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"I feel like I've gotten my life back."

**STORY BY: PAITON BOTTOM
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GALLATIN CENTER FOR REHABILITATION &
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"James, at Gallatin Center (pictured), has found a new love for art. He tends to get easily frustrated and stressed with day-to-day tasks. After a stroke, James lost strength on one side. He was hesitant to join us

for our first therapeutic art session, but we continued to encourage him. We knew James loved going outdoors, so we offered to have an art session outside, thinking that others like him, who wouldn't typically participate in an art activity, would join in. To our surprise, James agreed to attend the class. He surprised everyone with his talent and newfound love for painting! James said, 'I feel like I've gotten my life back.' Now, he comes to my office (Paiton Bottom - storyteller) every day, even when I'm off work, to ask where his friend is that taught him how to paint. We love seeing what James creates each week and look forward to spreading awareness about art therapy in the months to come!"

Inside:

Don't Put Your Socks Back on Yet
— Another Great Story • P2

What Nursing Home Staff in
Tennessee Have to Say • P3

He Named it "Happy Silence" • P4

More Art, Gratitude & How You
Can Help • P5

"She beamed with excitement"

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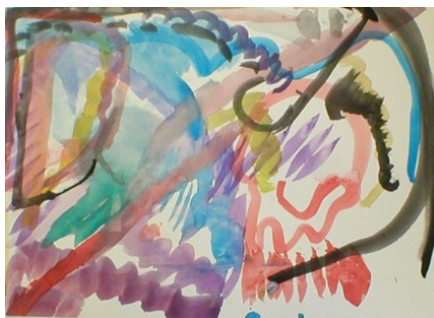
"Monita arrived at Beverly Park nearly 13 years ago. She experienced a stroke in her mid-20s that brought her to this campus in her early 40s. The stroke affected Monita's right, dominant side. She has befriended many, been active in many groups and helpful to others in many ways, but never really had many friends who remained on campus."

Monita has always longed to develop the use of her left hand. She's always shied away from writing or coloring. Even the task of signing her name sometimes caused feelings of inadequacy. When first approached about the art program, Monita did indicate that she wanted to participate, but it was several weeks before she became involved. She stated that she could not draw, color or perform any tasks that art-making might require.

After the constant encouragement of staff, Monita finally agreed. Her first drawing was just for fun. She loved using a combination of bright, 'cheerful' colors, as she called them. She titled that artwork 'Crazy.' Over time her work really took shape.



Monita was asked to create a piece that brought back good memories. She chose a memory of her grandmother's property that included a large tree next to a pond with bushes to one side. Monita was shocked at how well she could create a piece of art from memory, how well she was able to use her left hand, and the overall quality of the work. She beamed with excitement as others bragged on her art creation. The staff at Beverly Park will continue to offer the art sessions and the opportunity for Monita to tell her story through art."



“What Nursing Home Staff Have to Say About the ArtTherapy4Life Program Training

I LEARNED ...

Social Worker: “The positive effects of art on cognition; disease process of dementia.”

Unit Coordinator - RN: “How to engage with residents and things to be cautious of saying.”

Administrator: “How to engage residents in art; how to manage with all different stages (of cognition) and explore thoughts and feelings.”

I LEARNED ...

Director of Activities: “How to engage others in art and ways to get residents to express their feelings and memories through art.”

RN - Charge Nurse: “How to use art as an outlet for memories and thoughts and communicate with patients in a different way.”

Certified Occupational Therapy Asst: “Ways to implement and to help patients open up about themselves and their feelings.”

Certified Nursing Assistant: “How art can improve mood, focus and stimulate the brain.”

I LEARNED ...

Director of Activities: “Ways to communicate with residents through the art. How to turn a negative attitude toward art around.”

Social Worker: “Ways for residents to use art to express themselves/communicate when the standard way may not be working. Creating connections and invoking conversations, creating an opportunity for them to open-up.”

Social Worker: “Thank you for opening my mind to art therapy not being 'arts & crafts'—big difference for these patients.”

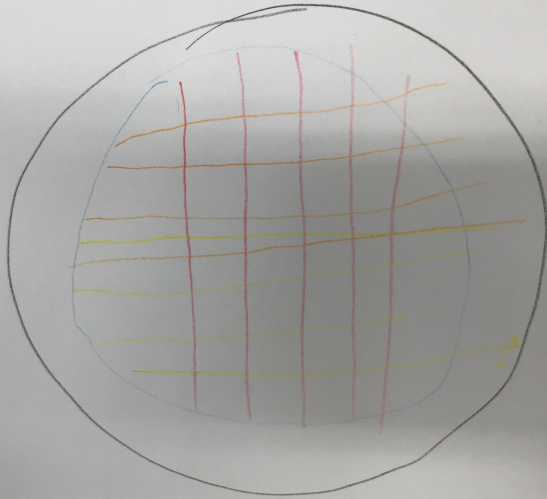
I LEARNED ...

Director of Nursing: “Different ways you can express yourself through art and how expressing yourself can change your mood.”

Certified Dietary Manager: “That people express themselves in different ways and that dementia has different stages.”

Certified Nursing Assistant: “Art makes your brain work and helps you express the way you feel.”

Title: Happy Silence



"He named it Happy Silence"

"A resident from our care center named Jimmy has Schizophrenia. At first he was hesitant to participate in art-making, but with encouragement he decided to give it a try. Jimmy was given a canvas with a blank circle on it and asked to draw anything inside the circle that made him happy. This circle is referred to as a Mandala. A Mandala is far more than a simple shape. It represents wholeness. Mandalas are usually circular, geometric patterns. Some people see drawing and coloring of a Mandala as a form of meditation and relaxation, which is reflective of the inner self and often contains what is most important to the individual."

Jimmy painted vertical and horizontal lines in a variety of colors. When asked what the title of his painting was, he said, 'Happy Silence.' When asked how he chose that name, Jimmy indicated that it was because the voices in his head were silent while he was painting. He enjoyed a great day after painting. The following week, he was invited to participate again and this time he eagerly accepted. Jimmy started painting immediately.



Title: Country drive



It was a painting of him driving a truck through the woods with a fishing pond off to one side. He entitled the piece 'Country Drive' and stated that he was very happy, calm and had a good rest of the day."

STORY BY:

**AMANDA BLAIR
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HEALING — LEBANON, TN**

Nursing Homes in Tennessee Shine On!

Inspiration is Free-Flowing

Bethany Center for Rehabilitation and Healing in Nashville is a proud participant of the ArtTherapy4Life program in Tennessee. The focus of Bethany's first class centered around residents making creative choices and on artistic development. Bethany Center is currently creating a prominently placed gallery wall to display the incredible artwork of all participants!



ARTIST REFLECTION

TITLE: FREEDOM

STORY BEHIND THE ART:

"Being a man of God. Singing, praying and paying tithes."

— CHESTER



ARTIST REFLECTION

TITLE: ANGEL

STORY BEHIND THE ART:

"To fly and to make friends and give love to everybody."

— THELMA

The ArtTherapy4Life - Tennessee State-wide Initiative is made possible by:

Tennessee Technological University's Whitson-Hester School of Nursing and a grant compliments of:

the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services in partnership with

the Tennessee Department of Health & the Tennessee State Agency

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You Can Help!

Thriving4Life, Inc. is a tax exempt charitable organization under 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Service Code.

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