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The Application of Art Therapy Methods in Alleviating Negative Emotions Among Contemporary Urban Youth

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Abstract

Integrating art therapy methods to alleviate negative emotions among urban youth is crucial. Art therapy can help promote the reduction of negative emotions among urban youth, gradually assisting them in regaining a positive, healthy, and optimistic outlook on life. This fosters a more harmonious daily life and supports the orderly progress of urban development and construction. However, the application of art therapy methods to alleviate negative emotions among contemporary urban youth also encounters certain challenges. This paper analyzes these challenges and provides corresponding suggestions based on problem orientation to facilitate the exchange of ideas. Through systematic analysis and research, exploring effective art therapy methods can provide psychological assistance and support to various youth groups, contributing to the harmonious development of society.

Keywords

Art Therapy Methods; Contemporary Urban Youth; Negative Emotions; Alleviation

Introduction

In the development and construction of society in China, the pace of life is continuously accelerating. The public faces pressures and challenges from work, family, emotions, and other aspects, especially contemporary young people. They face pressures from housing loans, employment, children's education, and more. Helping young people alleviate these pressures has become an important task. Art holds significant importance in the development and progress of human society. It conveys emotional value and plays an irreplaceable role in soothing and healing the soul. Therefore, art therapy methods can also play a role in alleviating negative emotions among contemporary urban youth. They become an important means to help young urbanites relieve stress and adjust their mindset. It is necessary to actively explore the application forms of art therapy methods in alleviating negative emotions among contemporary urban youth, thus playing an auxiliary role in relieving the pressure on urban youth.

1. The Significance of Applying Art Therapy Methods in Alleviating Negative Emotions Among Contemporary Urban Youth

In the fast-paced, high-pressure modern urban life, young people often face pressures from multiple dimensions such as academic pressure, career pressure, interpersonal relationship pressure, etc. These pressures can lead to certain negative emotions like anxiety, depression, and repression among urban youth. These negative emotions can affect the physical health and psychological growth of young people and even impact their daily lives and work. Therefore, effective measures need to be taken to address these negative emotions. As a new psychological intervention method, art therapy has gained widespread attention and recognition in recent years. This therapy helps individuals express

emotions, relieve stress, and improve self-awareness through art forms and the creative process, achieving a certain degree of healing effect. Essentially, art therapy is a non-verbal, creative, and emotional expression healing method. It has a positive significance and influence in helping urban youth alleviate emotions. Strengthening the application of art therapy methods in alleviating negative emotions among contemporary urban youth can help them maintain a positive, healthy, and sunny mindset, enabling them to face life's pressures and challenges more optimistically. This is crucial for promoting the stable and harmonious development of society and advancing the construction of socialist spiritual civilization.

2. Specific Manifestations of Negative Emotions Among Contemporary Urban Youth

With the continuous advancement of urbanization in China, the accelerating pace of life, and increasing work pressure, urban youth face multiple challenges. This can lead to certain negative emotions, manifested in several aspects:

First, Anxiety. Anxiety is a negative emotion among urban youth, which may stem from work pressure, the accelerating pace of life, uncertainties in future planning, etc. It is mainly characterized by restlessness and worries about their ability to cope with various life challenges and changes.

Second, Depression. Depression is a significant manifestation of negative emotions among contemporary urban youth. It is mainly characterized by feelings of low mood, hopelessness, or fatigue when facing various pressures and difficulties in life. Some extreme cases may even lead to suicidal thoughts, which is detrimental to the psychological health of urban youth.

Third, Anger. Anger is a primary manifestation of negative emotions among urban youth. It is characterized by feelings of rage when facing unfair treatment, tense interpersonal relationships, or setbacks at work. This is often manifested as irritability, quick temper, and even aggressive behavior, which is harmful to their social interactions and may bring more unhappiness to their lives.

Fourth, Loneliness. Loneliness is another emotional manifestation among urban youth. In a highly competitive societal environment, some may feel unable to communicate with others, feel isolated in work and life, lacking support and understanding from others. This can significantly impact their psychological health and quality of life.

3. Challenges in Applying Art Therapy Methods to Alleviate Negative Emotions Among Contemporary Urban Youth

3.1 Lack of Awareness

The lack of awareness is a significant challenge in applying art therapy methods to alleviate negative emotions among contemporary urban youth. This challenge affects the effectiveness of alleviating negative emotions and hinders the widespread promotion and application of art therapy methods. In reality, contemporary urban youth often lack knowledge and understanding of art therapy. Many may have never heard of the concept or have only a vague impression of it. Some even confuse art therapy with simple artistic creation or entertainment activities, reflecting a lack of understanding. Additionally, many urban youth are unaware of the potential and benefits of art therapy in relieving stress, emotional management, and enhancing self-awareness. Therefore, they are unlikely to seek help from art therapy methods when experiencing negative emotions.

3.2 Resource Limitations

Integrating art therapy methods into alleviating negative emotions among contemporary urban youth also faces resource limitations, which are a significant challenge affecting the comprehensive application of art therapy methods. Firstly, there is a limitation of venues. In some urban areas, there is a lack of dedicated spaces for art therapy, making it difficult for some individuals to access related services promptly. Even if some cities have art therapy venues, they may be occupied by other activities, making it challenging for urban youth to schedule appointments or visits. Additionally, promoting art therapy methods may require specific equipment or tools, such as painting materials, musical instruments, or dance equipment. However, some regions may lack these resources, limiting the application of art therapy methods. Furthermore, applying art therapy methods to help urban youth alleviate negative emotions requires sufficient professional support. However, this field often faces a shortage of professionals and a lack of skilled personnel, impacting the integration of art therapy methods into alleviating negative emotions among contemporary urban youth.

3.3 Cultural Barriers

The application of art therapy methods in alleviating negative emotions among contemporary urban youth also faces cultural barriers, which are significant challenges. These cultural barriers are primarily reflected in the differences in cultural values. In some urban youth groups, emotional expression may be seen as inappropriate or discouraged behavior, leading some urban youths to be unwilling to use artistic means to express and release emotions. Inwardness and restraint are also components of traditional Chinese culture, influencing some urban youths to emphasize these traits, thereby avoiding the use of art to express their emotions. Additionally, different youths in society have varying preferences and acceptance levels for art forms and culture. Some art forms may only be welcomed by a small portion of the youth population. Thus, when using art therapy methods to help urban youth alleviate negative emotions, these cultural perceptions can influence the effectiveness and quality, leading to suboptimal results.

3.4 Time Conflicts

Integrating art therapy methods into alleviating negative emotions among contemporary urban youth also faces challenges from time conflicts, affecting the widespread use and effectiveness of these methods. In the process of urbanization and development in our country, the pace of social development is relatively fast. Consequently, contemporary urban youth face heavy work and study tasks, often leading to fully packed schedules that leave little time and energy to participate in art therapy activities (Wang Yuan & Zhang Junting, 2023). Furthermore, apart from work and study, some urban youths also engage in social and recreational activities, which occupy a significant portion of their time. For example, current university students not only need to attend various academic tasks but also participate in club activities and social gatherings, occupying their weekends and leisure time, making it difficult for them to find time to engage in art therapy activities.

4. Suggestions for Integrating Art Therapy Methods in Alleviating Negative Emotions Among Contemporary Urban Youth

4.1 Strengthening the Promotion of Art Therapy Methods

To effectively integrate art therapy methods in alleviating negative emotions among contemporary urban youth, the primary task is to strengthen the promotion and education of these methods, enabling more urban youths to recognize their importance and participate in related activities. For example, current multimedia platforms such as Weibo, WeChat, and Douyin can be utilized to publish articles, short videos, or images related to art therapy, spreading knowledge to urban youth. Social media platform promotions are more likely to attract the attention and recognition of young people, who also prefer to browse these platforms in their spare time (Zhao Qiaoming, Bao Kenuo, & Kong Side, 2023). Additionally, public places like libraries, museums, and shopping centers can host exhibitions and activities themed around art therapy, inviting urban youth to participate and experience the charm of art therapy. This approach not only increases awareness of art therapy methods but also encourages youth to seek help from these methods when experiencing negative emotions, achieving the goal of alleviating negative emotions among urban youth.

4.2 Diversifying Forms and Content of Art Therapy

To help urban youth alleviate negative emotions, it is necessary to diversify the forms and content of art therapy, attracting more urban youth to participate and enhancing the effectiveness of alleviating negative emotions. For example, integrating diverse art forms such as painting, music, dance, and drama into art therapy methods can promote the integration of art resources, providing a comprehensive art therapy experience for urban youth. Designing "music and painting combination" art therapy workshops in cities can inspire creativity through listening to music while expressing emotions through painting, promoting the comprehensive application of art therapy methods and helping urban youth alleviate negative emotions (Ma Jian, 2017). Additionally, modern technologies like VR and AR can create novel art therapy experiences, effectively enhancing the alleviation of negative emotions among urban youth.

4.3 Providing Customized Services and Support

Art therapy methods face cultural limitations in alleviating negative emotions among urban youth. To overcome these

limitations, providing customized services and support is essential (Guo Xinge, 2007). For example, offering "one-on-one" initial consultation services before starting art therapy can help understand the emotional state, needs, and expectations of urban youth through in-depth communication. Telephone or online consultations can facilitate this process. Based on each urban youth's assessment results, personalized art therapy plans can be designed. For participants with anxiety, setting up meditation and relaxation-themed painting therapy plans can guide them to draw tranquil natural landscapes to calm emotions, helping alleviate negative emotions.

4.4 Flexible Scheduling of Art Therapy

To meet the diverse needs of urban youth and enhance the effectiveness of alleviating negative emotions, flexible scheduling of art therapy sessions is crucial (Wang Haoyang & Liu Tiejun, 2022). Providing art therapy services at various times, such as weekday evenings, weekends, or specific holidays, ensures that urban youth with different schedules can access these services. Additionally, online art therapy resources such as video tutorials, audio guides, and interactive applications can be developed and provided, allowing urban youth to engage in art therapy at their convenience, highlighting the flexibility of the process and helping alleviate negative emotions anytime, anywhere.

5. Conclusion

In summary, to further enhance the effectiveness of alleviating negative emotions among urban youth, integrating art therapy methods is essential. These methods help urban youth find a positive, healthy, and confident mindset, promoting their mental well-being and contributing positively to the development and construction of our society. Therefore, this paper proposes countermeasures for integrating art therapy methods into alleviating negative emotions among contemporary urban youth, aiming to help them maintain a healthy and positive psychological state.

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