asked to go to a meeting

with her physiotherapist but she refused because she wanted to participate in the movement session and asked if they could meet after the session. The session planner promoted this type of movement therapy sessions successfully as it turned out to be very popular and wished session among the clients. If the financial decisions allow, it is possible that this type of therapy form will be seen in Villa Andante in the future.

### 5.2.3 Music session by Sarra Ben Ammar: November 10, 2011 at 10:30.

The process of implementing the session went as it was planned in the beginning. All the songs were played in order and the timing went as it was measured. The session started at 10:00 on Thursday the 10<sup>th</sup> of November. The room was open for everyone and all the clients were welcomed to participate. The number of clients participated was 14, the students were expecting more since in the usual music therapy sessions in Villa Andante, more clients were participating. The session started with a small introduction about the students and the aims of the music group, since Finnish is not the mother tongue of the student implementing the session, she had to prepare a short and simple explanation about how the session will be conducted and done.

The introduction included all of the parts, warming up, singing and ending phase. The session had six songs and they were divided by categories according to the objectives. The warming up piece is a non-lyrics song only melody which is a Finnish folk music “Troka” called “Klockar Aleksanderi” means; the objective behind this starting song was to give the clients an opportunity to use their imagination by following the rhythm and the melody. Unfortunately the objective was not achieved, since it was continuously interrupted as more clients were coming, the implementer of the session was not disturbed because more clients participate more interaction can be build inside the group.

When the warming up song started, the students did some movements by her hands, pretending to be an orchestra master and this was to show the clients that with some imagination we can feel the rhythm inside of us. Two of the clients were following the same movements and the others were just listing to the melody without doing anything. After the warming up song, Christmas songs were played since the student thought Christmas is soon and it is good if she creates a Christmas feeling together, where the clients can remember and discuss about Christmas time.

The songs that were chosen are: “Sydämeeni Joulun teen” by Joel Hallikkainen, “Enkeli Taivaan” by Kaijokoo Joulukirkossa and ”En etsi valtaa loistoa” by Jutta Urpillainen a Finnish Minister, this song was chosen for two reasons: the first is to share the story of a Finnish Minister singing a Christmas song and the second is to introduce the minister by the song if the clients are not following the political news of Finland. The student has also thought that it can be funny for the clients to listen to a song talking about not looking for glory and the singer is now having a minister position after the last elections.

At that moment of the session, the session’s guider distributed all of the three Christmas songs lyrics, so that everyone can sing along. One important thing was forgotten while planning the music session was the Swedish-speaking clients, many of them were complaining that they cannot read Finnish and they end up sitting and listening.

After the Christmas feeling and before the end, one old and famous song called “Miljoona Ruusua” by Katri Helena was played; almost all of the clients knew it by heart and sing along. The last song, as an end up activity called “Talikkalan markkinoilla” by Meiju Suvas, the students thought in order to achieve the B- goals of the session’s objective, an enjoyable song will make the clients happy and they will be able to continue discussing with each other’s. To evaluate the session, the implementer needed to go back to the main objectives and evaluate each goal. Since, two groups of goals A and B were set from the beginning the student started by evaluation the first group and then the second. The first goals were to create an enjoyable, safe and trustful atmosphere during the session, sharing the music and bringing the memories. This goal is hard to be evaluated since it was not possible for the student to know if it was achieved or partly achieved. The implementer believed that the rapport that was built between the student and the group made them experience group bonding. Only one client left the room because she was not feeling good another said, *“If she would have stayed, it surely would have helped”* (“Jos hän olisi jäänyt, olisi varmaan auttanut”); another client was very interested in the activity and even tried to persuade a partner to join the session instead of leaving the room. The student believes that the effect of the music was perceived, as all the clients were relaxed while listening and singing.

No one can be sure about the reason of not having any discussion between the clients, the student thought about the session that might haven’t been planned in a way that the clients have time between the songs to discuss or maybe because the clients were feeling tired. As a result, no discussion has been created during the session, some clients were commenting but no real discussion about a specific subject with each other’s. One client after the warming-up song independently wanted to comment: *“I like to give opinions, folk music is good”*

("Kansanmusiikki on kivaa"). Some clients did not show a big interest for the session, the student has wondered either due to their health problems that they could not show us their motivation or they only wanted to sit and enjoy eating bananas with some good music. As a whole process, almost all of the goals have been achieved besides the interaction between the clients.

For the B goals, the session was planned not only for the time having the session but also for the whole day left after the music group. The B goals were: Discussion and sharing stories between the clients, relaxation and being together. The achievement of those goals was expected since the clients had lunchtime after the session and they all went together eating, the student never knew if they have discussed or shared some stories but she hopes so. She also hopes that the clients felt relaxed the whole day.

As a general description how the session end, during the last song some clients began to leave without giving further explanations, the student thought maybe they were tired, bored or they were hungry. The ones left did not recognize the last song, even though it is an old and famous one and the implementer expected them to recognize, but it was not the case. A client commented that it was difficult for her to recognize it and for that reason she could not sing.

As a conclusion, Sara the planner and implementer of the music session does believe that the session went good and that the clients enjoyed it even though for some reasons she could not see or understand what they felt because nothing was said to her. Also the previous art and movement session has helped her a lot in motivating the clients to participate. An important and good result she had from the previous sessions was that the clients became so familiar with her that in the last music session with them she did not have to guide them too much.

## 6. The thesis process experience

Having Villa Andante as a working-life partner was a positive experience; its staff and residents gave the students more motivation to enjoy the chance to become involved in the project process.

To briefly describe the process itself, the students used harmony as a metaphor to describe the process. Since the beginning till the end, the process has been in a harmony melody way, which usually sounds pleasant to the ear because of its balance between the consonant and dissonant sounds (Wikipedia, 2011). This balance has occurred in the whole process and a balance between tense and relaxed moments has been necessarily measured by all of the three students.

The experience of working with Villa Andante was considered both successful and educational. The residents and the staff members expressed strong support for the activities and everyone in Villa Andante have treated and helped the students since the beginning of the process.

As it has been described previously, in a harmonious process different situations occur, and it is in the duty of the students to find a balance between those situations, the stressful and relaxed moments. One important opinion shared with Villa Andante representatives was that it could have been easier for the students to move around the facilities, if they could have had assigned a nurse as a host to be with them throughout the whole process. The student's work done in Villa Andante was mainly supported during the implementation phase; the students had a friendly and helpful staff member assisting the participants during the three sessions implemented.

The working-life partner gave the students necessary instructions and enough freedom to perform their work, which made the process easier. Observing the existing creative therapies in Villa Andante encouraged the students to think about innovative ways to plan their sessions. Also, the feedback from clients and the empowerment methods used in the current art therapy sessions has shown how effective these sessions are. In other therapeutic areas the students received little guidance but were still able to plan and implement sessions on their own. The positive feedback from the participants showed good results, and putting theoretical approaches into practice demonstrated that creative therapeutic approaches were appropriate methods to be used in this project.

The students' co-operation during the whole project was built on trust and respect. Since the beginning of the process they put some rules in order for everyone in the group to follow and be able to work on his/her part by his/herself and at the same time be supported by the others if needed. Some parts of the project were shared equally between the students as described previously in this paper, and when it came to implement and evaluate, all of the three students set and work together. All the students made the project evaluation while the session evaluations were made individually, based on the other student's observations.

Since all of the students knew each other's and have been studying the last three-year in the same class, they all knew how to communicate and make decision when needed. Mainly the decisions were made about the meetings and tasks sharing, also deadlines were put in order to make the work well done and organized. It helped the students to go through the process step by step and understand each part of the thesis.

The first period of the project, after the thesis contract, the students met virtually on the Internet, they used Skype conference once a week during two months. During the conferences, the students were telling each other's' about their tasks, what they have done, they discussed about important theories they have found and how they can implement and use them with the target group, also they explained what they want to do in each stage and why and if a problem accrues how it can be solved. These meetings helped the students a lot to think loud together and discuss about what needed in order to accomplish every task.

When coming to the student attitudes that can influence the way they interact inside the group, the rules that have been put in the beginning helped them to be sincere and discuss about everything that comes to their mind, sit together and look at the problem and solve it so that it does not affect the work. They also were very comprehensive since all of them have different cultural backgrounds and they all have their own beliefs on what is wrong and right and how things have to be done. Luckily, all of the students were open to listen and take into consideration the others' ideas and suggestions which has made their work more valuable.

The first phase of the student co-operation was in the early beginning of the process, when they had to put the main project objectives and tasks. Then it lasted until the end of the project and will last till the thesis will be proved.

All of the students are proud of themselves, since everybody knows how challenging and demanding it is when working in one thing with other people and when all the efforts and



energies are put in one paper at the end. The students are thankful to each other's as well as to their working life supervisors and school tutors for all of the support they gave during the project.

## 7. Results

After conducting the previous project stages it was possible for the authors to draft the final conclusions for this thesis work. The project components that allowed this are: the collection of the questionnaire replies from the clients; informal observations and group discussion of art therapy sessions; and the experiences gathered from the performance, observation and evaluation of therapeutic sessions.

The replies from the questionnaire were assessed in a table (appendix 1). The table was created to represent a part of the final thesis results containing replies of the questionnaires given to the clients. The quotations from the questionnaires and the observations have been edited and unofficially translated by Kupila and Morales. Contrary to theory regarding translation the answers had to be edited into full sentences. The reason for this was to enable the reader to understand the answers better. The analysis portrayed in this part intends to place the voice of Villa Andante's residents in a manner that makes the recurring ideas expressed visible. The components of this table, that is to say, the words of the client's, allowed the students to process the information that lead to the following thesis results.

According to the data gathered from observations and group discussions after current art therapy sessions offered in Villa Andante, the authors could say that the residents enjoy these sessions and feel empowered by them. Clients believe that artistic expression helps them to deal with deep thoughts and emotions while at the same time promote creativity and social interaction (original answers in Finnish in appendix 1). The clients expressed varied positive emotions during these observations. A female client mentioned the following, which was agreed by other participants:

*“Doing these art things, drawing for example, reminds me that I’m here (in this world)”*

*“I can release my anger or bad thoughts on these things... doing this I can take them out of my chest”*

*“It’s not important how long you live but how good it is your life. It’s about quality”*

(Unofficial translation by Morales)

When asked about her shyness in arts, a female client mentioned the following:

*“I’m not artistic but rather athletic (...) I used to swim when younger so I have different talents”*

(Unofficial translation by Morales)

At the end of one session, the authors had again the opportunity for group discussion. To the question “What did you like the most about this activity?” some clients replied the following:

*“It was funny and good to get together, it’s good to share bad things because it can be a relief for you”*

*“It’s good to have these ideas of places to draw, you can travel back there in your mind”*

(Unofficial translation by Morales)

When asked, “Did this activity help you to remember these places?” -Since the idea behind the session was to draw familiar or favorite places- some clients replied:

*“Yes, (drawing) is a trip in memories about the past, you have to think of the place and then you remember how nice it was being there”*

*“It helps me think about nice places, like, where other people live, where I lived myself. I drew animals, a sun, a house, wishing for a good pleasant day”*

(Unofficial translation by Morales)

From these client’s quotations and other valuable information it can be said that the experience of assisting to the art sessions was the most relevant tool to gather information about art therapy. Since many of the residents of Villa Andante suffer dementia and other memory related issues, getting their opinions during the session was important. In addition to the questionnaire sent to them, observation allowed the students to get information about their experiences, as the session was still fresh for them.

Regardless their age, Villa Andante’s Aria residents believe that it is useful to develop the existing services. When summarizing their general perspectives, an interesting result from

client's opinions was that they were able to see themselves as having a future where they are doing different activities on their late days. For this reason, they insisted to accommodate more activities in the future. A client expressed this idea: *"(I suggest) nature related activities, walks and outdoor excursions"*, or *"(I suggest) outside and inside games"*, wishing to improve current services.

The questionnaire form has been a valuable tool in this process since it allowed the study group to understand more aspects of the client's perspectives. In general lines, the clients perspective's about creative methods was that they perceive therapeutic activities as good because such sessions bring positive things to them on different levels, being the personal the most important.

*"I would like to raise my arms more. The exercise could be harder so I can feel it but it was still very nice!" and "these exercises were good for all the body parts"*

(Unofficial translation by Kupila)

Furthermore, the replies to questions about motivational factors to participate in creative therapeutic sessions provided interesting insight. Even though these answers were varied, the clients expressed that social participation and personal development (either physical or psychological) are among the most important motivational aspects. Other questions, about future wishes and free comments received many replies. The authors were able to use the client's recurrent perspectives of motivation and future wishes to construct the analysis content part of this thesis.

In relation to their preferences and connections with artistic and physical therapeutic methods, it was difficult for the authors to evaluate single opinions gathered from clients. Nevertheless, in addition to such comments, the questionnaire assisted the students to gather a clear picture of these questions. As general results the respondents stated that current creative music activities were their favorite during the project's implementation (2011); however it was not mentioned in detail if the meaning was active participation in music therapy sessions or private enjoyment of music. The clients also manifested having enjoyed arts and crafts throughout their life, therefore having had more experience with that field. Regarding the future, Villa Andante's residents mentioned they see positive to have the possibility to enjoy more movement and exercising related activities outdoors.

*” (Coming to sessions motivates me) the company of other people, the joy of creating and maintaining the physical health”*

(Unofficial translation by Kupila and Morales)

It is possible to affirm at this stage that the clients manifested satisfaction with the creative therapeutic activities offered in Villa Andante. They expressed that among all current activities, music therapy is the one that they enjoy the most. The clients' interest to participate in therapeutic activities arises from their interest in developing their personal, physical and mental well-being. In addition to this, the clients mentioned that other important features among the mentioned are social elements of participation and personal development, as joining together in a group with other residents was valued as positive. These perspectives have led the authors to believe that creative methods, besides their therapeutic components, are a valid method to create positive experiences in older people.

Regarding the project part of this thesis, it is possible to say that performing creative activities for older people have been a valuable learning experience. Besides, this component allowed the authors to gather information about the client's perspectives on these activities. In the sessions, they mentioned that creative therapeutic methods enhance and develop their social, mental, and physical capabilities. It is interesting to say that in comparison to the arts session, the movement and music sessions received four times more participants; however some clients fell asleep during these activities. The authors believe this was due to the fact that the activities were performed early in the morning and that music has a great power to induce relaxation. Overall, and considering that the target group for the sessions was new for the students, the authors received encouraging and positive feedback from the participants as they wished for more and similar activities in a near future (detailed in chapter 5.2).

*” (Creative activities effect in) increasing self-esteem and refreshing the mind. Brings change to the sometime boring care home living”*

(Unofficial translation by Kupila and Morales)

In relation to the theories, the following results were found. The results support the previous study done on relations between community and psychophysical well-being by Hyppä and Mäki in 2002. According to the observation results, the artistic activities did offer experiences and feelings that brought more light to the clients' psychological well-being. Cohen's and Tornstman's theories of qualitative change which happen in a person once getting older were

supported by the results of the data gathered. By observing the clients it was clear to see that they were free from their previous societal roles and that Cohen's belief on age bringing depth to expressing was also seen.

Since the movement session was conducted only once and it contained new material to the clients, the achievements with Paluska and Schwenk's (2000) distraction theory were difficult to measure. The session did serve in taking the clients' mind out from unpleasant thoughts but that was mainly because they had to concentrate to follow the instructions carefully. The decision of sitting in a chair dance turned out to be a good choice since some of the clients were too tired to stay awake and many of them had conditions that made their moving restricted. More repetition of the movement session would have been needed in order to fully evaluate if the theoretical references are adequate. Yet the single session showed signs of creative flow, enjoying self-mastery of the body and expressing feelings and emotions through movement.

Furthermore, after considering the achievements of this project from creativity and movement, it is necessary to be mentioned that certain aspects of therapeutic art theory were revealed throughout this study. Within this project, the application of the theoretical background used in for this study demonstrated that therapeutic art assists in exploring the client's emotions (Law in Liebmann 2008, 167). Clients expressed that negative feelings such as anger were relieved with the use of arts: *"I can release my anger or bad thoughts on these things... doing this I can take them out of my chest"*. Besides this, older people used their artistic creations as a method to travel back in their memories; by drawing and designing, clients were able to give meanings and open also positive emotions. Whether the paintings were abstract or complex, it allowed discussion about good times in the past between the client and the therapist.

The applications of art, particularly clay, in a therapeutic manner showed that mental processes become activated. Imagination and meaning assignation to the creations was seen during the performance of the sessions. The three-dimensional component of clay work helped to produce thinking by allowing the clients the possibility to solve problems from different perspectives (Case and Dalley 2008, 69; Buchalter 2004, 104). In addition, clay molding demonstrated to be an efficient tool also for the development of the client's finger and hands movement and coordination, as expressed by the clients after the art session: *"it is nice to exercise your fingers"*.

Giving the clients an opportunity to get together and become closer to each other's during the music session was an important factor in promoting social interaction. Referring to what Build stated in his book about how music can build a trustful environment where, a mutual respect between the clients is created the following result supports his idea; during the music session, the older people got a very good opportunity to join each other's in a same atmosphere based on trust.

Music as communication tool is well described in the theoretical framework part, as Bunt stated in his book how music eases communication, and how through it one can express him/herself and interact with others. As well a person having dementia is still able to communicate via music by showing body expressions, producing sounds and movements. This approach has been seen during the music session, when the clients where singing together in lauder voice. One interesting case was a lady in her last phase of dementia, she does not hear neither talk very well anymore, and while singing she was reading the lyrics and trying to follow the songs.

Relaxation is always referred when listening to the same type of music, when the client is familiar to the song, a trust is developed and relaxation can be achieved. It was challenging to see if the relaxation was occurred during the music session since some of the clients were not familiar with the songs even though they are quite old and famous. With the further desire for having more music sessions, familiar songs could build a relax environment for older people.

As Bruscia stated in his book "*Improvisational models of music therapy*" (1987) close interpersonal relationships can be created between the therapist and the clients. The sessions showed that creative methods are active and they require involvement form the worker and the client. With creative methods, the worker is able to build connections with clients.

In summary, the residents of Villa Andante experienced the creative activities as joyful, which enhanced their social interaction among each other. Moreover, the clients where able to express other ideas in the questionnaire answers: feelings of boredom from living in Villa Andante were revealed, for these reasons different activities help them to release from such feelings. As mentioned above, the residents wished for more and varied indoor and outdoor activities and exercising such as gaming, and also for more contact with nature by trips or gardening.

## 8. Ethical Considerations and implementation principles with clients

The authors would like to state that we respect the individuality, self-esteem, self-determination and privacy of the clients, their families and the workers involved with all the aspects of our thesis work. Our work follows the ethical guidelines of Laurea including the promise of confidentiality in which referred to the Section 5 of the Act on the Status and Rights of Social Welfare Clients (812/2000). We follow the rules and regulations of the working life partner. The research is client-centered and is based on everyone's free willingness to participate. Our thesis work does not commit Villa Andante's personnel to any practical actions but we wish for a positive approach to working in co-operation with us.

Our approach in working is client-centered. Client's wishes are heard, their individuality, self-determination and freedom of action are respected, their physical stages are respected, and their privilege for privacy is taken into account. We will listen to what the clients have to say and we will let them finish without interruptions. We aim to create the feeling of a community in which everybody is equally respected and given their place. We do not try to place ourselves above the client. We welcome the clients' ideas and are willing to change the direction of a session. The clients may have good ideas on how to do something differently or they would prefer another type of activity more to what we have planned. When we give them the power to effect on what will happen that will empower the clients greatly. We also aim to create an environment that is both stimulating and secure for the clients to participate in. The environmental effects can be reasonable in a physical and sociological experience of a client. Therefore it is important that the atmosphere in the sessions supports the positive interactions so that the clients can gain confidence and trust from people around them.

The anti-oppressive element of partnership and power relations are seen in our actions as following; we focus on the equal treatment and respect of the clients and the care staff. Our activities are planned in cooperation with the care home supervisors. We will support and encourage the clients to participate in the art session activities. We emphasize the voluntarism and self-mastery in making their own decision on everything concerning the clients. Their trust is difficult to gain over such a short period of time. We aim to achieve this with encountering the clients with respect and getting familiarized with them when ever attending their art therapy sessions or visiting the care home. We aim to have equality in our own power relations to the clients and to avoid oppressing them in any ways. If this requires letting go of some of the objectives or aims for the session then so be it.



In reference to the anti-oppressive practices' concentric models of empowerment and the three levels of feelings, ideas and action, we found the following features in empowering the clients; Client's suggestions and opinions are taken into account when planning the activities. The clients are asked to state their opinions and give feedback on how they experienced the artistic sessions. These results will be recorded and transported when planning a future session for them. The final decisions are however done by the professionals who will organize the future sessions. We students facilitate confidence and trust by providing a safe and comfortable environment for the clients to participate in activities and to express themselves freely. We encourage the clients for individual artistic experiences in which they can concentrate better on the self. The activities also support the communal experiences together with others, which are the more social part of the activities. We aim at promoting better well-being in the society by enhancing the physical and emotional health of the clients. We aim to work in a matter of increasing every client's self-respect. We also aim at reducing the clients self-blame, awaken a belief in their personal power to be in control of their own circumstances and in more concrete, their own bodies. We aim to increase every client's self-confidence and self-respect by encouraging a client to interpret the form of art in the way that he or she feels is the right way. We respect any client's refusal to an activity and equal treatment of all the participants.

## 9. Discussion

The purpose of this thesis was to prove within a project, if creative methods were valid tools to be used in elderly client work on the social welfare work field. For proving this the study group has used experimentation since it allows finding the right tools to be applied for the specific client group.

The sessions completed in Villa Andante were successful. The sessions and the questionnaire's results support the students' belief in the creative methods to be effective techniques, such as allowing self-awareness thru self-expression, in working with elderly. These approaches are essential for both the workers professional development as well as the clients' personal development.

When discussing about the theoretical framework the students found a clear connection with the practical activities and outcomes of the project. The clear connection of proving the validity of the arts in practice was reducing loneliness, increasing the social interaction and well-being of the clients. These were the most obvious features that appeared when interacting with the clients and reading the questionnaire results. Other outcomes that were found, social, psychological and physical aspects, also work as beneficial features in the clients lives.

The artistic theories addressed the issues of the three main themes of well-being, motivation and effects and activity wishes that were formed by the questionnaire answers leaving out the last theme wishes for future. The theories talk about how creative activities support well-being; they bring effects and have motivational factors that encourage the clients to participate. No theoretical connections were found with the last theme, it being about the elderly than creative activities. However, when considering the risk of loneliness, which can later lead to depression, the clients wish for more activities in order to prevent loneliness from happening.

The group's project was supported by many different theoretical sources that have been divided between the group members, which allowed the students to plan the whole project and at the end understand the results better. The division of the three different arts forms, which are movement, art and music, was useful and allowed the students to familiarize themselves with the different arts therapies in depth. Confirming the student's belief by the theoretical framework gave the results of beneficial experimentation of the client group. The clients'

questionnaire answers are in line with the theories arguments of the positive features the creative activities give the group. Those arguments have also been confirmed by the planned sessions. As it is mentioned in the results and the evaluation chapters in this paper, the good amount of attendance the students had in their sessions showed the clients interest for the specific art activities. Especially when referred to the movement session as it is not available in the care home in that form.

Promoting sessions that match the clients' daily lives needs was planned according to the art, music and movement theories. Related to the mentioned theories, empowering and increasing trust and self-esteem could be achieved if the sessions would have been repeated several times.

Some learning objectives, such as finding our personal abilities in both professional and personal development areas (i.e. acquiring the necessary skills that will prepare us professionally for future working life scenarios), or learning more about the work with elderly clients by using creative activities in planning, implementing and assessing sessions for them guided the study group during this thesis.

The implementation of this project showed also that students were able to produce quality sessions for clients. This study reported that older people benefit greatly from creative activities. Therefore, applying creative therapeutic methods by performing projects with other different client groups is encouraged in the future by the authors. It is important to bring in consideration that perhaps having a complete client-centered approach might bring different results, as this study group followed the suggestions of the working-life partner's personnel. Conducting a longer research or more focused in a specific creative therapeutic method is also supported for potential study.

The suggested further study, could include spending more time with the clients by having several meetings for instance, once a week for a longer period of time. This approach gives more opportunities to know the clients better so that one can observe and notice what they enjoy the most, what are their interests and if they maintain or develop in the change of time. This recommended further study could advice the researchers to have weekly sessions with the clients in which different art forms would be represented and experienced. New forms of art could be introduced and the clients could also perform a showcase of their works in the end of the process. This would also enable a deeper research about the clients' wishes about creative arts activities.

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## Appendices

- Thematic analysis table
- Time-table
- Questionnaire form
- Research approval certificate (Tutkimuslupahakemus)
- Session plans

### Appendix 1 - Questionnaire analysis table

	Well-being	Motivation and effects	Activity wishes
	Social, psychological and physical aspects.	Self-development, joy, social and recreational aspects.	Movement and nature related activities both inside and outside.
Client 1	“(Minua motivoi) toisten ihmisten seura, luomisen ilo ja kunnon säilyttäminen”.  ”(Motivates me) the company of other people, the joy of creating and maintaining the physical health”.	”(Vaikuttaa) virkistävästi ja itsetuntoa kohottavasti. Tuo vaihtelua tylsään laitoshoitoon”.  ”(Effects in) increasing self-esteem and refreshing the mind. Brings change to the sometime boring care home living”.	”(Ehdotan) ulko -ja sisäpelejä”.  ”(I suggest) outside and inside games”.
Client 2	“(Saa minut tuntemaan) hyvää vointia”.  ”(Makes me feel) good”.	“(Minua motivoi) kunnon ylläpitäminen”.  ”(What motivates me is) maintaining the health”.	
Client 3	“(Saa minut tuntemaan) iloa”.  ”(Makes me feel) enjoyment”.	”(Minua motivoi) uusien asioiden oppiminen ja samanhenkiset ihmiset”.  ”(What motivates me is) learning new things and the presence of like-minded people”.	”(Ehdotan) luontoon liittyvä toiminta, kävely j-a ulkoiluretket”.  ”(I suggest) nature related activities, walks and outdoor excursions”.
Client 4		“(Minua motivoi) toive hyvästä olosta ja että kokee virkistystä”.  ”(What motivates me is) a wish for feeling good and experiencing refreshment”.	

Client 5	“( Saa minut kokemaan) haasteita ja onnellisuutta”.  ”(Makes me experience) challenges and happiness”	“(Minua motivoi) kehitys”.  “(A motivation factor for me is) development”.	“(Ehdotan) ympäristöterapijaa (ulkona ja sisällä), puutarhatöitä ja tilan luomista”.  ”(I suggest) environmental therapy (outdoors and indoors), gardening and creating spaces”.
Client 6		“(Luovat työskentelytavat) ovat mukavia”.  “(Creative methods) are nice”.	“(Ehdotan) sisällä tapahtuvaa toimintaa niin kuin esimerkiksi savitöitä”.  ”(I suggest) indoor activities like for example claywork”.
Client 7			“(Jag föreslår) mera musik” “( I suggest) more music”.
Client 8		“(Minua motivoi osallistumaan se kun) ei ole muutakaan tekemistä”. (Vaikuttaa siten, että) vähentää tylsyyttä”.  ”(What motivates me to participate is that) there is nothing else to do”. “(Effects so that it) reduces boredom”.	“(Ehdotan) että olisi mahdollisuus liikkua, ei vain istua huoneessa”.  ”(I suggest) that there would be a chance to move and not just to sit in one's room”.
Client 9			“(Ehdotan) liikkumista luonnossa”  ”(I suggest) exercising in the nature”.
Client 10	“Auttaa minua ajattelemaan mukavia paikkoja (...) toivoen hyvää ja mieluista päivää”.  “It helps me to think about nice places (...) wishing for a good pleasant day”.		
Client 11	“Pystyn vapauttamaan vihani tai pahat ajatukseni näihin asioihin... tämän tekemisen avulla pystyn ottamaan ne pois rinnaltani”.  “I can release my anger or bad thoughts on these things... doing this I can take them out of my chest”		
Client 12	”(Minusta on) ihan kiva sormilla näprätä”.  ”(I think that) it is nice to exercise your fingers”.		

## Appendix 2 - Time-table

First meeting and presenting our project

Sending the thesis contract

Target group information is given to the group

Villa Andante signs the project's contract

Getting familiar with the clients of villa andante. Sessions information and initial observations

20/4: First contact with the organization

28/4: First visit to Villa Andante

24/8: Meeting with the organization

1/09: Music therapy

6/09: Art Therapy

8/09: Music Therapy

13/09: Art Therapy

15/09: Music Therapy

20/09: Art Therapy

22/09: Music Therapy

27/09: Meeting + Session Art Therapy+ Signed the research contract + Nurse Interview

29/09: Questionnaire sent

30/09: Confirmation + questionnaire are handed out

11/10: Art Therapy

18/10: Art Therapy

25/10: Art Therapy

28/10: Art Session by Santiago Morales Coscio

4/11: Thesis plan presentation

9/11: Dance and Movement Session by Mervi Kupila

10/11: Music Session by Sarra Ben Ammar

### Appendix 3 - Questionnaire Form

#### Perspectives of clients on creative and therapeutic activities organized by Villa Andante

1. Are you interested in therapeutic or creative activities?
2. Do you participate often in these therapeutic or creative activities?
3. What type of previous experience do you have with therapeutic or creative activities?
4. What motivates you to participate in therapeutic or creative activities?
5. What do you like about the therapeutic or creative activities in general?
6. Could you explain how the therapies are affecting your life?
7. What does the therapeutic or creative activity make you feel?
8. Between the different sessions (music, movement, arts) which activity do you like the most? Please explain why.
9. Is there anything else you would like to comment, maybe about the present activities or suggestions for future ones?

#### Asiakkaiden näkemyksiä luovista ja terapeuttisista aktiviteeteistä Villa Andantessa

1. Oletteko kiinnostunut terapeuttisista tai luovista aktiviteeteistä?
2. Osallistutteko usein näihin terapeuttisiin tai luoviin aktiviteetteihin?
3. Minkälaisia aikaisempia kokemuksia teillä on terapeuttisista tai luovista aktiviteeteistä?
4. Mikä motivoi teitä osallistumaan terapeuttisiin tai luoviin aktiviteetteihin?
5. Mistä pidätte terapeuttisissa tai luovissa aktiviteeteissä yleisellä tasolla?
6. Osaisitteko selittää kuinka terapiat vaikuttavat elämäänne?
7. Mitä terapeuttinen tai luova aktiviteetti saa sinut tuntemaan?
8. Eri aktiviteettien välillä (musiikki, liikkuminen, taide) mistä aktiviteetistä pidätte eniten? Tarkentaisitteko.
9. Onko mitään muuta mitä haluaisitte kommentoida, ehkä tällä hetkellä meillä olevista aktiviteeteistä tai ehdotuksia tulevaisuudelle?

### De boende perspektiv om de kreativa terapeutiska aktiviteter i Villa Andante

1. Är du intresserad om kreativa terapeutiska aktiviteter?
2. Deltar du ofta till dessa kreativa terapeutiska aktiviteter?
3. Hurdana erfarenheter har du tidigare om terapeutiska aktiviteter?
4. Vad är det som motiverar dig att delta till denna terapeutiska aktiviteter?
5. Vad tyckte du om terapeutiska aktiviteten?
6. Kan du förklara hur dem här terapeutiska aktiviteter har påverkat dig?
7. Hurdana känslor skapar den här terapeutiska aktiviteten inom dig?
8. Vilken av dem här olika aktiviteter (musik, rörelse, konst) tyckte du mest om?
9. Har du något annat kommentera/lägga till? kanske några förslag?

## Appendix 4 - Research approval certificate (Tutkimuslupahakemus)



### TUTKIMUSLUPAHAKEMUS

13.09.2011

Tämä tutkimuslupahakemus esitetään Villa Andantelle koskien Laurea ammattikokeakoulun opiskelijoiden (Mervi Kupila, Santiago Morales ja Sarra Ben Ammar) tekemää lopputyötä. Haemme tällä vapaamuotoisella hakemuksella lupaa haastatella, havainnoida ja toteuttaa kokeillisia ohjattuja ryhmähetkiä Villa Andanten asiakkaille saaden tietoa heidän kokemuksistaan taideryhmien toiminnasta.

#### **Tutkimusluvan hakijoiden edustaja**

Nimi: Mervi Kupila

Sähköpostiosoite: [mervi.kupila@laurea.fi](mailto:mervi.kupila@laurea.fi)

Oppilaitos: Laurea ammattikorkeakoulu

Suoritettava tutkinto: Bachelor Degree in Social Services

#### **Tutkimuksen ohjaaja**

Nimi: Laura Eskelinen

Työnimike: Hoitotyön päällikkö

Toimipaikan nimi: Villa Andante

Toimipaikan osoite: Kattilatanhua 6

Puhelin toimeen: 040 455 9650

Sähköpostiosoite: [laura.eskelinen@mediaverkko.fi](mailto:laura.eskelinen@mediaverkko.fi)

#### **Tutkimuskohde**

Vanhukset; palvelu -ja virkistystoiminta

## **Tutkimuksen aihe ja toteutustapa**

Laadullinen tutkimus Villa Andanten asiakkaiden kokemuksista taideryhmien toiminnasta. Tutkimuksemme tarkoituksena on haastatella ja havainnoida taideryhmiin osallistuvia asiakkaita ja toteuttaa heille taide-aktiiviteetti tunteja.

## **Tutkimuksen taso ja tutkimustapa**

Taso: AMK

Tutkimustapa: haastattelut, havainnointi, testiasetelma

## **Aineiston suunniteltu keruu-aika ja valmistumisaika**

Alkaa 15.9.2011 Päätyy 31.11.2011

Valmistuu 30.12.2011

## **Tutkimuksessa käytettävät tiedot**

Tarvitsemme tilastollisia taustatietoja asiakasryhmästä, jonka kanssa tulemme suorittamaan tutkimuksemme.

## **Tutkimusaineiston käyttö**

Tutkimusaineistoon kerätyt asiakkaiden tunnistustiedot poistetaan ennen analyysivaihetta. Tutkimusaineisto säilytetään julkaisua varten ilman tunnistetietoja. Digitaaliset ja kirjalliset tunnistetiedot hävitetään.

## **Eettiset näkökohdat**

Tutkimusmenetelmissä kunnioitetaan ihmisten yksityisyyttä, oman-arvon tuntua ja itsemääräämisoikeutta. Tutkimus noudattaa organisaation sääntöjä ja käytäntöjä. Tutkimus on asiakaslähtöistä ja perustuu jokaisen vapaaehtoisen osallistumiseen. Tutkimus ei sitouduta Villa Andanten henkilökuntaa mihinkään käytännön toimenpiteisiin, mutta toivomme positiivista suhtautumista yhteistyöhön kanssamme.

## **Sitoumukset ja allekirjoitukset**

Sitoudumme siihen, ettemme käytä saamiamme tietoja asiakkaan tai hänen läheistensä vahingoksi tai halventamiseksi taikka sellaisten muiden etujen loukkaamiseksi, joiden suojaksi on säädetty salassapitovelvollisuus emmekä luovuta saamiamme henkilötietoja sivulliselle.

Luovutamme valmiista tutkimusraportista yhden kappaleen korvauksetta Villa Andantelle osoitteeseen Kattilatanhua 6 02330 Espoo.

Paikka ja päivämäärä

Allekirjoitus

12.9.2011

## Appendix 5 - Session Plans

### Movement session plan- Kupila

#### Objectives;

The clients are being provided with opportunities and tools from which they can create something artistic innovatively. A client described her feelings when she dances in Leonie Hohenthal-Antin's interview: "*Something happens in me when I dance which lifts me above the every-day life*" (Hohenthal-Antin 2006, 34). That is the feeling that the session would like to give for the clients to experience. The flow-type of effect when the person is fully concentrated to the activity so that he will lose the awareness of time and place. Succeeding in this will be hard to measure but it is still considered as one of the objectives. The clients will dance and move in a creative way and that can reach the described feeling of the flow.

A goal is to introduce dance and movement to the clients and to the workers. This session also aims to encourage the care facility to provide similar sessions in the future if experienced as beneficial by the clients and the staff. If the practical session will not turn out to be successful, it has still provided lots of material to support the use of movement and dance with elderly clients. With the guidance of a qualified and an experienced instructor this creative activity can provide lots of benefits. The main objectives of dance and movement are to promote physical, psychological and social well-being of the clients.

#### Physical goals:

Promoting joint mobility.

Knowing one's own abilities to function.

Strengthening the ability to move with concentrating on balance.

#### Psychological goals:

Are divided into

##### a) goals in emotional life

1. maintaining mental health and preventing and healing depression.
2. strengthening emotional expressions.
3. experiencing individuality.
4. feelings of achievement and strengthening self-esteem.
5. supporting the physical self-image.
6. bringing joy and refreshing experiences.

##### b) cognitive goals

1. increasing information and knowledge about one's own physical abilities to function.
2. exercising abilities in memory and reasoning.
3. exercising creativeness.

#### Social goals:

1. alleviating loneliness.
2. supporting in making friends.
3. giving opportunities to act in different roles.
4. supporting independence and initiative.
5. strengthening the social relationships.
6. supporting in taking a initiative and experiencing belonging to a community. (Karvinen 2004, p.62).



Considerations for the content of the session;

Contents and goals are expressing, experiencing, moving creatively, relaxing and increasing social interactions. When planning the content of the session, the following features need to be considered;

1. Some client will most likely have slow speed in reacting to things. Therefore it is important to use slow and peaceful movement.
2. Giving feedback makes the client feel that you have noticed them and their efforts in the session. Since we aim to empower our clients it is good to concentrate on the positive feedback but also to point out less positive features that may cause negative consequences health wise for example a client performing a movement in a way that it can cause harm in their health. The feedback can also be given in between the exercising which can raise general discussion on the topic.
3. Clear use of tone so that everyone can hear and understand the instructor in their best abilities.
4. Visibility of the instructor, everybody needs to be able to see the instructor so that they can follow the instructions as precisely as they can.
5. Short and clear speech and demonstration of the exercises. The less explanations the instructor uses for the demonstration of the exercises the easier it is for the clients to understand.
6. Encouraging and motivating the clients through out the session.
7. Enough time given to execute the exercises.
8. The level of the exercises need to be suitable for the physical abilities of the clients.
9. Securing the safety of the session; making sure the possible equipments work properly, the condition of the room where the session is taking place needs to be checked, securing the fluid balance with providing chances to drink water.
10. To create a comfortable atmosphere in which the client feels good to be in.

According to Hohenthal-Antin (2006, 35) sitting dance is very often built on a story. Giving the clients a prepared story makes it easier for everyone to participate in the session. The client can follow the story but use their own interpretation in the way he or she wants to portray it (ibid, 35).

### **Art session plan - Morales Coscio**

In order to explore the experiences of older people with the use of artistic expression in a therapeutic manner, the author planned a session for this thesis project. After gathering some additional information about the Aria group both from a nurse working in this section and regular contact with the assigned art therapist in Villa Andante, it was possible to think about adequate contents for such session. The nurse informed the study group that the clients enjoy movement activities and painting. She also mentioned that would be beneficial to activate or improve the client's motor skills. It was pointed at this meeting that the client's use of hands and fingers would be something to think about for a session with them as she mentioned that these activities are enjoyable for them while at the same time could bring their interest.

Combining activities that relate the use of hands in art is not difficult. The vast majority of art creations are produced by the artists' manufacture either by touching the raw material itself or the tools to create artwork. The author of the session discussed different topics with the therapist and finally settled to the conclusion that molding clay would be the perfect activity for the project. The reasons for this activity are none other than the previous wishes of

the professionals working in Villa Andante but in addition, as far as the knowledge of the therapist goes, such activity has not been yet performed with the present client group.

As mentioned above, after long discussions and consistent planning, the main idea behind organizing a session that involves the use of plastic materials over drawing or handcrafts comes from the idea proposal of the work life partner. The suggestion to help activate the clients' hand and finger coordination and use, in addition to the theoretical context already manifested about the benefits of group socialization and the opportunities to use clay therapeutically. When reading the available literature about therapy, and clay work in particular, certain ideas were taken into consideration. Since the organizer of the activity is not a graduated therapist, the method for this session will be used therapeutically instead of a continual therapy. The student has to remain careful in the use of any form of therapy because of the importance to maintain certain realities of the client private and only to be explored with a professional therapist.

In addition to the assistance of an experienced nurse, a quiet and comfortable space for the session, the materials needed for the session are the following:

- Clay
- Hand gloves
- Color Pencils
- Brushes

The objectives for the session are:

- Development of mental processes
- Development of spatial imagination
- Development of hand and finger movement
- Personal relaxation in a pleasant activity
- Positive group bonding and experience thru participation
- Enjoyment and Empowerment (nothing is wrong in arts)

The session offers the opportunity for personal and group objectives to be fulfilled. The expected outcomes of the session are to be enlisted after its performance, however the author is confident that the goals enlisted above could be reached. Feelings of empowerment thru achievement are possible to be attained from the clients due to the fact that in artistic expression everything done is correct. Self-expression and participation have the potential to bring relaxation and positive emotions.

In addition, it is necessary to mention at this point that the session will follow the methodology of other art sessions: A dedicated warm-up activity such as getting each other or explaining the activity and its contents will start the session. Some guidance might be needed at the beginning in order to activate the participation. But once the session starts and the clients know what they would like to do an independent approach will follow. After the session, which is originally planned for an hour, the clients will have a dedicated time for appreciation and further discussion.

The original theme for the session is to be able to freely manufacture an object with the use of clay. Ideas about present objects of interest such as trees, food, utensils, etc. will be encouraged in addition to past memories such as favorite animals, loved pets that will necessarily be projected. Thru this process of creation the client will be able get support and appreciation from fellow participants and also the group manager.

At the end of the session each client will be encouraged to think of ideas for future themes he or she would like to produce with clay. By doing this, clients are allowed to show their opinions about the session and the materials used, which may allow the planning of future in-depth sessions with their regular art therapist.

### Music session plan- Ben Ammar

After reading about music therapy session and its outcomes, one of the students' mission in this thesis is to plan the session, Sara, the planner of the session, chose to follow two different books, named *Approaches to Communication through music* and *The New Music therapists Handbook* "second editions" for using approaches and theories such as Musical interaction therapy and interactive Music that both focus on promoting social interaction methods during the session. Also Guided imagery and Music as a technique will be used during this session, since this approach involves listening to music in a relaxed state, its purpose is creativity, spirituality, and self-understanding. (B.Hanser *The New Music Therapist's Handbook*, Second Edition 1999, USA) (Corke.M & Hewett.D *Approaches to Communication through Music* 2002, Great Britain)

In order to plan and implement the session in a therapeutic way, the student had read and researched about the most beneficial methods to use for to this target group.

Observing the Aria group had an important role in the planning of the session, getting familiar with the target group. Getting to know them beforehand had given an idea about the group dynamic, what can and cannot occur during the session.

Depending on the clients' ability, Sara planned the session this way:

#### Music therapy session plan:

- Date and time: 50 min. of session, 10 min. for presenting the students and session goals to the client group
- Session duration: 1hour
- Participants: Aria group, open group
- Students: Sara, Mervi and Santiago
- Language used: Finnish and English, Swedish if needed
- Objectives of the session:

A- Goals: Creating an enjoyable, safe and trustful atmosphere during the session with Aria group. Through the session, the group members get an opportunity to interact with each others. By having fun and sharing the session, a feeling of being accepted and belonging into the group will be created. Good famous old and well-chosen songs will therefore help the client remember the lyrics and would probably bring up some good old memories back.

B- Final objective: After the session, the students hope to make the clients experience a happy moment. The clients will be able to continue the discussion and share the stories because the session will build a trustful relation between the clients. The clients may be relaxed and released of the emotions that come out during the session. The client will have enjoyed being with other persons other than the nurses who take care of them, and the patients already living with them.

Session description and program:

Warming up song: Familiar song, singing together

Christmas songs: Enkeli taivaan

Closing song: An inspired song from a traditional Finnish context