

Sixth Edition

the Creative
Arts
in Counseling

Samuel T. Gladding



AMERICAN COUNSELING
ASSOCIATION

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Sixth Edition

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Arts
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Dedication

To the good people of Decatur, Georgia, who nourished my curiosity and creativity growing up; especially to my former Decatur High School English teachers Ann Lewis and Weldon Jelks, who encouraged me to write; and to Walter McCurdy, Jr., and Reid Crow at the First Baptist Church, who taught me with their stories and music.

also

To Jim Cotton, Robbin McInturff, Mariam Cospers, and Laurie Smith at Adult and Child Developmental Specialists in Birmingham, Alabama, from whom I learned the art of good counseling.



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Preface

“Counseling is a professional relationship that empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education, and career goals” (D. M. Kaplan et al., 2014, p. 366). Counselors focus on helping clients make developmentally appropriate choices and changes. Effective counselors are aware of the multidimensional nature of the profession and choose from a wide variety of interventions when working with diverse populations. The creative arts are a sometimes overlooked aspect of counseling that can promote the best within the helping arena (Neilsen et al., 2016). By their very nature, the arts foster different ways of experiencing the world. They are enriching, stimulating, and therapeutic in their own right. When used in clinical situations, the creative arts can help counselors and clients gain unique and universal perspectives on problems and possibilities.

In this sixth edition of *The Creative Arts in Counseling*, I concentrate on how the creative arts can be used independently and complementarily to enhance the counseling process on primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. Specifically, the following creative arts are examined:

- Music
- Dance and movement
- Imagery
- Visual arts
- Literature and writing
- Drama and psychodrama
- Humor
- Play
- Animal-assisted therapy
- Horticultural, nature, and wilderness therapies

These arts and artistic ways of knowing the world share much in common. They are all process oriented, emotionally sensitive, socially directed, awareness focused, and applicable in numerous forms for working with clients over the life span. In addition, they enable people from diverse cultural backgrounds to develop in ways that are enjoyable as well as personally and socially enhancing.

Mental health providers such as counselors, social workers, psychologists, creative arts therapists, marriage and family therapists, psychiatric nurses, pastoral care specialists, and psychiatrists will find the content in these pages useful because of both the research and the pragmatic nature of the material covered. The information presented here comes from a variety of educational and treatment-focused work settings. Chapters 2 through 11 may be especially helpful because of the systematic format they follow in presenting a great deal of information in a uniform manner. These chapters are structured in a parallel way:

1. Introductory background about the specific art form
2. The premise behind using the art form
3. The general practice of using the art in counseling settings
4. Use of the specific art with special populations, such as children, adolescents, adults, older adults, groups, families, and cultural minorities
5. A summary
6. Art-related exercises

Chapter 1 provides information on the history, rationale for, and benefits of using artistic methods in general; Chapter 12 highlights current trends in the use of the arts in counseling and includes additional resources. Together, these chapters are bookends for those in between, enabling you to obtain a global view of the field, how it developed, and where it is going. Chapter 13 contains creative exercises in the different artistic domains covered in Chapters 2 through 11.

Creative Reflection boxes are distributed throughout Chapters 1 through 12 to give you an opportunity to reflect on your own creativity and how you can use the creative arts in counseling. There are eight boxes in each of Chapters 1 through 12, for a total of 96 in all. I hope that these boxes prompt you to further explore your thoughts and feelings as well as generate ideas you can use.

Overall, practitioners will find this book user friendly. Most of the ideas discussed here have been extensively field tested by experienced clinicians. By carefully reading this book, you will become better informed as a professional and will be able to enhance your skills and effectiveness. The creative arts have much to offer the healing and helping professions and the clients who use these services.

New to This Edition

An old maxim states that a new book should never be written when an old book will suffice. That goes for revisions too. I could not agree more, which explains the 5-year time span between this edition and the previous edition. I would love to say that the fifth edition of this work is still up to date, but it is not. First, the sixth edition includes more than 150 new references, most more recent than 2015. They are mixed liberally with more classic texts and articles so the best scholarship in the field of using the creative arts in counseling has been maintained and expanded.

Second, as mentioned previously, this sixth edition contains eight Creative Reflections in each chapter. The uniformity of reflections makes reading the chapters smoother. The 19 new Creative Reflections in this edition of the book give you more opportunities to slow down and think about how the material you are reading applies to your life personally and professionally.

Third, the former chapter “Animal-Assisted Therapy in Counseling, Therapeutic Horticulture, and Wilderness/Nature Therapy” has now been split into two chapters: “Animal-Assisted Therapy in Counseling” (Chapter 10) and “Horticultural, Nature, and Wilderness Therapies” (Chapter 11). There is expanded coverage on each of these approaches.

Fourth, the former chapter “Play and Humor in Counseling” has been split into two chapters also. “Humor in Counseling” (Chapter 8) and “Play in Counseling” (Chapter 9) provide expanded information on each area and give each subject more focus with up-to-date references.

Fifth, at the beginning of each chapter is a two-part overview informing you of some of the highlights of the chapter. The first part emphasizes topics to be covered in the chapter, whereas the second part suggests some personal and professional issues to consider in regard to the material.

Sixth, all websites and links for creative arts therapy associations have been double checked and updated where needed. New ones have been added as well. Thus, you can easily access the latest research and conference information related to creative arts therapies. A list of “General Creative Arts and Art Therapies Websites” is found in the newly added appendix to this book.

Seventh, a new section on telebehavioral health counseling with the creative arts has been added to Chapter 12. This section has been added in recognition of the fact that crises, such as the Coronavirus pandemic of 2020, occasionally make in-person counseling impossible. Knowing how to change the modality of delivery is crucial in such circumstances.

Finally, a dozen new creative arts projects and exercises have been added to Chapter 13. The creative arts are truly global and culturally relevant to counselors from multiple settings and backgrounds.

All of these changes have made this sixth edition of *The Creative Arts in Counseling* a richer and more relevant text. Yet this book continues to be user friendly in a pragmatic and well-organized way, punctuated with examples and activities. It is engaging while maintaining a scholarly base.

Enjoy!

—*Samuel T. Gladding*



Acknowledgments

Writing a book is similar to many other activities in life. Some say it is like having a baby and that the labor involved results in a newness that is breathtaking and well worth the time and nurturing that went into the process. (My wife disagrees with this analogy and says that being pregnant and then a mother is completely different. I imagine many other women would agree.) I like to think of the writing process as similar to a good group experience. In productive groups, many people share valuable information and give you important feedback. In addition, groups usually occur over time. Psychoeducational and task groups help participants produce a product either directly or indirectly (and it is not a baby!). Ultimately, the outcome is both an interpersonal and a personal experience. The group that has helped me formulate ideas, gather knowledge, and put together this sixth edition of *The Creative Arts in Counseling* contained some of the same individuals who helped me with the previous editions as well as a few new ones.

First, I want to thank Carolyn Baker, the associate publisher of the American Counseling Association (ACA), and the ACA Publications Committee for accepting my proposal for a sixth edition of this text. Carolyn has always been a joy to work with and kept me on task once again in a timely and professional manner. In addition, my sincere thanks goes out to Nancy Driver, ACA's digital and print development editor, who not only read every page of this text but made excellent suggestions for improving it. Like Carolyn, Nancy is a first-class professional. Next, I want to thank Dr. Richard Hayes for encouraging me to write the first edition of this book back in the early 1990s. Without Richard's suggestion, I doubt this work would ever have been written. I also want to thank the reviewers and editor of the initial edition of this text, Drs. Howard S. Rosenblatt, Stephen

G. Weinrach, JoAnna White, and Elaine Pirrone. They were honest and straightforward in their appraisal of the manuscript and offered constructive thoughts that made this work far better than it would have been otherwise. In addition, I want to express my appreciation to Wake Forest University counseling graduate students—Katie Anne Burt, Dan Barnhart, Michele Kielty, Mary Beth Edens, Regan Reding, and Deborah Tyson, in particular—for contributing ideas and thoughts on counseling and the creative arts. Katie Anne, Dan, and Michele were especially helpful and industrious in locating the latest research on the creative arts and were meticulous proofreaders. In addition, I wish to express my gratitude to recent undergraduates at Wake Forest University in my class on the creative arts in counseling, especially Kristen Berry, Kaela Griswold, and Anna Glaser.

Finally, I am grateful to clients and colleagues over the years who have shared creative ideas with me and helped me to focus more on the importance of the arts in counseling. I especially appreciate the support of my wife, Claire, and our three children. They humored me with jokes and goodwill while this book was in process. I am truly a fortunate individual to be surrounded with so much that is good, growth enhancing, and artistic.



About the *Author*

Samuel T. Gladding, PhD, is a professor in the Department of Counseling at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. His academic degrees are from Wake Forest (BA, MA Ed), Yale (MA), and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (PhD).

Before assuming his current position, he held academic appointments at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and Fairfield University (Connecticut). He was also an instructor of psychology at a community college and director of children's services at a rural mental health center, both of which were in Rockingham County, North Carolina. He is a licensed mental health counselor in North Carolina, a national certified counselor, a certified clinical mental health counselor, and a former member of the Alabama Board of Examiners in Counseling and the North Carolina Board of Licensed Professional Counselors.

Dr. Gladding is the author of a number of publications on counseling, including *Becoming a Counselor: The Light, the Bright, and the Serious* (2021), *Counseling: A Comprehensive Profession* (2018), *Family Therapy: History, Theory, and Practice* (2019), and *Groups: A Counseling Specialty* (2020). He is the former editor of the *Journal for Specialists in Group Work*. He has served as president of the American Counseling Association (ACA) as well as three of its divisions: the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (ACES), the Association for Specialists in Group Work, and the International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors. He has also been president of the American Association of State Counseling Boards and Chi Sigma Iota (Counseling Academic & Professional Honor Society International) as well as chair of the American Counseling Association Foundation.

Dr. Gladding has received numerous recognitions and honors. He is a Fellow in ACA and the recipient of ACA's Gilbert and Kathleen

Wrenn Award for a Humanitarian and Caring Person and Arthur A. Hitchcock Distinguished Professional Service Award. He has also received the Chi Sigma Iota Thomas J. Sweeney Professional Leadership Award and the Association for Humanistic Counseling Joseph W. and Lucille U. Hollis Outstanding Publication Award. In addition, Dr. Gladding is a recipient of the ACES Outstanding Publication Award as well as the ACES Leadership Award. Furthermore, he received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Association for Creativity in Counseling and the Research Award from the International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors. He is also a Fellow in the Association for Specialists in Group Work and received this association's Eminent Career Award.

In 2008, the Association for Creativity in Counseling named its Inspiration and Motivation award after Dr. Gladding. In 2015, ACA named its Unsung Heroes award after him.

Dr. Gladding has worked with counseling colleagues in Malaysia, Estonia, Australia, Singapore, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, the Philippines, Sweden, Austria, the West Indies, and South Africa and was a Fulbright Specialist to Turkey and China. He is married to the former Claire Tillson and is the father of three adult children. He enjoys the arts, creativity, and humor on a daily basis.