Let's Get Messy: A Curriculum for Filial Art Therapy Informed by the Crucial Cs

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Abstract

A literature search of filial therapy, art therapy, and family art therapy informed the creation of a curriculum that teaches parents to 1) use art making to foster creativity in their child, 2) create moments of fun, and 3) provide a chance for parents to engage with their child. The curriculum was also informed by theories of Alfred Adler and Rudolf Dreikurs. It combines therapeutic techniques within filial therapy, child directed play, and the therapeutic use of making art. It also includes the encouraging language of the crucial C’s.
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Introduction

As a teaching artist working with hospitalized clients the author has seen families take the time to create art together and have observed the families communicating and working as a group. The families reported enjoying their time together and confessed to wishing they could do it more often but did not know how.

According to an article published by the American Academy of Pediatrics, many families are inundated with messages that they must have their children involved in as many extracurricular activities as possible (Ginsburg, 2007). There is a perceived pressure to get good grades and to actively build on every skill of the child all of the time. This focus and over-scheduling has decreased family downtime considerably over the years (Rosenfeld & Wise, 2000). The consequence of this is that families miss those quiet quality moments of talking, preparing meals, playing games or creating art, which is needed to build strong relationships. Research has demonstrated the benefits of this time spent together. For example, Hofferth and Sandberg (2001) found an increase in test scores and a reduction in externalized problems in families that spent more time eating together.

In a comprehensive review of current literature, only one chapter in one textbook was found to have information regarding filial art therapy (McCarley, 2008). What the literature did show was that parents and children benefit from filial therapy. According to research done by Edwards, Sullivan, Meany-Walen, and Kantor (2010), there was a decrease in negative behaviors and parents reported an increase in communication between themselves and their children. The author is proposing that using traditional art therapy directives, a curriculum (see Appendix A) designed to increase parents comfort level with making art and teaching them how to engage
their children in the creative process would be a helpful, additional tool in parent education. According to Adler (1988) a parent’s job is to raise children who are self-confident and courageous. Helping parents feel these same things is the reason for the creation of a curriculum. In order to elicit parent feedback on their interest in learning how to create art with their children as a way of connecting and enhancing communication, the author created a parent survey (see Appendix B). In an ongoing effort to use parent feedback to enhance the program, the author also created a feedback form (see Appendix C).

**Alfred Adler: Individual Psychology**

Alfred Adler was born in Vienna in 1870. He struggled early in life due to a series of illnesses and did not do well in school. A math teacher encouraged his father to take Adler out of school and start him as an apprentice. His father refused to do this and Adler set about to become a better student. He eventually studied medicine at the University of Vienna and graduated in 1895 with a specialty in ophthalmology. As his private practice grew, he switched to internal medicine and began to notice that many of his patients’ ailments could be traced back to their living and working conditions (Mosak & Maniacci, 1999). In 1902 Adler joined Sigmund Freud and other psychotherapists to discuss Freud’s new ideas in psychotherapy. Freud and Adler had a contentious relationship and they parted ways in 1911 (Furthmuller, 1946). Prior to their split, Adler had already begun to develop his ideas of Individual Psychology. According to Adler, Individual Psychology is the relationship to the outside world that informs the individual’s experiences (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964). These relationships start as infants.

Adler believed that as young children individuals make rules for themselves and develop patterns for how they interact with the world. These *rules* or style of living are established by
the time individuals are six years old (Brokaw, n.d.,) and for the most part it is not realized they have been created. These rules or *Life Style* are based on a series of convictions (Brokaw, 2011):

- Self-Concept, “I am” i.e. I define myself by what I like to do, how I behave, and what I look like;
- Self-Ideal, “I should be/not be”, i.e. I believe I should be something more than I am;
- Environmental Evaluation, “Life is”, I believe the world is a “scary place” or “safe place”; All men and all women only behave in one way;
- Ethical Convictions, ethical and moral “I should”, I should do what is proper and right.

Other factors that contribute to the concept of *Life Style* includes what our birth order is, the environment that we grow up in, how well families get along, and mistaken beliefs.

**Birth Order**

Birth order is the idea that each child born into a family has a position and each position has certain characteristics. Only children tend to be the center of attention and can come across as pampered. They may never learn how to share. First borns were once only children and may resent no longer being the center of attention. They frequently become protectors and caregivers. The second child has never had an opportunity to have their parents’ undivided attention. They may often act as if they are in a race, trying to catch up with the first born. The youngest child generally will have things done for them and can retain the characteristics of a baby long after they have grown (Ansbacher & Ansbacher, 1964; Brokaw & Wolf, 2010). These birth order characteristics impact one’s parenting style and interaction with others.
Environment

Environment includes the ethnic makeup of the neighborhoods people grow up in, membership in religious organizations, and schools they attended. The environment can also impact how parents raise and interact with their children, for example, if a parent feels a neighborhood is unsafe, it could cause the parent to become over protective. Peer groups are also part of the environment. “The music and television to which children are exposed can modify values and establish what the peer groups determine to be ‘required’ in order to ‘fit in’” (Mosak & Maniacci, 1999, p. 41).

Family

Before a child is exposed to what is considered ‘in’ by its peers it is first influenced by its family. Family values or what a family feels is important helps shape the child’s lifestyle. The family atmosphere can shape how the child adapts to situations. If the child is exposed to conflict and fighting, they may become anxious and withdrawn or become angry and aggressive. It is possible for two children to grown up in the same family atmosphere and have completely different approaches to the same environment (Mosak & Maniacci, 1999).

Mistaken Beliefs

When rules become beliefs that we must ‘always’, ‘never’ or ‘only’ behave or do something a certain way, and are incongruent with our current beliefs, it becomes a mistaken belief (Wolf & Brokaw, 2010). These mistaken beliefs in how we find our place in the world can cause individuals to feel discouraged and to act out in certain ways. Rudolf Dreikurs, a colleague of Adler, defined these acting out behaviors or Goals of Misbehavior as (Dreikurs & Stoltz, 1964):

- Attention getting – Any behavior, including negative, that attracts attention;


- Power seeking – Attempting to control others and defying superiors;
- Revenge taking – Retaliation for perceived wrongs;
- Displaying inadequacy – Unwillingness to try for fear of failure.

Dreikurs recognized that parenting was evolving from an autocratic to a democratic style and parents were struggling with the traditional methods they had been raised with. A new set of parenting concepts was needed and Dreikurs recommended changes. According to Shulman and Dreikurs (1978):

Scattered throughout the writings of all Adlerians who considered the subject are descriptions of principles applicable to raising and educating children. However Dreikurs gave us the most systematic exposition of such basic principles. The included topics which he discussed at great length and which students have elaborated further. (p.160)

These principles include encouraging the child, using natural and logical consequences, respecting the child, eliminating criticism and minimizing mistakes, maintaining a routine, refrain from over protection, listening, and having fun together (Dreikurs & Soltz, 1964, p. 306). These principles have been updated and presented as the Crucial Cs.

**Crucial Cs**

As parent educators, Lew and Bettner (2000) determined that children need four ‘vital protections’ in order to thrive and become useful individuals. They call these the Crucial Cs and identify them as the need to be connected, the need to feel capable, to feel as though one counts, and to have courage. These four needs are informed by Adler and Dreikurs’ theories of mistaken beliefs and goals.

In Kottman’s (1999) article *integrating the Crucial Cs into Adlerian Play Therapy*, she described the Crucial Cs. The idea of feeling Connected allows a child to feel secure and better
able to interact with friends and family. The need to feel Capable allows children to feel confident in their abilities. They need to master self-control as a way of taking responsibility for themselves. Children who do not feel adequate may act out by controlling or bullying others. The need to feel as though one Counts assists children who feel valued by their families believe they are significant and can make a difference. They are less likely to display revenge seeking behaviors such as hurtful words and physical violence. Children who have Courage feel courageous and are willing to try and potentially fail, but will still feel encouraged and supported by their families. Children who are discouraged often feel inadequate and are generally unwilling to take on anything that looks like a challenge (Kottman, 1999).

Art Therapy

Art therapy is a form of therapy that uses drawing, painting, sculpture, and other messy techniques that allow a person to communicate without using actual words. In order to understand art therapy as an intervention I will define art therapy, discuss the pioneers of art therapy, and finally how art therapy can be used with families. Sadie Dreikurs had this to say about art therapy (1986):

This medium can help people feel better about themselves, change the perception of themselves, or merely provide an enjoyable experience. It can encourage those participants who are depressed to pursue other possibilities for enjoyment. After participating in the art activities they often have a sense of well-being, even of elation, from the feeling of accomplishment and contribution. Art therapy can help people function in any area of their lives or it can be a softening up process through which they become more aware of their environment in life and can choose, if they wish, to make lifestyle changes through psychotherapy (p. 57).
Pioneers in Art Therapy

Sadie Dreikurs, the second wife of Rudolf Dreikurs, was an art student and social worker at Hull House in Chicago in the 1930s. She started art groups for delinquent boys and watched as the group dynamics played out. Around the same time that Dreikurs was finding her way in Chicago, Margaret Naumburg and Edith Kramer were making similar discoveries on the East Coast. Kramer was a proponent of the idea that the act of creating art was therapeutic and could allow a person to heal. She considered herself a psychologically informed art teacher (Junge, 2010).

Naumburg is considered by most people to be the ‘mother’ of art therapy. She was the first to name art therapy as an actual form of mental health profession and another form of psychotherapy. It was important to Naumburg that the client use words to help describe their art, thus giving a better idea of what was troubling the client (Junge, 2010). These women were the start of a movement that has continued to grow and develop into a multi-disciplinary approach in assisting clients deal with their issues.

Art Therapy and Families

When working with families it is important for the therapist to get a sense of how the family works together. Using art can be a nonthreatening way of seeing how the family interacts (Wolfe & Collins-Wolfe, 1983). Art therapy is especially well suited to children who may not have the vocabulary that is needed to express their emotions and experiences (Malchiodi, 2007). Asking families to draw individual pictures and to collaborate on larger images with and without communication allows the therapist to see how the family functions and what their roles are within the family in a fairly short period of time (Landgarten, 1981).
After the drawings, the therapist can ask for feedback from the family members about what they like and what they did not like about the activity. Family members will frequently tell the therapist, ‘See, this is what is always happening!’ Often family members will gain insight and recognize patterns in their behavior. This is an excellent opportunity to have the family create new strategies to work together (DeOrnellas, Kottman, & Millican, 1997). There are many other art techniques that also work with families to gain insight.

Clay sculpting is a technique that works well, especially when younger children are involved. Family members are asked to create themselves in clay, paying attention to size, stature and body posture and how they will be located to one another. Family members are reassured that they are not being judged on their artistic skills and are encouraged to explain how they would like them to look. According to Banker (2008) “family sculpting encourages dialog about the closeness and distance in family relationships, including the exclusions, alliances, coalitions, conflict, boundaries and strengths in the family system” (p. 296). Another way to view family patterns is to have the family work together to create a structure. This technique allows the therapist to notice how the family works as a unit, whether they can cooperate or engage in more controlling behaviors (Staton & Lucey, 2004).

Parent-child-dyad therapy is a form of family art therapy that focuses on the parent/child relationship and also the relationship with the therapist. Developed by Lucille Proulx in Montreal, the therapist sets the environment up so that it is friendly and spontaneous. Proulx (2002) stated:

Art therapy facilitated expression and communication for the alleviation of stress by supporting expression of both conscious and unconscious feelings and thoughts. It might,
in itself, have been a therapeutic agent for unresolved conflicts for both parent and child.

(p. 239)

**Filial Therapy**

Filial therapy is an approach to working with families and children in a therapeutic setting. Parents are taught how to engage their children in play that encourages the child to direct the play. Parents learn how to structure the time with definite beginning and ending times, thus helping the child to learn how to handle transition (Topham & VanFleet, 2011). Parents also learn how to be active listeners. This may include eliciting eye contact and paying attention both to the words and the feelings behind them. Parents then summarize and reflect back the child’s words (Webster-Stratton, 2005) in order to give encouragement to the children’s ideas (Watts & Broaddus, 2002). Parents set the limits to keep the child safe and help the child understand what will happen if limits are not followed using a firm but not angry voice. If the child is non-compliant the parent uses the consequence that has been discussed ahead of time; usually it involves ending the session (Topham & VanFleet, 2011).

Harvey (2008), of New Zealand’s Taranaki District Health Board, says that Dynamic Play Therapy (DPT) can allow families to better cope with stressful events in an interactive way. This suggested that learning how to play with your child is beneficial to both families and children’s social-emotional well-being. In addition, according to a study by Shari E. Duff, (1996), she found that family play can be an effective tool for improving inter-family relations. During sessions, families had to work together to accommodate the smaller children and this led to some shared frustration. This frustration was also seen in the home. Duff’s data suggested that using play therapy as a way to integrate newborns into existing family dynamics would be beneficial. By focusing on non-competitive tasks that required families to work together,
success was seen by families’ reports of lessened misbehavior and attention seeking. The play techniques the families learned in therapy, such as active listening and inclusion of the younger children, were carried over into the household.

Research has shown that parents who participate in filial therapy feel more confident, understanding of their children, and self-aware in their parenting. In Foley, Higdon, and White’s 2006 qualitative study of filial therapy, the respondents reported that they felt more aware and confident in parenting. They also reported feeling increased self-awareness and understanding of their children’s goals and needs. One parent said “We are having more fun, I am less anxious about getting things done or being in control, so we have [sic] having more fun and relax” (Foley, Higdon, & White, 2006, p. 53). Although this form of therapy has benefits, there are always limitations and barriers to participating in something new.

**Parental Concerns**

According to Rise VanFleet (2000), parents can have concerns about the value of play therapy. Some reasons being they don’t know how it works, what its benefits are, and parents could find it potentially difficult to work with a therapist of a different race or culture. VanFleet’s theories about parents’ concerns about the value of play therapy are addressed by acknowledging parents resistance to change. VanFleet stated that parents may feel a loss of control and predictability. Inviting the parents to play therapy first, without their child, can alleviate these concerns.

VanFleet also discussed the value of culture. She suggested that to not recognize cultural differences is a failure on the part of the therapist (VanFleet, 2000). Addressing parents’ potential concerns about working with a therapist of a different race or culture is an opportunity
for the therapist to demonstrate cultural competency. The therapist must also recognize the individuality of each child and their family.

VanFleet suggested parents do not see play or getting messy as valuable. “Play might be viewed as a trivial activity that should be used as a reward for hard work and good behavior rather than as a means of overcoming bad behavior or emotional distress” (VanFleet, 2000, p. 37). In addition, parents may hesitate to make art with their children because they think they are not artistic enough (Brown, 2015) or they may worry about not having art materials in the home or the potential for great mess (Trotman, Davies, & Harris, 2012). Inviting the parent to play may help alleviate some of these concerns and introduce them to alternative process of communication. McCarley (2008) proposed that by adding messier art materials, outside of markers and crayons, to be used only for ‘special art time’ may create a more unique experience for the child (McCarley, 2008).

Doing art can help a family bond. Dr. Richard Rende, partnered with Elmer’s® glue to create a program called Let’s Bond. This program was started to celebrate the connection between parents and children. Dr. Rende’s research incorporated feedback from a group of 300 parents, as well as input from experts in child development and pediatrics. His unpublished research affirmed the benefits to children, through participation in activities for fine motor skills development and social and emotional well-being (”Bonding moments are more than just glue,” 2014).

Parents also have concerns about participation. In an article by Wickstrom (2009) married parents were concerned that if only one parent attended or participated in therapy sessions the other parent would not see the value or would not want to join in, because they would not ‘know how to do it.’ One father’s stated that “If there’s one person who is trying to
pull all the weight and says ‘we need to do this, we need to do this’, it’s not going to work, because then the kid is seeing the split and the resistance” (Wickstrom, 2009, p. 201).

**Outcomes of Filial and Play Therapy**

Despite their concerns about what would happen if they played with their children, the studies show that that filial and play therapy have a positive influence on families. In a filial therapy study done by researchers at Texas Woman’s University, the researchers found that parents reported improved parent-child communication, improved partner communication, improved child behavior, and increased couple unity (Bavin-Hoffman, Jennings, & Landreth, 1996). In another study, parents who took part in a Child Parent Relationship Training (CPRT) that met for 2.5 hours for 8 weeks reported increased confidence in parenting, enhanced communication, stronger parent-child relationships and improved behavior (Edwards et al., 2010). One respondent explained that they had changed the way they were communicating with their child (Edwards et al., 2010, p. 170).

Filial therapy can also have a positive impact on single parent homes. Bratton and Landreth (1995) engaged 25 single parents in a 10 week filial therapy training. The researchers found an increase in empathy from the parents toward their children during the play sessions. There was also a significant decrease in parental stress. The new parenting skills and more accepting view of their children had the parents reporting a major reduction in problem behaviors from their children.

**Filial Art Therapy: An Adlerian Perspective**

Adler saw the family as a system and that each person has a role within that system. If our roles are incongruent with our beliefs in how we find our place in the world, a child can begin to act out. Rudolf Dreikurs coined these acting out behaviors as Goals of Misbehavior.
Sutherland (2008) suggested that when a family is involved in making art it is possible for the family members to see their role within the family and with encouragement, begin to change these mistaken goals or behaviors.

Courage (or encouragement) is one of four vital Crucial Cs that would allow children to be productive (Lew & Bettner, 2000). The other three are: the ability to connect, to feel capable, and to know they count. When families create art together they have an opportunity to explore these Crucial Cs. Creating a family collage, using photographs and keepsakes, can help a child feel they belong (connected) and significant (counted). Having a child pick out paint colors and direct their parents in painting a picture allows the child to feel capable. Playing with wet clay can be a challenge for many children and adults, by creating a safe space to get messy the family has a chance to display their courage. When these needs are met “one becomes more creative, one becomes more courageous and willing to cooperate” (Dushman & Sutherland, 1997).

**Conclusion**

Alfred Adler believed that a parent’s job is to raise courageous and self-confident children. Parents receive many differing messages on what they should be doing in order for their children to succeed. Because of these pressures, many families miss opportunities to create and play together. These missed opportunities can lead to an increase in negative behaviors.

Filial therapy is one approach parents may take in an effort to redirect negative behaviors. Filial therapy involves teaching the parent how to engage with their children using active listening, limit setting, encouraging language, and allowing the child to direct the play. Making art is an excellent way to engage with a child but many parents find it difficult. They may lack the resources (where to get art supplies, what art supplies should be on hand), the idea of mess is a turn off and they are uncomfortable with their own art abilities.
The proposed curriculum is an introduction to art materials and techniques that may reduce the fear of the unknown. Having the parents make the art before they do it with their children will increase the parent’s confidence. If the parents appear relaxed and excited by the art experience the children will be more likely to want to participate as well. Creating space for parents to allow themselves to get a little messy and to see this as a positive and non-threatening process allows for increased connection and the ability to add fun to the therapeutic process.
References


Dreikurs, S. E. (1986). *Cows can be purple: My life and art therapy*. Chicago, IL: Adler School of Professional Psychology.


Appendix A: Filial Therapy Curriculum

The curriculum is presented over a course of six weeks. One art project is introduced one night a week. Time is 1.5 hours. This allows the parent time to explore the media presented. As the parents engage in art making, the instructor models encouraging language and talks about how to listen and restate what the child is doing.

Restating the actions of the child is similar to the role of a play by play sports announcer (Webster-Stratton, 2005). For example the parent may observe the child using blue paint and comment ‘I see you are using the blue paint’, this is also called ‘tracking’ and it lets the child know that the adult’s attention is focused on the child (Kottman & Warlick, 1989). Encouraging language is also promoted.

When using encouraging language or praise it is important to focus on the process the child is using to achieve their results, for example, ‘You did a great job of figuring out that tough puzzle’ or ‘I like how you are taking your time to get that color just how you want it’. By focusing the praise on the process instead of ability it allows the child space to practice and feel capable (Dweck, 2007).

The initial curriculum is designed for families dealing with everyday family issues that come with raising typically developing children. The projects are jumping off points for a child directed experience. The child may not be interested in using the items as suggested and may go in another direction entirely. The job of the parent is to support the child and to be actively attentive. It is imperative that the parent be ok with how things are being done by the child and not focused on how it “should” be done.
1. **Title**: Full body drawing

**Materials needed**: Long paper, from butcher or art store, markers, crayons, and paints.

**Preparation**: Have the main space clear of table and chairs; you will need room to spread large paper on the floor, to one side of this space a table should be set up with markers, crayons and washable paints. Let the client choose a drawing medium to use for the outline. After the outline is complete, it can then be filled in with other mediums.

**Technique**: Have the child lie down on the paper and strike a pose. Carefully trace around their body. When the drawing is complete you and the child can color in the form with any media available. Alternately, the child trace can trace the adult’s body.

**Objective**: This activity physically connects the parent and child while the tracing is occurring. The close proximity can stimulate conversation as well.

**Benefits**: The child has the parent’s full attention and physical contact while the tracing is being done. The parent may make minor adjustments to the child’s body to better fit the paper, there may be conversation or some silliness occurring. At this point the child is feeling secure and that they belong.

**Adaptations**: Trace body outside with chalk on the sidewalk. Use a bright light source, project shadow onto paper on a wall or trace hands or head silhouette.

**Crucial C**: Connected

**Contraindications**: This project may not suitable for families dealing with physical or sexual abuse. There may be limitations due to physical impairment, developmental delays and/or sensory processing issues.
2. **Title:** Mask making

**Materials needed:** Premade mask form from craft store or brown shopping bag. Markers, paints, sequins, scrap decorative papers, pipe cleaners, feathers, several types of glue and scissors.

**Preparation:** All materials should be laid out on a table, making sure that there is ample supply for everyone. Having paper towels nearby for cleanup of spills and messy hands is recommended.

**Technique:** Cover the mask in paint or collage. Attach art bits with glue. If using paper bag, cut eye holes in the bag and decorate.

**Objective:** Allows the child to try on different personas or confront scary ideas in a safe and contained way.

**Benefits:** Engages the child’s imagination. There is no right way or wrong way to do this project. As the child realizes they are in control of their artwork they may feel capable. When a child feels capable they are more likely to exhibit courage.

Designing masks offers a great opportunity to ask simple questions and take time to actively listen to the child’s answer. Super hero’s wear masks, what powers would you have if you wore a mask, what kinds of things would you do? How do you show yourself, how are you on the inside?

**Adaptations:** Tape a Popsicle stick to a paper plate, cut eye holes and decorate.

**Crucial C:** Competence, courage.

**Contraindications:** There may be limitations due to physical impairment, developmental delays and/or sensory processing issues.
3. **Title:** Family photo collage  

**Materials needed:** Photocopied family pictures, stickers, several heavy pieces of 8 x 11 piece of paper, glue stick, tape

**Preparation:** All materials should be laid out on a table, making sure that there is ample supply for everyone.

**Technique:** Cutting and pasting

**Objective:** To create a sense of belonging, to encourage family storytelling.

**Benefits:** Family experiences quality “down time” or quiet time. Young children enjoy hearing stories about when they were babies. This activity is a chance to share those stories while engaging in art. Very small children will have an opportunity to help with the gluing and the taping. In addition to feeling capable, children are seeing and hearing that they matter and that they are a valuable part of their family.

**Adaptations:** magazine pictures of favorite objects can also be used.

**Crucial C:** belief that they count, significant, valuable

**Contraindications:** There may be limitations due to physical impairment, developmental delays and/or sensory processing issues.
4. **Title:** Build something

**Materials needed:** Cardboard tubes, shoe boxes, masking tape and glue, fabric bits, odds and ends that might be found in a junk drawer.

**Preparation:** All materials should be laid out on a table, making sure that there is ample supply for everyone. Having paper towels nearby for cleanup of spills and messy hands is recommended.

**Technique:** Stack boxes and tubes together and tape in place, decorate.

**Objective:** To practice working together and listening.

**Benefits:** Exercising the child’s imagination and problem solving skills. This is a child directed activity. It is important to let the child select the building materials and to set the course for how things will be built. The job of the parent is to listen and follow the child’s directions. This requires courage on the part of the parents because it is possible the structure will fail. Keeping in mind that the child is capable and will have the courage to handle that failure is if the parent focuses on all of the things the child did that did work.

**Adaptations:** Legos or wooden building blocks if a permanent structure is not possible.

**Crucial C:** Competent and capable, courage

**Contraindications:** There may be limitations due to physical impairment, developmental delays and/or sensory processing issues.
5. **Title**: Family Time Line Mural

**Materials needed**: A roll of paper purchased or created by taping sheets of drawing paper together, markers, pencils, ink and rubber stamps

**Preparation**: All materials should be laid out on a table, making sure that there is ample supply for everyone.

**Technique**: A line or a thin road is drawn down the middle of the paper. As a family, write down important events on the line in chronological order. Fill in spaces with doodles or illustrations of the events.

**Objective**: Collecting family stories and reminding ourselves where we come from and all that we have experienced. Taking turns listening and talking.

**Benefits**: Quiet time spent together as a family. This is another opportunity for children to hear family stories and to have input into those stories. Being able to see where we came from and what we’ve experienced is a very powerful way to remind us that we’re capable, that we have made a contribution and sometimes it took a lot of courage to get to where we are today.

**Adaptations**: Could be used in conjunction with the family photo collage.

**Crucial**: Connected, counted.

**Contraindications**: There may be limitations due to physical impairment, developmental delays and/or sensory processing issues.
6. **Title**: Paper mâché sculpture/plaster tape

**Materials needed**: Plaster tape or paper mâché, foil, thin wood, cardboard tubes, balloons, sticks, masking tape, dowels, paint, feathers and sparkly gems. Bowl of warm water.

**Preparation**: All materials should be laid out on a table, making sure that there is ample supply for everyone. Having paper towels nearby for cleanup of spills and messy hands is recommended.

**Technique**: Use foils, balloons and other stiff materials to create a base sculpture. Cut strips of plaster tape, place them in the bowl of warm water just until damp and then placed on sculpture. Repeat this technique until the sculpture is covered. Allow to dry and then decorate.

**Objective**: This is a messier version of build something. It requires everyone involved to be brave in dealing with a messy element.

**Benefits**: Parents and children experience being messy together and understand that it is ok. Parents have an opportunity to practice limit setting and encouraging language. The main element of this project is fun and mess. For many people making a mess is not part of their daily life they go out of their way to avoid getting messy. Having courage in this case means the parent-child learn that they can handle being uncomfortable and that they’re willing to try new things.

**Adaptations**: If there are sensory issues around the use of plaster tape or paper mâché colorful duct tape could be used to hold the structure together.

**Crucial C**: Courage

**Contraindications**: There may be limitations due to physical impairment, developmental delays and/or sensory processing issues.
Appendix B: Pre/Post Parent Survey

These questions were initially designed to determine if parents had any interest in learning how to create art with their children as a way of connecting and enhancing communication. This questionnaire could be used as a pre and post class survey as a way to help parents reflect on what is holding them back from engaging with their children in a creative way and encourage them to see the value in the ideas of play and having fun. The questions with an * would be part of an exit survey.
Parent Survey

1. Do you keep art supplies (crayons, paper, markers) easily available for your child(ren)?*  
   Yes or No? If no, what is the reason? Too expensive. Messy. Child not creative. Art not important to us.

2. Do you consider yourself creative?  
   Yes or no?

3. How many minutes a week do you sit with your child(ren) drawing, painting or building>*  
   0-10  10-30  30-45  45-60

4. What art/creative activity did you enjoy as a child?

5. Do you still do this today?  
   Yes or no? If no, why? No time? Not good at it? No need for it.

6. How often do you find yourself playing, laughing, talking with and in general, enjoying being in the company of your child(ren)?*  
   None of the time, some of the time, most of the time, all of the time.

7. How often do you find yourself yelling, arguing, disciplining and generally avoiding the company of your children?*  
   None of the time, some of the time, most of the time, all of the time.

8. Would you be willing to create art with your child(ren) if someone “showed you how”?  
   Yes or no

9. Would you be willing to create art with your children if you knew it would decrease the yelling and arguing between you and your child(ren)?  
   Yes or no
Appendix C: Evaluation Form

Filial Art Therapy by Carol Strand

Did you learn something today you didn't know before?

How will you use the information you obtained?

Was the presentation too long, too short, or just right? How did you come to your conclusion?

Did anything I say confuse you?

On a scale of 1 to 10 for "easy to understand content," would you rate the presentation a high of 10? Please explain your choice.

On a personal level: Did you have fun, and if not, why not?

What was the best thing about this presentation? What was the worst thing?