

Chapter 8

Considering the Visual Arts and the Autism Spectrum

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores the visual arts and the autism spectrum. Descriptions and working definitions of “visual arts” and “autism spectrum” will be presented. The four defining and observable characteristics that make the autism spectrum will be considered. The purpose of the autism spectrum coordinates increasing possibilities that need to be discussed and evaluated for each person by many people. Five disabilities that preceded the autism spectrum organization will be identified. The five disabilities have been joined together in the autism spectrum. The authors invite people identified as being on the autism spectrum to consider engaging in art activities often. Art is a joyful activity for many people. Some people who are on the autism spectrum seem to be very artistic. This observation is being studied and discussed by many professionals at this time. What are positive ways for people on the autism spectrum to express their artistic talents?

INTRODUCTION

This paper explores the Visual Arts and the Autism Spectrum. Descriptions and working definitions of “visual arts” and “autism spectrum” will be presented. The four defining and observable characteristics of the Autism Spectrum will be considered.

Art is a joyful activity for many people with autism spectrum disorder. In fact, evidence has shown that not only are many children with autism highly intelligent and creative, but many children with autism are also better able to process details than

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-7732-5.ch008

non-ASD peers (Drake, 2018). In many tests, children on the spectrum outperform of processing tasks that require identification of parts of a whole (Drake, 2018). And it is this local processing skill, a trait of ASD, that may account for high levels of children with ASD who also talented artists (Drake, 2018) are. The following chapter will examine, positive ways for people on the autism spectrum to express their artistic talent, ways to encourage people on the autistic spectrum to engage in creation of art and specific art lessons for teach art to individuals with ASD. Finally, a recognition and appreciation of the many talented artists on the autism spectrum.

AN OPERATIONAL DEFINITION FOR THE TERM “VISUAL ARTS”

Visual Arts are humanly created communications through using light shape and color. It is always nice to use words, but people may choose to use only light, color and shape. People with vision can see visual arts. People with vision assume that that everyone sees what they see. People create visual arts with their imaginations, their eyes, colored lighting, their hands, paper, ink, pencils, brushes, machines that reproduce visual arts and computers. Painting pictures, creating theater sets, making posters, making books, drawing comic books, designing advertisements, and writing calligraphy are some of the visual arts. Designing menus for restaurants, making decorative lists, creating invitations and cards, making collages, creating and organizing sequences, decorating rooms and planning gardens may all be forms of visual arts that have utilitarian purposes. We see and share visual arts if we can. We do not all see the same thing. Drawing, painting, and photography are major and very popular visual arts. When we are in communication through light, shape and color, we may or not use words.

People choose to create art. They are using art to share something that they think about. Sometimes people share what they think about through words. Sometimes they do not. Art is related in some ways to public speaking. Some people may choose to speak about the visual art they imagine and create. Some people want to ask, “What is that?” Some people think everyone can imagine what they imagine. Some people on the autism spectrum do not ask “What is that?” Sometimes people on the autism spectrum know what it is and seem to think other people already know what they see. When a person wants to talk about artistic ideas and their art, it is good to plan what is going to be said with great tenderness. Everyone does not seem the same thing. There can be a time and place made for speaking about art to happen without stress. It is very good when people can share their ideas. A shared idea is a special gift.

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