

MAPANLIKHAING PAGBUBULAY-BULAY: NARRATIVES OF SELECTED FILIPINO
ADOLESCENTS ON EXPERIENCES OF VISUAL ART JOURNALING

A thesis presented to
The Faculty of the Department of Psychology
College of Arts and Sciences
Miriam College

In partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the Degree
Bachelor of Science in Psychology

by

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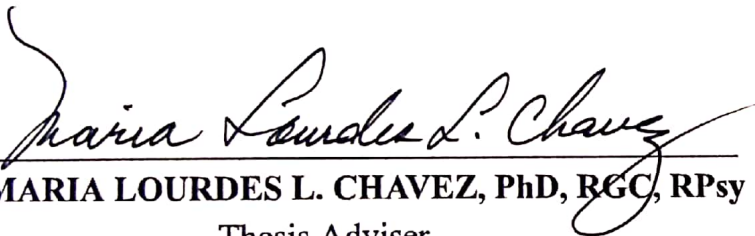
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The Faculty of the Department of Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences, of Miriam College accepts
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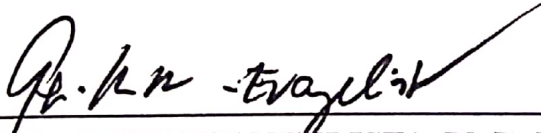
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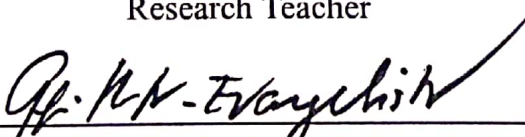
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Abstract

Visual Art Journaling (VAJ) was utilized in this research to explore how young adults find the process in terms of making it an outlet for inner expression thereby facilitating emotional wellness. Nine participants from Metro Manila area were gathered through random purposive sampling through social media. After an orientation given by the licensed Psychologists, the participants went through the exercise guided by the principles of focus oriented-art therapy.

Each participant was interviewed once a week until the end of the study. Results indicate that despite having different personal concerns, VAJ helped them in problem recognition and self-processing. Furthermore, the following themes were identified in relation to how they felt about VAJ: the process helped externalize internal issues, finding meanings in metaphors were helpful in the process of confronting problems and, finally, acceptance facilitated solutions which made them express the desire to move forward.

Keywords: arts, visual journaling, mindfulness, focusing

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The arts have long been ingrained in human history. From the cave art of the Upper Paleolithic era to the more sophisticated and detailed art of the Renaissance, there is much evidence of our ancestors' use of arts in telling stories and expressing thoughts and ideas, as well as a means of escaping into new realities and emotions (Dilks, n.d.). Zaidel (2010) posits that engaging in the arts is an activity exclusive to humans, and he regards the vast number of art produced by human societies across the world as a good “source of ideas, experiences, cultural concepts, creativity and social values” (p. 179).

In line with this, Malchiodi (2013) asserts that it is beneficial for people to engage in art expression, as she believes that the said activity helps the brain function as a whole. Furthermore, immersing oneself in creative art activities enriches and offers ways to give voice to human experience, especially that of the internal experiences, and stimulates learning about the self and the world (Jourard & Landsman 1980, as cited in Gladding, 2015; Whiting, Hendricks, Parr & Jones, 2008, as cited in Gladding, 2011).

Bodhi Simpson (2017) stresses that “words cannot always describe the depth of our felt experiences”. In the same regard, Zaidel (2010) postulates that the various forms of arts – performance, visual, literature, and music – foster a communication between the artist and the viewer and presents a form that is not “afforded by language alone” (p.179).

One form of art is visual art. As described by Morriss-Kay (2010) in a study of the evolution of human artistic creativity, it is an entity intimately intertwined with other forms of art such as music, dance, rituals (marking life landmarks, death, religion, and politics), and language (poetry, song, and story-telling). Existing studies conclude that visual arts making is an evocative

experience (Brillantes-Evangelista, 2013), allowing one to gain insight into themselves and how they feel (Kim, 2010). In addition, research show that art activities allow expression of thoughts and emotions, and that the meditative state it induces helps reduce anxiety and stress (Curl & Forks, 2008; Curry & Kasser, 2005; Mercer, Warson & Zhao, 2010).

The use of arts is, according to Gladding (2011), “enriching for people in all walks of life because it sensitizes them to beauty, helps heal them physically and mentally, and creates within them a greater awareness of possibilities” (Jourard & Landsman, 1980, p. 2). Furthermore, it helps the “human internal experience” and acts as a force for learning about oneself and the world, and the act of artistic expression itself carries its own healing (Gladding, 2011).

The researchers of this study, not only possess an inclination towards the arts, particularly in performance and literature, but also exhibit interest in the visual arts. Taking from the common elements of these art forms, with emphasis on expression, they have decided to embark on this study that will give them the opportunity to explore other means of expression and provide an in-depth experience of how the visual arts can be just as effective in expression as performance arts is, especially to those who, like them, are young adults and whose journey and challenges could somehow be similar to theirs. While this is a non-directive study, the researchers hoped that it might establish visual art journaling as a potential tool for managing emotions and benefit practitioners in the clinical setting in the future, as well.

Review of Related Literature

Creative arts can either be written or auditory (e.g., music, drama, literature) or predominantly visual (e.g., painting, mime, dance, and movement) practices that allow individuals to reflect and express inner thoughts, sentiments, and feelings (Brillantes-Evangelista, 2013; Gladding, 2011; Ngo, 2016). The following types of creative arts can also be used for

expression: photography, sculpture, writing, bibliotherapy, theater, and making or building sand castles (Adibah & Zakaria, 2015).

Gladding (2011) cited the following reasons as to why creative arts are beneficial: he saw it as something helpful in mental congruence; as a source of new energy and reinforcement; as something that provides focus that allows clients to clearly see what they strive for and the progress they make towards achieving that goal; as something that allows and promotes inward and outward expansion of the self in a relaxed and enjoyable manner; as a way to help clients establish a new sense of self through gaining a fresh perspective of themselves; as a means to provide concreteness and insight; as a way to build socialization and cooperation; and lastly, as something that is culturally sensitive.

Visual Art Journaling

In the field of Psychology, the potential of art as a medium to express unconscious processes has long been recognized. The art therapist Margaret Naumburg believed in this potential and added that exploring and converting inner feelings into art could possibly lead to healing (Huntington-Kaye & Peterson, as cited in Sanders, 2013). Carl Jung also believed in the “creative impulse,” which “acts upon the conscious mind from a subconscious level,” a so-called “external force” that wields itself upon the artist, allowing the creation of symbols that “express the unknown, intimating something beyond our powers of comprehension” (Dilks, n.d.). Jung believed in the power of art as a tool to understand the nature of one’s subconscious and even “encouraged his patients to draw and paint their dreams and use active imagination in which image and meaning were integrated, in order to unlock the symbolism at its core” (Dilks, n.d.).

Reflection and expression of thoughts. The process of visual art expression is said to aid in reflection and expression of thoughts. Curl and Forks (2008) reviewed existing studies and

has established that the process of art making is equally or even more important than the end product itself—that through art making, “the expression of emotions by creating something unique is empowering” (Grodner et al., 1982; Moon, 1994; Foster, 1992, as cited in Curl & Forks, 2008, p. 164). The study by Abidah and Zakaria (2015) concluded that through expressive arts, their participants were stimulated to express their thoughts, emotions, ideas, or beliefs through senses that lead them to feel a deep relief, and allowed them to explore their conflicts in life through symbolic and metaphoric pictures. Furthermore, research have shown that the process of visual art making has positive effects on self-esteem, mood, stress, anxiety levels, and even physical ailments—a person’s physical and mental well-being in general (Bolwerk, Mack-Andrick, Lang, Dörfler & Maihöfner, 2014; Curl & Forks, 2008; Stuckey & Nobel, 2010).

One medium used as a therapeutic tool is visual journaling or visual art journaling. Visual journaling primarily uses visual arts (e.g., painting and drawing) accompanied by written reflections. It is described by Malchiodi (2010) as “art diaries” that often contains both images (usually drawings) and words which can be rough drafts and can later become finished artworks. It can also serve as an actual diary meant to contain day-to-day experiences, activities, and emotions.

Form of expression. Most of the time, visual journaling is used outside the clinical setting and alongside art therapy. In cases where it is used in the clinical setting, it is a means of reflection and eventual realization. However, while visual journaling is used in art therapy, the practice is not confined to the field of Psychology and the process of art therapy; it also functions as a form of expressive art. It makes use of the arts as a means of stress relief or to reduce anxiety by using symbols to express feelings and thoughts instead of overtly expressing these. Laurence (2017) described visual art journaling as a way of “getting in touch with the self” and promoted it

because she recognized it as something beneficial, specifically because there is not necessarily a correct way to go about it. Even though there are available guidebooks and websites for individuals who wish to take on visual journaling but have no idea how, it is still fairly useful to practice it without any guide (Laurence, 2017; Wakely, 2010). This is because visual journaling focuses on introspection. It is a medium which allows an individual to express all feelings, including those that cannot be described through words (Simpson, 2017; Wakely, 2010; Brower, n.d.).

Visual journaling has also been described as a combination of “focused artmaking and reflective journaling” (Ganim & Fox, 1999, as cited in Deaver & McAuliffe, 2006, p. 616). It is based on the premise that inner feelings are revealed through imagery and that the use of language in reflective journaling can help people make sense of the images, as it taps into a person’s creativity, as creativity and imagination are believed to be gateways to finding our identity. The amount of visual and written expression depends upon the discretion of the person creating the journal, and the shift in these elements are usually determined by changes in emotions and needs (Mims, 2014; Stuckey & Nobel, 2010). Artistic and creative processes are also able to “create congruence between their affective states and their conceptual sense making” (Yorks & Kasl, 2006, p. 53) by allowing an individual to be aware of their own emotions and feelings (Yorks & Kasl, 2006).

Positive emotional effects. In this regard, the benefit of art creation is the positive effect it has on the individual’s emotional state. Curl and Forks (2008) investigated the therapeutic benefit of artistic creation and mentioned that in 1992, Foster investigated the value of collage-making through a program for institutionalized elders. The program, having given the participants the opportunity to create art about subjects of their own choosing, appeared to

stimulate and “restore their sense of personal control, and to achieve, happier, healthier lives (Foster, 1992, as cited in Curl & Forks, 2008, p. 165). Moon (1994) even expressed that “artistic expression is ultimately a form of self-validation” (p. 165) and that the benefits of artistic creation make creativity an important aspect of a person’s overall mental health. Devlin (2010), in his book “Restoring the Balance,” focused on how the arts contribute to well-being and good health, and some of the key elements of his case studies are the following: the arts facilitate in exploring and learning about the self; expressing emotions and thoughts one was not even aware of; facilitate feelings of flow; genuine enjoyment while participating in the arts helps one make sense of what they feel and who they are; and overall helps keep their busy life balanced.

Art and young people. In line with this, Elpus’ (2013) longitudinal study yielded results that showed that arts positively impact young people widely, from their attitude towards school and peers to instilling virtues such as optimism that they carry until they reach adulthood. The United Nations defines adolescence or “young people” as persons between the ages of 15 and 24 (United Nations Children’s Fund, 2011; United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2013). Additionally, the literature of Coholic (2011) suggested that mindfulness-based, non-threatening manners of expression, develops self-awareness by allowing the youth to focus on their feelings and thoughts without judging these experiences. The development of self-awareness builds their coping and social skills, problem solving skills, and self-esteem (Coholic, 2011).

Furthermore, a study by Kim (2015) conducted on Korean adolescent students, who were both victims of and perpetrators of school violence, found that art expression had the following significant effects on the students: (1) it gave the students an opportunity to experience enjoyment, interest, and aesthetic sensibility; (2) allowed students to have flexible and creative

thoughts, freeing them of the trauma of school violence and allowing recovery; (3) nurtures problem recognition and problem-solving skills, as well a community spirit and cooperation; (4) helped reframe their adversity, encouraging strength and positive emotion; and (5) recognize human dignity through self-exploration. Art expression was also found to provide character training to adolescents for them to ultimately grow into well-rounded individuals.

Growth in Arts. There are seven areas of growth described by Lowenfeld and Brittain, in 1987 (as cited in Hughes-Brand, 2007), which describes the “expression of the total child or adolescent at the time of the drawing or painting” (Hughes-Brand, 2007). These seven areas of growth include: “emotional, intellectual, physical, perceptual, social, aesthetic, and creative growth”. The *emotional growth*, according to Hughes-Brand (2007), can be evaluated by the levels of involvement of the drawing, from low levels with standard repetitions to “high levels of involvement where there are personal meanings and feelings attached” (p. 35), while *intellectual growth* sheds light on the way the adolescent pays attention to his environment, and how much knowledge he utilizes in showing his relationship with the environment. Intellectual growth develops as a person matures. The next area is the *physical growth*, which pertains to motor and coordination skills. For adolescents, translating the way they view themselves into an image is referred to as body imagery and this differs based on “physical characteristics, active physical motions, and emotional states” (Lowenfeld & Brittain, as cited in Hughes-Brand, 2007). Meanwhile, *perceptual growth* refers to how a person develops sensitivity to stimulus such as color, light, space, and form. It also encompasses the way an individual processes and interprets texture as they use different media or work on different surfaces. *Social growth* is evaluated by how children or adolescents identify themselves with their own experiences as well as the experiences of others. Drawing or creating art develops as a means of socially connecting with

others, as well. Furthermore, relationships with others and social activities are often the subject of their artwork, as a means of communicating thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. *Aesthetic growth* refers to the way adolescents and children organize their thinking, feeling, and perceiving “into an expression that communicates one’s thoughts, feelings, and behaviors to others” (Lowenfeld & Brittain, as cited in Hughes-Brand, 2007). Hughes-Brand (2007) further adds that the “organization of the lines, shapes, colors, and forms make up art that is influenced by one’s culture, individual preferences, type of artwork, and the purpose behind the art form” (p. 36). Lastly, *creative growth* is the children’s or adolescent’s ability to imagine, create, explore, and engage in a variety of art experiences that aid in the expression of the inner self, which is reflected in the process of art making and the final product.

The Challenges of Adolescence

The population of this study are youth in their late adolescence stage, where, emotional regulation is more fully established (Bhandarkar, 2006; Blum, 2016), but changes in their physical, biological, cognitive, and most of all, social development pose as challenges (Blakemore, Berenbaum, & Liben, 2009; Susman & Dorn, as cited in Bluth, Roberson, Gaylord, Faurot, Grewen, Arzon & Girdler, 2015) and is marked by the transition into adulthood, posing the challenges of maturing, becoming independent, pursuing a career or further studies, and are faced with more demanding roles and responsibilities (Bhandarkar, 2006; State Adolescent Health Resource Center, n.d.; Zarrett & Eccles, 2006). Eccles and Gootman (as cited in Zarrett & Eccles, 2006) defined the primary challenges involved in this stage as: “(1) the management of these demanding roles, (2) identifying personal strengths and weaknesses and refining skills to coordinate and succeed in these roles, (3) finding meaning and purpose in the roles acquired, and (4) assessing and making necessary life changes and coping with these changes” (p. 15). Along

with these transitions, adolescents are expected to fulfill different roles. As a result of the rapid changes that occur in this stage, adolescents become stressful (Spier, 2010). Dealing with these changes poses great pressure on adolescents, and they are expected to learn to cope with it. However, adolescents are generally seen as people who need support as they cope with the “vulnerability and fragility of their development” (Elkind, as cited in Spier, 2010). Moreover, the psychosocial, physical, and cognitive advantages of the individual; their social support systems available; and the developmental environments that facilitate youths exploring and interacting with these challenges are factors that promote the successful management of these challenges. Studies claim that adolescents “require greater external structure in order to help balance out against their lack of internal structure and their desire for emotional release,” and this gives rise to a need to externalize the internal conflicts felt by the adolescent for them to manage it more easily (Robertson, 2001; Silvan et al., 1999, as cited in Crookes, 2007). A study by Ogena (2014) claims that the same holds true for Filipino adolescents, and it recognizes the need to make this stage more pleasant for them. Existing research sheds light into art as a way for adolescents to externalize their internal feelings. Past research show a promising role for art as an expressive outlet for adolescents, as art offers an external release for adolescents.

Form of communication and expression. The creative arts are perfect responses to this need because, according to Crookes (2007), “adolescents have a strong creative drive and a propensity to express themselves using symbols and metaphors” (p. 54). Burton, Horowitz, and Abeles’ 2000 study (as cited in Moorefield-Lang, 2008) said that existing research supports the idea that the use of the arts in schools can increase students’ motivation, confidence, and creativity and consequently promotes it to help adolescents through this stage. Adolescents are drawn to creative work since they are constantly surrounded with various images and symbols

and are used to non-verbal communication. They consume music and imagery steadily as a way to connect with and to sort out their experiences. In addition, adolescents are in the stage where they are working on their individuality and are looking for opportunities to exercise self-assertion and unique thoughts (Crookes, 2017). Lastly, they are willing to take risks and do not shy away from new experiences. The novelty and self-expression that they look for can both be found in creative expression (Franklin, 2000; Kahn, 1999, as cited in Crookes, 2007).

Art as a means to formulate responses and facilitate solutions. The role of art does not end in aiding external release. Art also helps enhance the way adolescents address their problems, this is made possible by “*visual thinking*”, which was defined by psychologist Rudolph Arnheim as a way to externalize ideas so they can be visually represented (Hughes-Brand, 2007). Burton (as cited in Júlíusdóttir, 2003), asserts that producing visual images helps young people to imagine, explore, discover, inquire, develop new skills, reflect, and formulate responses in expressive form. Furthermore, Rubin (as cited in Hughes-Brand, 2007), postulates that visual representations or art forms such as drawings, sculptures, and images “can also express a certain thought, feeling, or behavior symbolically or literally that cannot be expressed in words”. These images also have the power to increase the sense of control an individual feels over natural forces. Rubin (as cited in Hughes-Brand, 2007) referred to this power as the “magic power of the image”.

Past research by Brillantes-Evangelista (2013), Gladding (2011), Ngo (2016) have explained the nature of creative arts and have established the beneficiality of the creative arts to each person. Furthermore, studies by Abidah and Zakaria (2015), Curl and Forks (2008), and Sanders (2013) emphasized the benefits of using creative arts as means of expressing oneself to

consequently feel deep relief and allow people to explore thoughts, emotions, and conflicts through symbolic and metaphoric ways, which has been found to help in expression of thoughts.

In line with these findings, visual journaling has been promoted as an effective means of expressive arts by the studies of Brower (n.d.), Simpson (2017), and Wakely (2010). They noted that it is particularly helpful in introspection which is invaluable when it comes to expressing oneself through arts. Past studies on visual art activities, including the ones on collage-making by Foster (1992) and art making by Curl and Forks (2008), both yielded positive results, were all done with an adult and clinical population. However, Elpus' (2013) study on art and adolescents show that adolescents also greatly benefit from engagement with arts, especially as Blakemore, Berenbaum and Liben, Susman and Dorn (as cited in Bluth, Roberson, Gaylord, Faurot, Grewen, Arzon & Girdler, 2015), all agree that people in their adolescents face challenges in various facets of their life. Similarly, Ogena (2014) said that these challenges are also faced by Filipino adolescents. Robertson (2001) and Silvan et al., (1999, as cited in Crookes, 2007) assert that there is an urge for adolescents to externalize their inner conflicts brought about by these challenges, which is why Crookes (2007) suggests that adolescents engage in expressive arts.

However, despite all these knowledge, there is a dearth of research on visual journaling as a medium for expressive arts for adolescents. More so, the researchers have not encountered any study that has focused on visual journaling for Filipino adolescents. It is for this reason that the researchers embarked on this study to address this gap in research and hopefully contribute to the flourishing research on expressive arts and visual journaling for adolescents.

Theoretical Framework

Focusing and Focusing-Oriented Expressive Arts Therapy

The concept of Focusing Oriented Therapy was introduced by Eugene Gendlin in 1960. Rappaport (2009), who consequently introduced Focusing-Oriented Expressive Arts therapy, defines Focusing as a mental and physical practice of getting in touch and embracing a person's "felt sense" towards an experience or situation. She adds that welcoming it leads the body to wisdom and paves way for "healing and growth." It allows the person to consider how a situation affects his entire being—mentally, physically, and spiritually—in the present moment. The felt sense is characterized as a "direct bodily awareness and experience of our inner state." It goes beyond knowing emotions such as happiness or anger but feeling that it is possible to extract a feeling and understand everything about it—what it made of, where it is from, and what its effects are (Rappaport, 2009, pp. 23 & 29).

The six steps of focusing according to Gendlin are as follows (Rappaport, 2009):

1. Clearing a Space
2. Choosing an issue and felt sense
3. Handle/symbol: a word, phrase, image, gesture, or sound
4. Resonating
5. Asking
6. Receiving (p.37)

This study will introduce its participants to principles borrowed from a practice known as Focusing-Oriented Expressive Arts Therapy, which is a theory and method that utilizes Gendlin's method and Focusing-Oriented therapy with art therapy practice and theory. This will be discussed further in the method section.

Narrative/Constructivist Approach

George Kelly (in Grainger, 1990, as cited in Brillantes-Evangelista, 2013) postulates that people's experiences, thoughts, behaviors, and feelings are determined not only by reality but by efforts to predict the world to develop a structure on how they make sense of their lives. Without a structure, people are unable to fully grasp or make sense of their place in this world and fail to fully develop a personal identity (Boeree, 2006; Brillantes-Evangelista, 2013). In addition, according to a study by Brillantes-Evangelista (2013), the narrative/constructivist approach used in creative arts therapy states that individuals have a dominant narrative, specifically their own dominant life story that is shaped by their experiences and how they see these experiences. This story can be projected into an art form through the use of images or metaphors as a means of externalizing this dominant narrative. With the help of various art forms, the individuals are able to see their life story as something apart from themselves, and it will eventually allow them to reflect on and reconstruct these dominant narratives of their lives.

“To construct” means to organize or to create order. Thus, the main emphases of the constructivist approach are the dynamic structure of human experience, connection rather than separation, and process (Flick, 2004; Mahoney & Granvold, 2005). It also emphasizes the importance of human relationships in well-being and development (Mahoney & Granvold, 2005). With the use of this approach, the researchers will be able to identify the process involving visual journaling as well as how each individual makes sense of their experiences in the activity.

Statement of the Problem

Visual arts, as discussed by aforementioned studies, are perceived to have positive impacts on individuals, especially when it comes to self-expression and understanding oneself. However, there is a dearth of research about visual journaling among adolescents. Given this, the researchers aim to embark on this study guided by the following questions:

1. What do the participants think of visual art journaling as an expressive activity before, during, and after the process?
2. What are the significant experiences that participants have with visual journaling?
3. What are the narratives that arise from the participants' visual journal entries?

CHAPTER II

METHODS

This research used a qualitative design, specifically, the narrative approach. Reismann (2002) describes narratives as providing “windows into lives that confront the restraints of circumstances” (p. 707). In this approach, the focus was on the stories and experiences of each individual, allowing researchers rich insight into each individual’s perspective of these experiences and find manifest points in each story, to be able to understand each individual as a whole (Watson, 2014). Furthermore, this approach can be useful for expressing perceptions of individuals or populations, especially those of underrepresented ones (Reismann, 2002, as cited in Watson, 2014).

Participants

The researchers invited ten (10) college students who met the following criteria: must be aged 17-24; and must have some background in sketching or at least be inclined towards visual arts. The participants were selected through random sampling and were invited mainly via Facebook through the use of publication materials sent to friends who referred willing participants. However, due to the non-clinical nature of the study, willing participants who have been diagnosed with psychological conditions were excluded from the study. One participant dropped out of the study due to conflict in schedules.

Setting

There were three settings for this study. For the participants’ visual journaling orientation and initial session, the participants were invited to Miriam College where two rooms were reserved. For the first batch, orientation was conducted in Miriam College’s Discussion Room 2, and for the second batch, orientation was conducted in Miriam College’s Learning Commons.

After the orientation, the participants may do the visual art journaling activity with one of the researchers, in their respective homes, or anywhere during their free time, as long as it is conducive to their art journaling. Lastly, the weekly interviews and the final interviews were conducted at venues where one-on-one interviews were done without interruption.

Instruments

To serve as main instruments of this study, the researchers used two sets of semi-structured interviews, created with the guidance of, and reviewed and approved by their research adviser, Dr. Malou Chavez, and their research professor Dr. Grace Brillantes-Evangelista; as well as the visual art journal entries of the participants, which include both the visual art entry, and the reflective journal. The interview questions were anchored and written through the lens of the theories discussed in the theoretical framework and further guided by the research questions. Each interview with the participants was voice recorded, and conducted with the aid of an interview guide which consists of a list of questions and topics to be covered during the interview (Cohen, 2006). The use of a semi-structured interview was chosen to simultaneously establish a more flexible interaction between the researchers and participants, and tackle the subjects that need to be covered.

Weekly and Final Interviews

The weekly and final interviews were conducted with a guide, designed to help check up on the weekly progress of the participants and their felt sense during the time of the interview. The final interview guide was structured to probe deeper and inquire about the overall experience of the participants, and what they have observed about themselves and about visual journaling before, during, and after the entire process.

Data Gathering Procedures

The researchers first underwent their own visual journaling sessions, with a licensed psychologist, and conducted a session with two willing participants who were oriented about visual journaling and debriefed afterwards, which served as their pilot study, before reaching out to college students in universities and colleges situated in Katipunan, Quezon City. Researchers accomplished this through contacting friends via social media, specifically: Facebook, where their friends referred them to willing participants; and willing participants were personally given consent forms informing them of the nature of the study and the request to invite them to participate, and to ensure that they willingly let the researchers use the information they will disclose for the purpose of this study. It also contained the assurance that all their information will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will not be used for any other purpose beyond this study.

Orientation and Initial Session

For the first part of the data gathering, the researchers introduced visual journaling to all the participants through a group orientation conducted by a licensed psychologist guided by the principles of the Focus-Oriented Expressive Arts Therapy (FOAT) Model which puts emphasis on Focusing which, as described by Rappaport (2009), is a “mind/body practice of bringing a welcoming, friendly attitude towards one’s felt sense of an issue, situation, or experience” (p.23). Borrowing the FOAT process employed by Rappaport (2009), the study began by making sure that the participants felt safe and that their orientation reminded them to welcome, befriend, and accept their “inner felt sense” on a situation, experience, or problem. The participants had to wait for the body to be in touch with a felt sense and wait until a handle/symbol (image) emerged. They must then check it for underlying feelings and express these feelings through visual

journaling. There is usually a “felt shift” that follows (p.19). The researchers provided them with a starting kit containing the materials they would need for the entire duration of the activity. This kit includes a sketch pad, colored pencils, a pencil and eraser, and a glue stick, however, researchers brought paint, as well, and participants were allowed to use other materials they have at home for their visual art journaling.

The next step was “Asking,” followed by “Receiving,” both of which are usually done to inquire about the participants’ process. For the purpose of this study, this was done through the interviews which will be discussed at length later.

Visual Journaling

Following the orientation, the participants were allowed to bring home their starting kits for them to conduct their visual art journaling during their free time. The participants were expected to come up with at least one entry per week for one month but were more than welcome to create more than that.

Weekly Interviews

The researchers met the participants once a week during the participants’ free time for the weekly interviews. These interviews were conducted in a conducive place where there were no interruptions. During the weekly meetings, guided interview formats pre-approved by a registered psychologist were used to interview participants to inquire about their reflective journals and experiences with visual journaling, with emphasis on how they felt through during the process of visual journaling. Specifically, the interviews consisted of the following inquiries: the participants’ creative process and output, the medium they used and their reason for choosing

it, the style they followed if there are any, their mood when in the process of visual journaling, and whether their work was inspired by a place, person, or event.

Final Interview

Lastly, a semi-structured final interview was conducted to inquire about the participants' general feelings about their visual journaling process, the significant experiences they had during the activity, what they discovered about themselves, and how they felt before, during, and after the activity.

The data analyzed came from multiple sources, including the images drawn, the accompanying reflective journals, the interview responses about the images drawn after each session, and the interview responses about their process.

Ethical Considerations

This study was done with the best interest of the participants in mind. The researchers adhered to the Code of Ethics provided by the Psychological Association of the Philippines (2009) and the National Ethical Guidelines for Health and Health Research by the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board (2017), with emphasis on upholding and safeguarding the rights, dignity, and welfare of the participants and exercised utmost care to keep their identities private throughout this study and any subsequent circumstance related to this study. The researchers took the following measures to guarantee that the aforementioned ethical guidelines were followed:

The researchers proceeded with this study guided by the belief that it will provide social value, which means that the “results are expected to bring about a better understanding of related issues, or contribute to the promotion of well-being of individuals, their families, and

communities” (Philippine Health Research Ethics Board, 2017), particularly to the late adolescent population.

Furthermore, no vulnerable participants—characterized as the ones incapable of deciding for themselves or are at a greater risk for harm, including the mentally and physically disabled and those who come from the marginalized sectors—were invited to participate in the research. Justice will be upheld in making sure that participants who qualify were chosen fairly and without discrimination.

Once participants were chosen, each of them was given consent forms to inform them of their role and rights as a participant. The consent forms included the permission request to audio record interviews and report outputs, but with the guarantee that their identity will be protected at all times and at no point will it be revealed even after the data has been reported.

As for risk and safety concerns, the researchers sought to it that the risk for the potential occurrence of unpleasant emotions or memories while doing the activity was kept to a minimum by making sure that the activity was introduced and done with utmost care; in other words, the participants were not deliberately exposed to harmful procedures and questions. Once the data gathering process was over, each participant was debriefed with the aid of a debriefing statement. As a precaution, the researchers underwent training for basic psychological first aid to make sure they have the capacity and competence to administer it, should the participants need it any time during the study. Furthermore, if the activity causes psychological distress that needs professional attention, the researchers will refer the participants to professionals and will shoulder the professional fees that might crop up.

In terms of transparency, the researchers were clear about the areas of the study that might have an impact on the participant’s rights and well-being, which was discussed at length in

the informed consent. Furthermore, the data report will be truthful and will not be altered to be more favorable.

All ethical procedures for research provided by the aforementioned codes of ethics was observed in conducting the research process.

Data Analysis Procedures

Following the Narrative Analysis Model used by Watson (2014), the researchers first transcribed all the interview responses, took note of the visual journal and reflective entries of the participants, and made a physical and electronic database. After which, the researchers used descriptive coding, in-vivo coding, and narrative coding. This was done to make the data more concise and to note the important details that arise.

Coding

Coding was done to break down the data into “semantic units of meaning” to form a connection and identify relationships among various data sources (Creswell, 2007, as cited in Watson, 2014). It is meant to capture the essence of the data. The researchers coded several times once they collected the data, and reviewed these codes by comparing and contrasting the data gathered through interview responses with the reflective journal entries.

The researchers used the following types of coding: descriptive, in-vivo, and narrative coding. These types will be discussed further in the next paragraphs.

Descriptive coding, as described by Saldaña (2009), is meant to summarize in a word or a short phrase, the general topic of passages. This type of coding allowed the researchers to make the data more manageable and ease into more in-depth analysis. After which, a list of all the descriptive codes was created.

This was done alongside *in-vivo* coding, which, according to Saldaña (2009), pertains to words or short phrases extracted directly from the participant's actual language. Meaning, the researchers did not have to assign descriptive labels to the exact words and phrases used by the participants. It allowed the researchers to remain in touch with the data as the responses and the entries remained unaltered. As it is with descriptive coding, in-vivo codes that had the same essence were clustered together on a list.

Once the researchers finished with descriptive and in-vivo coding, *narrative coding* was employed. Polkinghorne (1995) suggests that narrative coding factors in the principles of literary elements while coding, guiding the researchers into forming stories as they identify the type of “narrative, genre, purpose, setting, plot, character, characterization, form, point of view, elements, and spoken features”(Polkinghorne, 1995; Saldaña, 2009, as cited in Watson, 2009).

All data sources were coded and re-coded using the aforementioned techniques. An initial list of codes was used for each of the coding techniques. After which, similar codes from the initial lists were combined to come up with a master list of the most appropriate codes.

Categorizing

Lastly, Watson (2009) suggests that “the master list of codes will then be re-coded to develop broader categories”, which pertains to broader units of meaning with the same essence. The initial process has been described by Saldaña (2009) as the first cycle coding, while the process of categorizing codes is referred to as second cycle coding.

Following Watson's (2014) model further, the codes were developed into categories using the second cycle method of pattern coding. Miles and Huberman (as cited in Watson,

2014), defines pattern codes as, “explanatory or inferential codes, ones that identify an emergent theme, configuration, or explanation”. The codes were then reduced into categories.

Synthesizing

Once the codes and categories were identified, a chronological ordering of the data or “synthesizing”, was done and a narrative draft for each participant was completed. After which, an analysis of the significant events, perspectives, reflections, and recurring patterns regarding the visual journaling activity for each participant was done.

Narrative Writing

Once synthesizing was done, narratives were written, including the narrative elements, plots based on the chronological pattern, and visual journal entries that encapsulate the participant’s narrative. The plots were divided into three: beginning with visual journaling, experiences of visual journaling, and final reflections on visual journaling.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

This section presents the narratives of the nine participants who were introduced to visual art journaling through an orientation. Participants had the option to have a visual art journaling session with the researchers, or do visual art journaling on their own, guided by a set of instructions provided by the researchers. Both options entailed having an interview with the researchers afterwards. Each researcher had five to six participants they would meet for four weeks.

Narratives

The succeeding paragraphs contain each participant's narrative regarding his or her visual art journal entries and the narratives arising from these entries, their visual art journaling experiences and how they perceive the activity as an avenue for expression before, during, and after the entire process; and their significant experiences from visual art journaling. In the interest of confidentiality, the researchers have assigned a pseudonym for each participant. The general findings, as well as the similarities and differences across all entries, will be discussed in-depth in the discussion section.

Violet

Violet is a 21-year-old female Filipino college student, awaiting her graduation rites.

Violet is a college student who has completed the required units for her degree, and is just waiting for her graduation rites. During the time of the research, she was preoccupied with handling her family's papers for their Australian citizenship visa, her search for a job – specifically, an internship which will help her grow. Violet puts great importance in her work, she mentioned that she greatly values work, and puts a great deal of self-worth in what she does.

Violet expressed feelings of frustration, uncertainty, and anxiety about her future as a result of searching for work, and fixing papers for their visa. During the first session, she expressed feeling less calm after making her first entry (Figure 1).

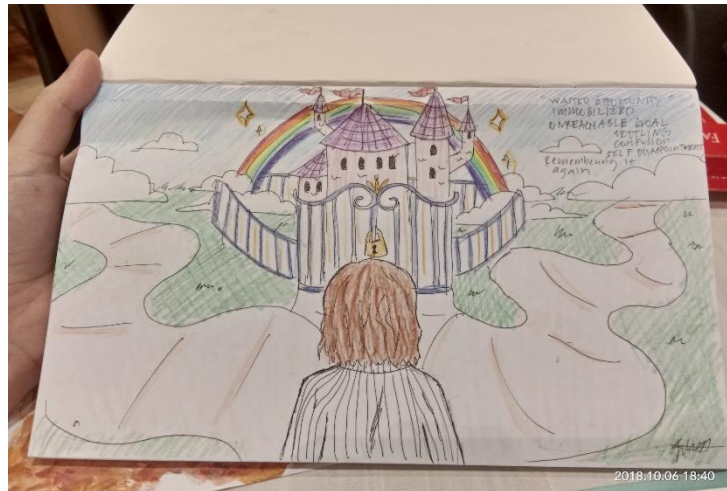


Figure 1. The Locked Gates

She shared, “Cause I remembered like – [okay], because this week I’ve been like doing so much paper works, visa applications, job interviews, but I feel so confused or like lost cause there is this internship that I was eyeing for the longest time. Like I fit the job description, it was my dream place to apply, and then I’m handling the paperwork and then the passport renewal;

visa appointments. Like I totally forgot about it, I was lax, I didn't even get to apply. So when I checked the opportunity again, it was closed. And I feel so – like it's my fault. It's so stupid, but I don't wanna work anywhere else, even if I go to all these interviews and stuff, 'cause I don't wanna work anywhere else and I don't know if the opportunity is like gonna pop up again. I know I should move on and stuff like that but I get so fixated”.

Furthermore, visual art journaling only clearly presented the problem to her but did not change the situation, resulting in her feeling frustrated.

In her entry, she wrote: “Wasted opportunity. Immobilized. Unreachable goal. Settling. Confusion. Self-disappointment. Remembering it again”.

In subsequent entries, Violet showed trends of frustration, worry and uncertainty about her future and the choices she will make (Figure 2).



Figure 2. A Cliff

For her, the entries represent the anxiety she felt. Violet mentioned feeling sad before meeting with the researcher for her second session when she made her second entry (Figure 2).

On that day, she woke up early thinking she was going to have a job interview, only to find out it was a multi-level marketing scheme. She felt that her time was wasted.

Violet felt boredom before making the entry, but felt more relaxed when she started making it, until it was time for her to ride the bus home. Her initial vision for the entry was different; however, she thought it turned out well, and that the sun, flower, and sky were last minute additions. She described the cliff as being akin to a wave where it goes up and down; which she perceives to be closely related to anxiety and being in a state of uncertainty.

Her insight regarding her entry had to do with optimism. However, she admitted that it was hard to stop being anxious about her future. For her, the entry represents trying again, wondering what is to come, and trying to move on.

Meanwhile, she described her third entry as a symbol of acceptance. For her third session, she was in distress prior to meeting the researcher. She started to relax because the bus ride on her way to the meeting place had little to no passengers, was clean, and the music she listened to was enjoyable.



Figure 3. Acceptance

Violet further added that her third entry (Figure 3) looked like a heavenly scene, as the entry looked like clouds. Before making the entry, Violet felt happy; however, while making the entry, she admitted that it was a challenge to translate the idea onto paper. After accomplishing the entry, she kept adding more elements to it, which made the entry look quite different from how she imagined it, yet the outcome still pleased her the same way her second entry did.

She shared that this entry was one of her favorites, because it was inspired by a video essay she watched about abstract art. She believed that the video might have influenced her to make abstract art as well, and during the session, she found herself not wanting to draw concrete images, and shared that all she imagined were colors.

When asked about her insights regarding the image, she expressed that she had been stressed weeks prior to the session, but has somehow accepted that she has been feeling stressed, and this acceptance made her feel relaxed.

In her last entry (Figure 4), Violet tried ink as a new medium. She found it challenging to use ink, as it required more control. She described this entry as a manifestation of her anxiety, and of the mess and uncertainty of what was going on in her head at that moment.



Figure 4. Confusion

While making this entry, she asserted that she knew what elements she wanted in her entry – lots of lines that differed in their thickness. However, she did not know what exact image she wanted to make. In her statement, she added that this was the first entry where she did not know what the outcome would be and expressed that she simply let her hands do the work. After accomplishing the entry, she stated, *“I noticed that compared to before, most of my works are now leaning towards the abstract, compared to like a concept or a definite thing; a material item. So, I guess now I can just let myself loose and do any shape, like art doesn’t have to make sense”*. After making the entry, she was surprised by the outcome, and added that she could have done better if she was not wary of running out of ink.

For her insights, Violet shared that she drew mountains because she experiences encountering new problems after overcoming old ones. In a way, mountains represented her unending problems. She also added that her entry was “messy” because her mind was full of contradicting thoughts, and expressed that she did not know what to do; that she was lost.

When asked about her experiences in visual art journaling, she mentioned that she enjoys and likes it, and maintained that it is fun and relaxing, and it makes her feel productive. Visual art journaling gave her the opportunity to make art, which is one of her hobbies. The most significant entry for her was her first entry, because her feelings were fresh. She expressed, *“I still didn’t get the hang of flow, now I know like what it means to you know, let yourself go and go with the flow. Before I thought it was a competition like I was surrounded by a lot of people, so I couldn’t let myself fully go. It was very structured, and then realizing that, it seemed to lack in authenticity because it was so planned out, like I knew, but if you let yourself go, you can make like really wonderful pieces that you never thought you could make”*.

As she went through the process, she experienced the feeling of letting herself go, and was surprised that two of her entries were quite different from her initial visualization, but nevertheless, turned out well.

Violet's insights about her entries came after making them. By the end of her sessions, Violet was her usual energetic and cheerful self. She thought of her visual art journaling journey as fun and relaxing, and found visual journaling to be enjoyable, as it provided her a means of accomplishing artwork.

It is notable how Violet's responses were consistent, such as when she mentioned that all her entries show a lot of frustration, uncertainty, and dealing with the same problem. She further suggests that visual art journaling be done every other day, or whenever one pleases to do so.

Sunny

Sunny is an 18-year-old student who dabbles in performing arts and student leadership. Sunny hails from a family of artists and has been into arts – performing and painting, since her early childhood years.

Sunny has a notably lively personality which she takes pride in. However, when Sunny started her visual journaling journey, she was stressing out over her attitude towards school-related concerns. She talked about how proactive she used to be but finds herself a little too relaxed lately. She said she suddenly became easily distracted and wanted to lay-low as a resolve.

Sunny's first entry was a figure of a girl in motion (Figure 5). She mentioned that her reflections for this entry centered on self-identity.

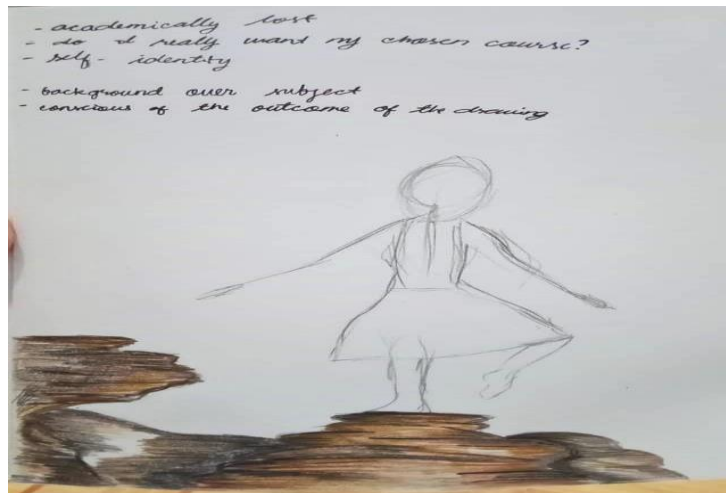


Figure 5. Self-Identity

She talked about how she was just telling her family about a man she met, and how excited they seemed about it, which bothered Sunny because she believes she cannot bring herself to be attracted to men. She explained that the girl represents her and the fact that she is just going through the motions as of the moment. The background of the image is supposed to

represent areas of her life – including her course and gender identity, which seem to be set for her by others. While she is not opposed to all these, she contends that there is a need for her to delve deeper into herself and stop blindly submitting to things readily laid out for her.

During the second interview, Sunny was recovering from an illness and divulged that she had undergone a wide range of emotion that week. This was reflected in her second entry (see Figure 6), which was an image of a woman in tears, accompanied by the phrases: “*pagod na pagod*”, “*laki na ng pinagbago ko*”, “*hadlang ka sa gusto kong gawin sa school*”, “*kailan?*” which respectively translates to, “I am so tired; I have changed a lot; you are a hindrance to what I want to do in school; and, when?”

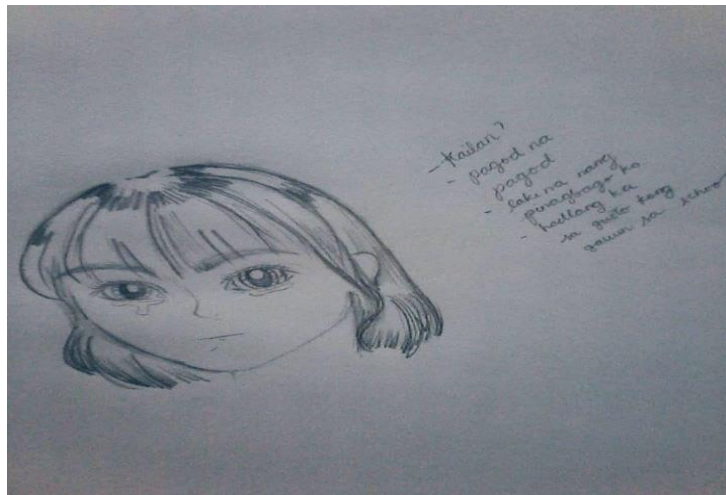


Figure 6. Emotions

According to her, the entry was created when she was dealing with problems with her peers. She explained that the issues her peers seemed to be obsessing over did not seem appropriate for their age – acknowledging this led her to the realization that there has been a lot of change in her, and that she has become more understanding over the years. She said she has chosen not to dwell on what was happening around her, but expressed her frustration because the

fixation of her peers on said issues hampered the productivity of the group, and put too much burden on her, especially in school-related tasks. Thus, the image of the crying lady.

Sunny's third and fourth entries were collections of scribbles drawn throughout the week. She shared that the images were drawn randomly, and reflected the different emotions and cravings she felt throughout the week, her favorite being the image of a sweet potato (Figure 8).



Figure 7. Cravings



Figure 8. Kamote (Sweet Potato)

On her third week of participation, Sunny shared that making entries for her visual journal helped lull her to sleep and calmed her down. She reflected on how much she has on her plate as a student leader, performer, daughter, and student, and thought that it was slowly becoming too much for her to handle. She claimed that visual journaling helped calm her down everytime she felt uneasy that week, and expressed extreme comfort with the activity that she already feels uninhibited when coming up with entries.

During her last interview, Sunny revisited one of her concerns during the first week of her visual journaling – her confusion regarding her gender identity (Figure 9).



Figure 9. Confusion

Her confusion started when she met a girl with whom she thought she was attracted to. To better make sense of this, she initiated a conversation with her peers that made her rethink her gender identity. Sunny initially thought that she must identify as bisexual because her interests and movements were traditionally feminine, however, she admits to being exclusively attracted to females.

Sunny was told that being exclusively attracted to females meant she is not bisexual, and most likely makes her a lesbian. Zinik (1985) defines bisexuality as the state of being attracted to both females and males in either a romantic or sexual manner. The conversation confused her further. When asked what she now identifies as, she said she is still struggling with the terms but is certain about what her preferences, a confusion which manifested in her fifth entry (Figure 9).

During her last week of participation, Sunny continued to create entries with random themes. For instance, she sketched her desired looks (Figures 10 and 11) for their upcoming team building seminar.



Figure 10. Team Building Inspiration



Figure 11. Beach Inspiration

Lastly, Sunny also made a sketch of her desired hairstyle for her team building seminar. She says she is the type of person who enjoys planning these details ahead of time.



Figure 12. Beach Look

During the final interview, when asked what her most significant entry is, Sunny referred to the two drawings related to her father (Figures 13 and 14), both of which she sketched on her final week.



Figure 13. Inconsiderate Father

She expressed not being able to fully empathize with her father, who has been blind for ten years and was slowly regaining sight the past few months, but against the advice of his

doctor, lifted something heavy. She found it inconsiderate because it meant that, she had to miss school, and her mother and brother to miss work, to take care of him (Figure 13).

The entries were key parts of Sunny's narrative as she went beyond looking inwards and considered others for the first time, as she shared. Sunny felt frustrated about the situation (Figure 14).



Figure 14. Frustration

Sunny liked the entries because it did not just involve herself and her thoughts. To her, it meant that she was becoming more conscious of those around her. After a month of visual journaling, Sunny discussed her visual journaling journey. Sunny asserts that visual journaling is about self-reflection. Ultimately, it helped her pose the question: "*bakit ba ganito buhay ko?*" [why is my life like this?] and helped her explain things in ways she could not with words. Sunny believes that visual journaling prompted her to go back to the events that bring forth an emotion and for that reason, her insights usually came to her as she drew her entries. She believes that when it comes to visual journaling, you cannot create something if you have not been through it.

When asked if she has learned anything from visual journaling, she answered: “*Grabe, natuto ako to be more patient towards others, tapos yung reflections mo, wag mo kikimkimin, express mo na di ka makakasakit sa sarili mo*” [Wow, I learned to be more patient towards others, and to not keep my reflections to myself and to express them without hurting myself], and when asked if she noticed any change in her, she said that she has become more patient and understanding towards others.

She credits visual journaling for allowing her to shift from painting to sketching, and realized that sketching allowed her to create more freely. She also mentioned during her second session that she realized that it is okay to express herself in more abstract entries, but added that she was more comfortable with doing concrete images because they captured fully what she was feeling on the inside. She mentioned that her insights sometimes stem from what she already had in mind before sketching, some became clear while in the process, while some only made sense when she was done with the entry. Sunny repeatedly mentioned that visual journaling was addicting for her, and that she was very glad to have found another outlet for self-expression.

Hazel

Hazel is a 21-year-old female college student-athlete, she has an inclination to the Arts and does written journaling.

Hazel, is a 21-year-old college student, taking up Business Management in Miriam College. She has an inclination towards visual arts, as a hobby, and has experience in written journaling. Written journaling is her usual way of expressing her feelings and does not have the experience in visual art journaling. She finds herself creative when she feels dull and sad. When engaging in these creative activities, she uses pencil, pen, and paper. She is able to fill a blank canvas, such as a piece of paper, with her creative ideas which gave her a sense of relief.

Throughout the research, Hazel tried to find time to manage her schoolwork, being in the school swim team, to communicating often with her long distance partner, Cole. All of which contributed to her feeling frustrated.

Whenever the researcher would meet with Hazel, there is a trend of her describing her day as tiring, draining, and full of tasks or activities. After every session, she describes visual art journaling as relieving.

In her first visual art journaling session, she said she had a long day as she came to school at 7:30 am and stayed there until 9:00 pm for training. On that day, she described her whole visual art journaling experience as intense due to the mix of emotions she was feeling. After accomplishing her entry, she felt indifferent upon seeing the image, *“but then seeing it as a vision... I don’t know... At least I have an image”*.

She explained that even if visual journaling presented a new way of assessing her feelings, she preferred written reflection as words helped her assess her emotions more.

In her first entry (Figure 15), she used acrylic paint, and stated that each stroke of paint helped her express her feelings better, *“The rough edges – the hard strokes, light strokes, tell their own story”*.

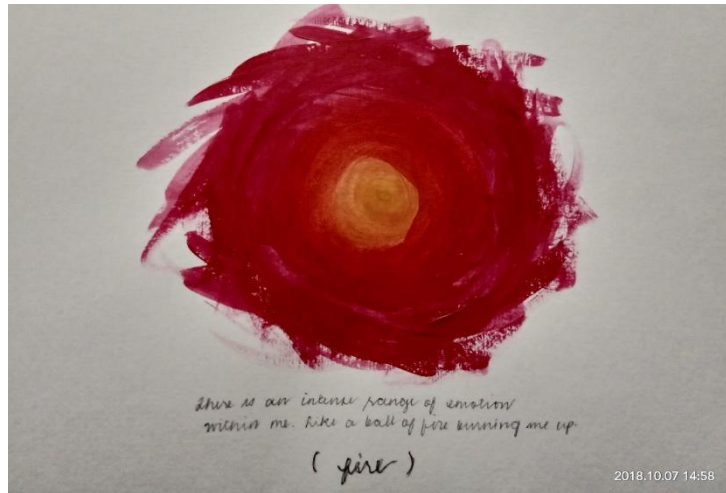


Figure 15. Fire

When asked about it, she described it as *“a ball of emotions pitted together into a ball”*, displaying feelings of anger and anxiety. Hazel also related the entry to the sun, expressing that *“it shares its light to the moon”*. In her entry, she has written: *“There is an intense range of emotions within me. Like a ball of fire burning me up”*.

During Hazel’s second session, she mentioned she had a *“mentally draining”* day, as it was filled with tasks she had to do one after another. She described her visual art journaling experience as fun as she had the chance to use paint, which she enjoys and only gets to use when she does visual art journaling. In her second entry (Figure 16), Hazel used acrylic paint again, expressing that she did not want to use much water in order for the colors to look more solid. She used the solid colors to represent her intense emotions. She described her second entry as reminiscent of the balls of emotions in the movie *Inside Out*, with the color blue, in her entry, representing sadness, she elaborated by saying: *“because nothing is going the way I want them*

to” and red representing anger as she was feeling both angry and sad, *“because, why am I sad? In a way, they clash”*. Hazel has also shared how she processes her emotions, *“I guess the way I process my emotions is like – when you have earplugs and you put them in your bag and when you pull them out, you have to untangle them”*.



Figure 16. The Balls of Emotion

Towards the end of the session, Hazel was asked about her insights regarding her entry and stated: *“I’m so full of anger and sadness”*; which, towards the end of the research, she admitted was the only emotions she initially felt, yet as her visual art journal journey progressed, felt more emotions emerge from them. In this second entry, Hazel appreciates how intense her emotions are, as it shows that she does things wholeheartedly, and that expressing emotions is *“a good thing”*; that one needs to feel pain before they heal.

Before meeting with the researcher for her third session, Hazel expressed that she was feeling tired from school as she had an exam in Physics, and was also tired from having driving lessons that day. However, after accomplishing her third entry, she felt relaxed and light, *“because I got to let it all out through painting and talking”*. To Hazel, being able to let out her

emotions and unload overwhelming feelings, as well as talk with the researcher about these emotions, relieved her and made her feel lighter.

In her third and fourth entry, she shared that these entries of hers were influenced mostly by her partner, Cole, since their relationship was something she did not expect and thus, made her feel quite nervous and shocked, especially because this was her first relationship, she was unsure where she stands in his life. Her third entry (Figure 17) was, to her, more profound than her first two entries. *“For the past two weeks I’ve been doing this, I’ve only had two emotions. This shows profound emotion. It’s all happening but not simultaneous.”*



Figure 17. Explosion of Emotions

In this entry, Hazel realized that the two emotions – sadness and happiness – she has expressed in her first two entries has given birth to more profound emotions. She felt quite relaxed before working on her entry, and felt calm while working on it. She was also worried and nervous about her relationship with Cole. The little circles in her entry represent the questions she has in her head, and it shows feelings of being nervous, sad, and tense.

She shared that the uncertainty of their relationship status is contributing to her worries about the fate of their relationship, *“Whenever I feel like it’s hard for me to hold on, I just*

remember that this is something unexpected and it just fell on my lap. So I owe it to myself to see it through. I know I'm strong but I'm afraid that if things don't work out, I'll feel the feeling of rejection again." After the session, Hazel shared that being able to let out her emotions through painting felt soothing and refreshing; that visual art journaling made her *"feel like a kid again doing arts and crafts in kindergarten"*.

Hazel's fourth entry was similar to her third in that it was a watercolor painting of circles of different colors, and sizes (Figure 18).



Figure 18. Another Explosion of Emotions

However, the difference between the third and fourth entry is that the colors she used are much lighter and almost transparent. She also expressed that watercolor was more versatile than acrylic thus, she enjoyed using it.

Before meeting with the researcher, Hazel felt tired, frustrated, and annoyed because of her boyfriend: Cole, her lack of sleep, from her busy week. Her feelings of annoyance, tiredness, and frustration were evident in her responses and body language during the session. When asked how she felt before, during, and after visual art journaling, her response was: *"Felt the usual"*.

Talking about her entry, Hazel explained the representation of each color. Blue signified sadness; red signified frustration; purple signified her mixed feelings; and orange signified optimism. Furthermore, the lightness of the colors, as opposed to her past entries which had solid colors, reflected how tired she was, and the bigger circles showed more intense and overwhelming feelings. This entry was, for her, the most significant of the four, as it involved fresh and strong feelings.

Initially, Hazel thought of visual art journaling as simply drawing and nothing more. However, during the study, she found visual art journaling fun and a new way of identifying how she feels. One of her most significant experiences was getting her period, after accomplishing an entry. At the start of that session, Hazel's period was delayed, which was one of the factors affecting her frustration. Being able to express how she felt through visual art journaling, and through talking about her feelings with the researcher allowed her body to respond by releasing her period.

When asked about her insights regarding her entries, Hazel stated that she learned how repetitive she is, because she noticed that her entries are all of circles. As for her significant learnings, she noticed how explosive her emotions are, and that one emotion she feels, elicits another emotion; broadening her emotional spectrum.

Hazel's entries tell a story of "*a girl with an explosion of emotions*", as seen in how her entries started from two initial emotions that eventually gave rise to more emotions. Her insights and learnings from each entry came during and after accomplishing an entry. In all her entries, Hazel showed consistency in how she felt before, during, and after each entry, with variations in the intensity of her frustration, worry, and annoyance. However, despite these feelings, her visual art journaling experience was a positive experience wherein, she was able to convey her feelings

onto paper, reflect on it, and eventually be able to feel and express more emotions. By the end of the research, Hazel enjoyed visual art journaling, and liked it as it could be an option for her to have another venue of expression. Being able to see her emotions through visual art journaling and acknowledge them, allowed her to manage her emotions as compared to her usual journaling style where she would write down how she felt, feel the emotions as she did, and brush them off and distract herself after.

However, she also expressed continuing to regularly make use of written journaling instead, as she was more comfortable with written journaling. To further improve visual art journaling, she suggested that artists give sessions or lessons on how to properly convey feelings into art.

Sky

Sky is a 21-year-old Architecture student from Manila. Sky's story involves tales about his friends, family, and his girlfriend.

Sky has had an inclination towards arts since childhood. As a child, drawing things or characters made him believe he can consider them his possessions. During those years, he would compare works with his cousins and he believes he always had the best output.

Sky carried this affinity for the arts as he grew older and ultimately decided to pursue Architecture because it marries the elements of Art and Engineering, two things he has interest in. He is a devout Christian who likes to share about his faith and his past struggles in hopes of helping others who need guidance.

Sky's first entry was a scene which had: a butterfly, two healthy roses under rain, surrounded by tulips that are either dying or have yet to bloom, and fire (Figure 19).



Figure 19. Roses and Wilting Flowers

He explained that the butterfly symbolizes his mother, and the two healthy roses were him and his girlfriend. The flowers represent his friends.

Sky's narrative begins with his issues with his peers. He believes that his friends do not truly care about him and this translates to the way they treat him; thus, he drew them as wilting flowers. In contrast, his mother – drawn as a butterfly, helps nurture him despite not being with him all the time.

Similarly, his girlfriend, represented by a fully-bloomed rose, serves as his partner as he goes through challenges, which was symbolized by fire. He mentioned that the rain can be interpreted as challenges that are necessary for his growth.

The elements of nature were also evident in Sky's second entry, which was an image of a whirlwind (Figure 20).

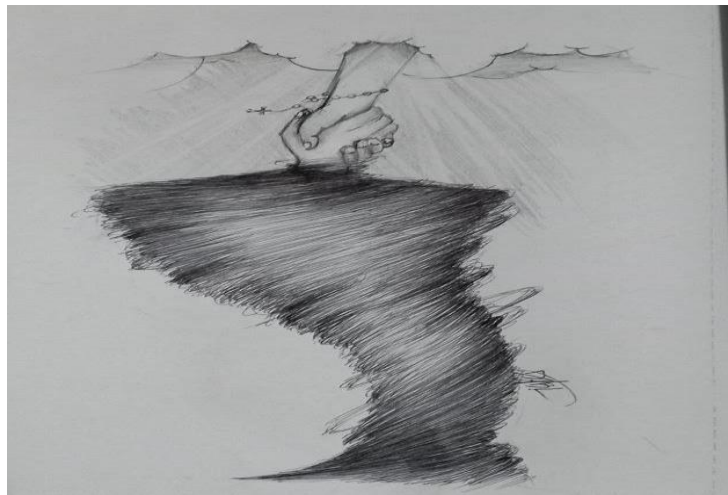


Figure 20. Whirlwind

He said that this represents the numerous problems he had to hurdle to get to where he is now. He mentioned that he has experienced being a working student, getting kicked out of his house, losing friends, and believes that the issues he has gone through would be enough to break others and push them to commit suicide. A notable detail is a hand emerging from the whirlwind, reaching out to a hand stretched out from the sky.

He said this is symbolic of the faith that got him through his darkest days. Sky mentioned that he shares his faith to friends who tell him they are on the verge of committing suicide – he tells them that if he managed to survive, they can, too. He acknowledges that not everyone shares his faith, and he is careful not to impose his beliefs on others, but still he makes it a point to share the teachings of his beliefs in hopes that it would help others the way it helped him before.

In Sky's third entry, the emergent theme was emptiness. He mentioned feeling empty several times during the interview. He believes it might have been brought about by a string of arguments with his girlfriend that week. He drew a heart to represent what he feels, and a brain to symbolize what he intends to do (Figure 21).

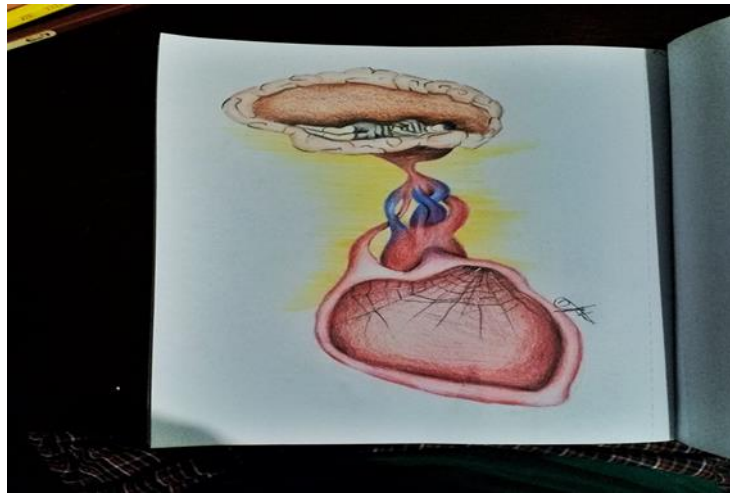


Figure 21. Mind vs. Heart

However, despite the seemingly conflicted theme of his entry, Sky assured the researchers that it was not a cause of worry, and that in fact, being able to draw this entry allowed him to assess the situation better. It is notable, however, that Sky's responses during the interview were a bit more calculated than usual.

Sky's fourth entry was the silhouette of a man (Figure 22), which he says symbolizes relief. He traces the roots of this symbol to his early college days in a different university. He mentioned that he and his friends use "relief" as a jargon or an inside joke of sorts, one that

began when they first finished their Physics course. He says he feels relieved because the semester has just ended and he thinks his visual journaling made him feel lighter.



Figure 22. The Hollow Man

In his last session with the researchers, Sky looked back on his first few entries and talked about the friendships that made him feel uncomfortable the past few years. He said that visual journaling helped him look back on his friendships and assess which issues warrant his attention. He said that being able to see all of those from a fresh perspective made him more attuned with his emotions and lessened his baggage.

When asked about the process of visual journaling, Sky said he thinks the mindfulness meditation guide provided by the researchers did not really help him, but also mentioned that he could not think of anything to draw when he does not do the mindfulness meditation. Sky

discussed at length the various media he has used in his life. He said he likes colored pencil, but only the expensive kind, because it has better color pay-off and he also uses colored markers, his current favorite. He is also very used to sketching as that is what they do to render sample works for their course requirements.

Sky's visual journaling helped him rediscover why he liked arts. He said the process inspired him to revisit his first understanding of art. He mentioned reading about an abstract painting, which was a blue canvas that cost an exorbitant price. He found out that art is valued in accordance to what it means and to what it represents. He said that visual journaling reminded him that art should ultimately be about what the artist has to convey and that he was grateful for the process.

Scarlet

Scarlet is a 21-year-old Psychology student who engages in art activities, sports, and co-curricular organizations.

Scarlet appeared confident when she started her visual journaling. For her first entry, she drew a moon to symbolize herself (Figure 23), and insisted that she knew herself very well.

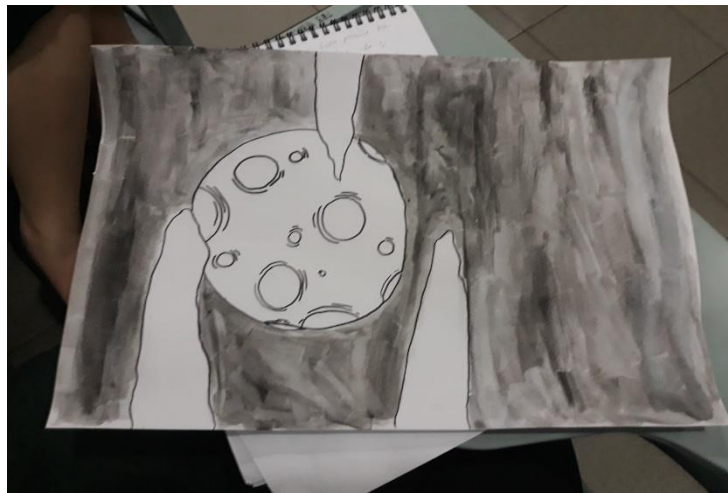


Figure 23. The Moon

She said the moon may appear unpleasant because its surface has holes, but she still finds it beautiful from afar. In that aspect, she likens herself to the moon. She also adds that while the moon seems lonely, she believes it draws energy from people laughing at night.

Scarlet mentioned that people who engage in midnight conversations join the moon in its solitude, therefore reduce the loneliness the moon feels. She adds that the many phases of the moon also resonates with her as she considers her different moods as her personal “phases”.

Scarlet expressed her happiness over realizing that she, in her own words, “knows herself well”. She believes the use of symbolism reveals her depth as a person. She also believes that her background in Psychology has helped her a lot when it comes to self-reflection.

Meanwhile, Scarlet's second entry was an image of a rocking chair, surrounded by vintage items, such as the stereo, which sparked nostalgia for her. The scene in the image, inspired by her childhood home, which for her represents easier, relaxed times, was where she longed to be, especially since she was very preoccupied that week.



Figure 24. Nostalgia

According to Scarlet, the entry made her realize how busy and constantly stressed she has been. She talked about how she longed for a day in that house, just sitting on the rocking chair, and quietly watching the rain while drinking hot chocolate (Figure 24).

Scarlet credits visual journaling for the realization that she needs to pause, and hopes to do just that. She said the activity also made her realize that resting or sleeping is her defense mechanism. This scares her because she knows she cannot rest all the time. Thus, she makes it a point to constantly be motivated to engage in sports and be active.

During her third interview, Scarlet shared that she has not been the best version of herself, and likened it to having her hard exterior being removed. She explains, “*kaya ko naman i-change kahit hindi naman dapat* [I can change it even if I do not have to]”. That was what led her to

draw inspiration from an artist she follows online. While she follows and admires several artists, one in particular stands out the most. The artist incorporates themes of women taking off their skin, proudly displaying horns, and breaking free. Borrowing from those themes, Scarlet made an entry depicting a woman breaking free from what appeared to be her body or “shell”, and unveiling her core (Figure 25).

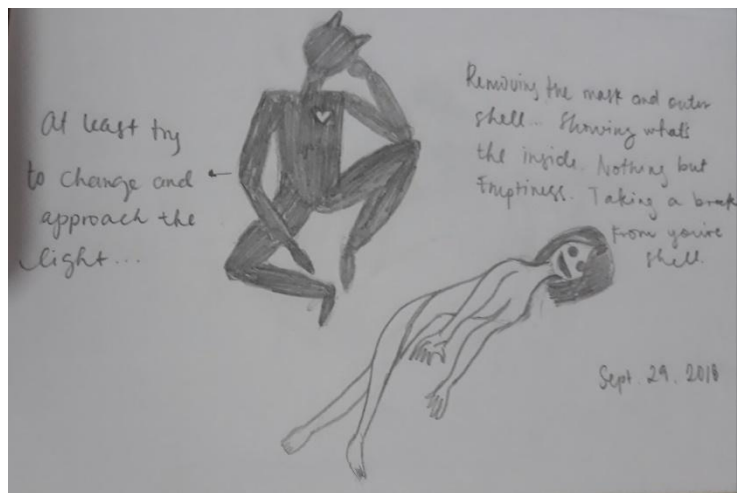


Figure 25. Breaking Free

She expressed feelings of emptiness, which manifests in her work. Scarlet believes she has no choice but to feel better, but resolves to avoid responsibilities for a bit.

However, she clarifies that if a friend needs her, she will be there. Scarlet ended the interview by saying that the realest thing she does is visual art journaling.

On her last week of journaling, Scarlet made four entries with recurrent themes – that of being exhausted and wanting to take a step back and resting. She talked about how she manages to juggle her time and reflected on whether or not her productivity is serving her well or if she is better off resting.

The piece of cake (Figure 26) represents a resignation of sorts, while the rest of the entries allude to forms of relaxation and course of action she wishes to take.



Figure 26. Cake

Her next entry (Figure 27) showed another relaxing setting, which she badly longed for.

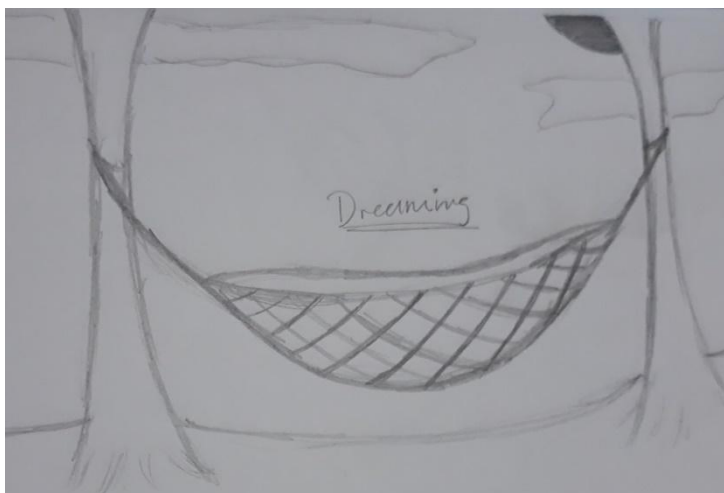


Figure 27. Relaxation

The next entry (Figure 28), serves as a reminder to herself that she is capable, strong, and beautiful inside and out.

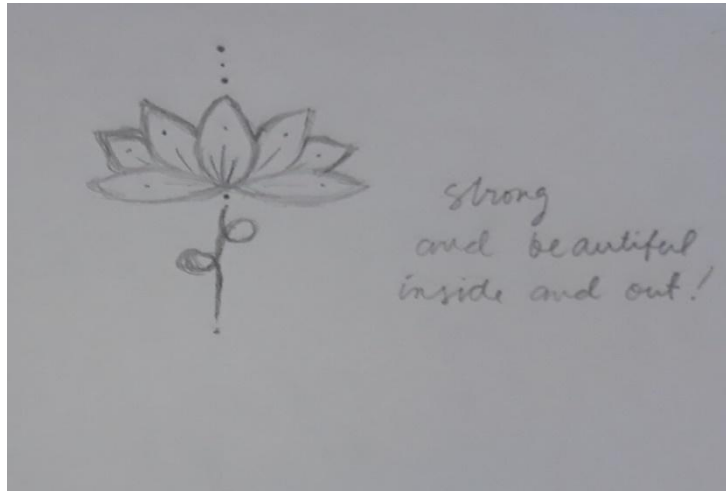


Figure 28. Beautiful Flower

Her last entry (Figure 29) showed that she ultimately went back to reminding herself to work on her pending tasks.



Figure 29. Reminder to Self

The recurring themes in Scarlet's entries were related to self-discovery, longing for a break, and being exhausted. If one takes a look at the stories she shares, one could deduce that

she is in a constant state of self-discovery. The visual journaling has aided her in assessing her life and what is truly going on within her.

When asked to tell a story based on her entries, Scarlet said that it would be about self-discovery; especially about being a woman who felt like she completely knew herself, and thought that she was whole as a person, but eventually realized that her life has become stagnant.

In terms of her visual journaling process, Scarlet initially thought that visual journaling is similar to what her counselor used to suggest to her, wherein she was asked to draw about her emotions, but she now believes the two are different since visual journaling asks her to delve deeper into her emotion and self. She said her insights came after making the entries, as a reflection of sorts.

During the first session, she used watercolor to explore a different medium. However, on her second week and throughout her journey, she used pencil, as it was easy for her to control and an effective way for her to easily and quickly translate her thoughts into art.

Scarlet shared that her struggle was to have the motivation to do the visual journaling every day, since she really wanted to do it on a daily basis. She said she had such a pleasant experience but believes that the success of visual journaling lies on the motivation of a person. Moreover, she suggests that people who intend to promote visual journaling in the future should have a more rigid set of instructions to follow. While she appreciated the fact that there is a creative freedom to it, she suggests making it more structured.

Scarlet mentioned that she was also influenced by artists she follows, because they helped introduce her to themes that help her better express herself. She said she would recommend visual journaling to her young adolescent brother, who she thinks has signs of depression, as she believes this would be very beneficial to him.

Ivy

Ivy, 19, is also a Psychology student who dabbles in arts and hails from a conservative family.

Ivy is a 19-year-old college student, who paints and draws as a hobby; however, she does not have experience in visual art journaling and does not engage in other types of journaling. Throughout her visual art journaling journey, Ivy first realized the depth of emotion she has been keeping, and has slowly let them out, which allowed her to learn more about herself in the process.

During the first session, Ivy was feeling relaxed, given that before arriving at the orientation venue, she and her boyfriend were playing an online game. Her first entry was an image of birds in a spiral (Figure 30), which looked like a whirlpool.

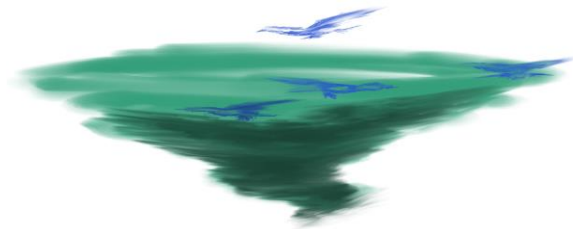


Figure 30. Blue Birds

The first entry (Figure 30), was inspired by the series “Once Upon a Time”, which Ivy was watching the night before the first session, however, the feelings behind are solely from her.

The birds in her image were of different colors, the blue birds become black as they go further in the spiral, representing how happiness slowly disappears as it goes into the spiral. In her entry, she has written “Blue birds turn into crows. Whatever little happiness you find, will

either disappear or turn into something malevolent”, which made Ivy realize just how much emotions she fails to express, and associates herself to a bottle that is being filled up to the brim, about to break. Furthermore, the green colors in her entry represented jealousy, and she has also written: “No matter what you do, it will never be enough”. This is so because, to her parents, she was never enough as she was always compared to her cousins, and this idea has carried over to other aspects of her life. She as well feels resentment towards events and people in her life that contribute to her feeling inadequate.

After accomplishing her entry, she felt frustrated and sad upon realizing that there are details in her life that she needed to face, *“Still relaxed, but there are some things I feel I need to face, but I don’t wanna face. And that made me realize that I’ve been hiding a lot of things – like keeping things back; like pushing them away for so long”*.

When asked about significant learnings she gathered from her first entry, Ivy stated that it might be good for her to start seeing the better side of things instead of concentrating on the negative things.

The medium Ivy used in this entry was watercolor, different from her usual medium of soft pastels, charcoal, and graphite, but she is able to work with other mediums as well, such as watercolor and oil paint despite admitting that she has yet to learn more about these mediums. Other art forms she would like to explore are singing and drawing.

During her second session, Ivy was upset with her professor because she gave them a surprise quiz. However, she tried to comfort herself with the thought that she did well on the said quiz. She then showed a work which she did in duration. She was feeling a bit hyperactive so she tried to calm herself down through visual journaling. The first thing that came to her mind after the mindfulness exercise was the image of the galaxy, which is why she drew an image of the

galaxy and two planets (Figure 31). The image Ivy had in mind was more vivid, had a bunch of planets, and had more hues of green but it did not feel right, so she opted for the colors shown below.



Figure 31. Galaxy

According to Ivy, this is her first time to feel completely lost in the moment while doing art. She described the feeling as “getting lost in the process”, and it was as if her hand was moving on its own. This was a feeling she did not feel during her art classes, as she usually felt restricted when in her art classes, whereas visual journaling and mindfulness makes her feel like the possibilities are limitless.

Furthermore, she shared that this was the entry she liked the most. Her process of making it felt really light, and made her feel happy and proud, as she knew what to make without having to think about what to make and how to make it – it just came to her – as opposed to her usual difficulty in putting her images onto paper.

During the third session, Ivy felt stressed as she just found out that they were to have to take three exams that week, so on that day she was procrastinating her preparations for her

exams. However, visual art journaling allowed her to relax and collect her thoughts before diving into her responsibilities and thus, Ivy was able to handle her academic responsibilities more, making her feel happier.

Her third entry was of koi fish (Figure 32). She used was watercolor pencils as a medium for the first time and enjoyed it. Ivy made this entry when she was waiting for a friend and decided to draw, as she had materials with her. The first image that came to mind when doing the mindfulness exercise, was of koi fish.



Figure 32. Free

Moreover, she felt relaxed when she thought of the koi fish, and as she saw the image of koi fish swimming, she was able to feel how being in the water was like and how familiar that felt, adding to her feelings of happiness and calm.

Ivy shared that this entry represents freedom and finding oneself, as fish in the ocean are able to swim free. Ivy yearns to be able to grasp the same freedom, since her parents are very protective of her, make decisions for her and not allow her to go out on her own. Furthermore, her insights came while she was doing the mindfulness exercise, and after accomplishing the entry, she realized that she is able to use other mediums even if she is not familiar with them.

Taking time for herself and doing the mindfulness exercise was a significant experience for Ivy, as it helped her reach hidden feelings that she never knew were there, further allowing her to know herself more and realize her goals clearly.

When Ivy made her last entry (Figure 33), she was tired from school as she was unable to sleep well reviewing for a quiz she thought they had that day. Her exhaustion showed in her tired disposition during the interview.



Figure 33. Liberation

The entry was a drawing of a skull, inspired by the yearly “Inktober” challenge online where, prompts for every day of October are given, and a participant would accomplish a drawing or painting using the prompt for that day. In this entry, she made use of a pencil and gel pens. The latter of which Ivy admitted was her first time using the medium. Initially, Ivy was unsure how to go about the entry and started drawing with a pencil, thus she started with dark to light shading, before finalizing her drawing with a pen. She admitted that using a pen was quite challenging since the pen had a small nib and she was used to using pens with wider nibs; however, if she had more time, she would use pens again.

Ivy admitted that it took her a few days to finish this entry as she got busy with academic requirements. She initially started with little, light sketches and worked on it during her free time over the course of a few days. Ivy felt stressed when not working on her entry, and while working on her entry, she felt less stressed, relaxed, and very engrossed in her entry. Furthermore, she felt as if she was forgetting the world and losing all sense of time. After accomplishing her entry, she felt relieved, as if she has poured out her emotions.

Ivy finds her creativity at night when she has nothing to worry about, and she lies in bed, listening to music and, at times, an image comes to mind as she listens. The music she listens to affects the image that comes to mind. Upbeat music usually gives her images consisting of bright colors, and classical music gives her images of fields, meadows, and forests. Moreover, when an image comes to mind, she immediately gets up to draw, as she has difficulty remembering the images. Trying her best to retain the image causes Ivy frustration; however, once she starts drawing, she gets engrossed in the process and starts to relax.

Ivy's insights came during and after accomplishing an entry, but she sees more insights after making an entry, and these insights allowed her to let out her emotions, eventually allowing her to know herself more. Furthermore, being more open to people around her, and letting out her emotions feels refreshing and is something she needs to do more often, were her most significant learnings.

Her initial impression of visual art journaling was that it would be like written journaling where one would write down what happened throughout the day, except that it involved drawing instead of words. She does not have any suggestions to further improve visual art journaling; however, her only problem was that she was occupied with schoolwork. Nevertheless, Ivy's visual art journal journey was fun and refreshing, allowing her to release emotions she has

buried, and eventually slowly learn about herself. When making art, Ivy was used to having a reference image that she simply interprets as her own, thus being able to create her own images from within herself, was surprising to her. Her process involved setting her materials on a table, sitting and doing the mindfulness exercise, and immediately start drawing after she sees her image. When choosing a medium, she chooses a medium that would be the best for the entry. Her approach to making her entries was step by step. She would start out with basic shapes and light sketching, before eventually adding more layers and shapes to complete the image. This approach did not have an impact on her entries; however, it did make her feel more confident in her skills.

Ivy's entries can be summarized into a story involving growth and release, of letting go of emotions, and self-acceptance. She had been feeling that she was quite hard on herself, in the middle of the process; however, towards the end of the process, she felt happier and less stressed.

Sapphire

Sapphire is an 18-year-old college student, has an inclination towards the Arts, and regards visual art journaling as a way for her to escape stressors and to relax. She draws mundane elements and makes sense of them.

Sapphire does not have any experience in visual art journaling, but has an inclination to the arts and has friends who dabble in visual journaling. She has consistently enjoyed exploring new mediums and styles throughout her visual art journal experience. During the research, Sapphire was a full time student, and met with the researcher after school.

During the first session, Sapphire felt pressured to make her entry look beautiful, as she was around other participants. In this entry (Figure 34), she used watercolor for the first time, as she wanted to try something new.



Figure 34. Calm

However, using watercolor made her feel more pressured to make her entry look beautiful, and felt uncomfortable using watercolor thus, in subsequent entries, she opted to use pen as her medium instead. She drew a complete human figure for the first time, she usually just draws heads or faces, yet in her first entry, she was able to draw a body as well.

The image was of a girl resting on her head on her folded knees, with the moon behind her. This painting reflected a state of calm and relaxation, which she felt during the session, contrary to how she felt prior, since she had a busy day. During the session, her thoughts became clearer, and she felt more relaxed. Her insight regarding her entry was, *“It’s telling me to take time and appreciate if there is an opportunity to relax”*, which was written on the subsequent page.

In her second entry (Figure 35), Sapphire used a pen as her medium, as using a pen allows her to focus solely on feeling relaxed and unhinged, and simply draw without having to think about what colors to use, as opposed to using paint, crayons, or colored pencils.

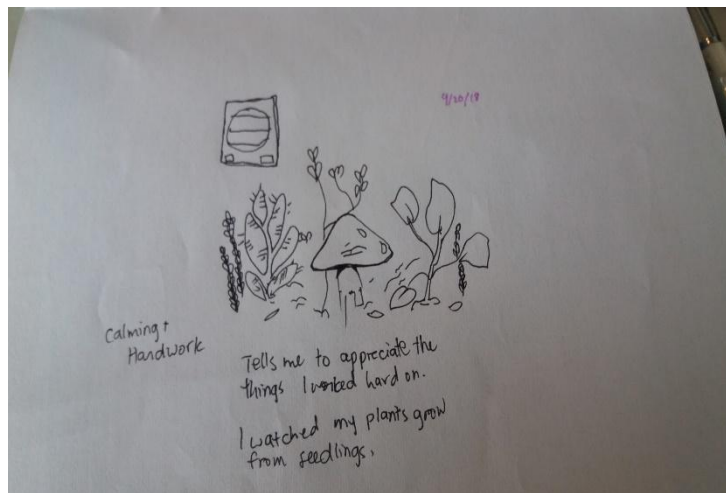


Figure 35. Calming and Hard-work

She explains, *“I didn’t really need crayons. It’s more relaxing without having to stress over which colors to choose. If I want to zone out, I can just use a pen”*. The image was of plants in her garden. Sapphire was in her garden when she drew her entry, and it allowed her to feel relaxed. While drawing, Sapphire had thoughts related to appreciating being able to witness the life and growth of the plants in her garden. *“Seeing the growth and development of the plants made me feel satisfied since I water them.”* After accomplishing her entry, Sapphire felt calm

and satisfaction knowing she worked hard in helping the plants grow. She expressed wanting to draw plants more. The medium and the entry allowed her to realize that she should not focus solely on trying to make her entry look better as it defeats the purpose of being able to unwind – which, to her, was the purpose of visual art journaling, *“It tells me to appreciate the things I worked hard on. I watched my plants grow from seedlings.”*

On her third week, Sapphire had gone to school forgetting that her class was cancelled and arrived in an empty classroom. She used the opportunity to accomplish her third entry (Figure 36), *“I took time in an empty classroom to do journaling.”*



Figure 36. Waiting

Before accomplishing her entry, Sapphire was frustrated at herself for forgetting about her cancelled class, but felt *“in the zone”* as soon as she started drawing. After accomplishing her journal entry, her thoughts became clearer, and she finally contacted her uncle to fetch her from school. She made use of a blue inked pen to draw the simple objects she saw around, as they allowed her to focus more on feeling relaxed and become engaged in her drawing.

This entry made her grateful for being able to study in a classroom and university that provided adequate facilities conducive to students’ learning.

Sapphire called her fourth entry, “busy” (Figure 37), as it depicted how busy and preoccupied she was with her midterm exams. That day, she felt overwhelmed because of the challenging exam she had, and would have schoolwork to accomplish when she gets home. However, while making her entry, Sapphire felt less overwhelmed and bothered by the load of schoolwork she has yet to accomplish, “*I got to forget what I had to do for a while*”, allowing her to feel relaxed. Despite still feeling quite bothered after the session, the activity helped her organize her thoughts and mentally list down what she had to finish one by one.



Figure 37. Busy

Sapphire’s usual inspiration is art she sees online, and other art expressions such as music and film, and her usual medium being oil paint. For visual art journaling, she opted to use a pen. Visual art journaling was not only a new experience Sapphire was looking forward to, but as she did it more often, realized that it was also a way for her to have time for herself and forget her worries for a while. Her approach to visual art journaling was allowing herself to clear her mind, and simply take in what is around her and learn from her environment.

Her initial impression of visual art journaling was similar to that of written journaling along with scrapbooking, wherein one would write down how each day went about, and would

add stickers, papers, drawings, etc. to design the page. She further suggests that individuals be allowed to accomplish their visual art journals this way as it can be enjoyable or that participants be given prompts for each entry. Sapphire most likely suggested this because, she admitted, it was quite a challenge for her to draw images through meditation.

Sapphire admitted that perhaps she was not most imaginative or creative when it came to her journal entries, as her entries were of her immediate surroundings. It is notable to mention, though, that her environment helps her reflect, and allows her to see things in a different perspective. One instance would be her insight about her third entry, when Sapphire felt appreciation for her situation in life. By the end of her session, Sapphire expressed satisfaction with visual art journaling, as it was an activity that allowed her to relax as well as feel productive.

Ocean

Ocean is a 22-year-old college graduate and is currently working as an Accounts Manager for an online shopping platform. He dabbles in poetry.

Ocean is a 22-year-old college graduate and turns to poetry as a way of expression as well as releasing his emotions or stressors. Although he does not practice visual art, he enjoys making artwork for his entries. He also believes that journaling helps in self-expression. During the research, Ocean was a full time employee, and would meet with the researcher during weekends. Ocean's first session was a surprise for him, as he was not one to dabble in drawing or painting but enjoyed being able to draw to complement his poems.

Ocean's first entry (Figure 38) was about transitioning from being a student to becoming an employee.

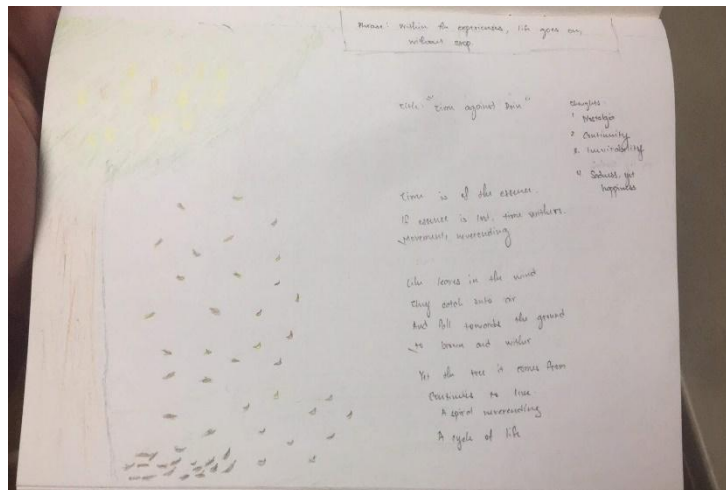


Figure 38. Time Against Pain

His entry was inspired by the question: “What in nature really connects to what I’m feeling?” which was an incorporation of his introspection into how he feels and his imaginations

from nature. His entry was of a tree with falling leaves. Next to the image is his poem, which tackles the inevitability of time. That time keeps moving forward and cannot be stopped.

Furthermore, his poem relates his own life to that of a tree's life cycle, wherein, the good and bad changes and experiences that occur in daily life, strengthen an individual. The "bad" changes such as falling of leaves, and "good" changes such as the growth of new bark, helps strengthen a tree as well.

His poem read:

*Time is of the essence
If essence is lost, time withers.
Movement, never-ending.
Like leaves in the wind
They catch onto air
And fall towards the ground
To brown and wither.
Yet the tree it comes from
Continues to live.
A spiral never-ending.
A cycle of life.*

During the first session, Ocean felt satisfactory, as he was in a transitioning phase in his life. He was unaware of what to expect during the first session, yet still felt interested and glad to be able to do visual art journaling. Ocean gained his insight before and after accomplishing the entry. He was able to self-reflect, during the session, and eventually realize the idea gathered from self-reflection, after.

Ocean's second entry (Figure 39) was inspired by his work and the stress that his second week at work brought him, as well as by the question: "What are we?"

The image was of a table with a laptop on top of it, which represented work and responsibilities people face (Figure 39). He envisioned everything he needs for work placed on top of his table, represented by the laptop which he uses. Furthermore, individually, the table represents humans; the laptop represents responsibilities; and the drawer within the table represents emotions, experiences, and skills people possess.

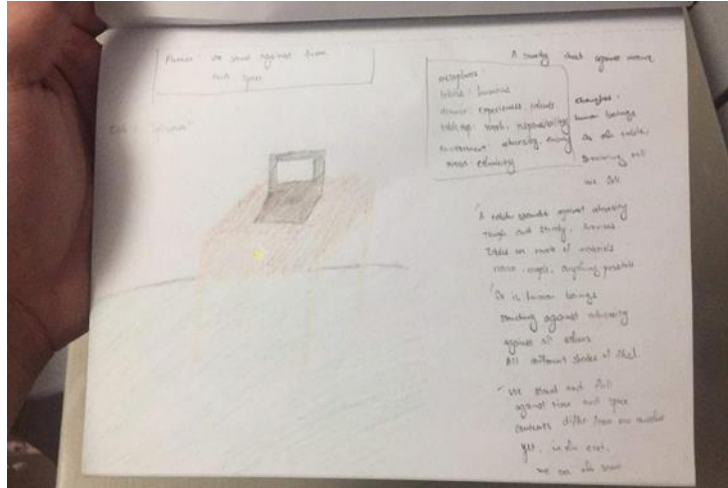


Figure 39. Splinters

Beside his entry was his poem. His poem read:

*A table stands against adversity
Tough and sturdy, it survives
Tables are made of materials
Narra, maple, anything possible
So are human beings
Standing against adversity
Against all others
All different shades of flesh
We stand and fall
Against time and space
Contents differ from one another
Yet, in the end,
We are the same.*

In his poem, he related the table to humans. Like the table, humans stand against time and space yet eventually weather, and die or rot. Furthermore, the type of wood used to make tables represents the different cultures and ethnicities the world possesses.

Before working on this entry, Ocean was focused on work, as the deadlines he had to meet frustrated him.

Ocean only had work in his mind as he made the entry, and asked himself “What relates to work?”, the answer to which was a table.

Furthermore, more symbolisms surfaced as he worked on his entry, by the end of the session, he became aware of all the underlying symbolisms of his poem and drawing. Ocean’s entry imparts that humans have a lot of responsibilities that affect their relationships and the other people around them. With that idea, he asks himself: “How will my work affect others in the future?”

Ocean’s third entry (Figure 40) is of stars in the sky.

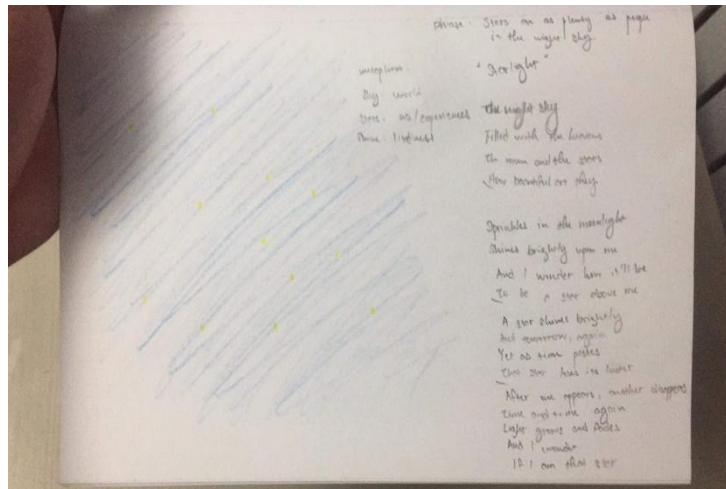


Figure 40. Starlight

The simplicity is a product of being busy with work. Furthermore, Ocean had an argument with his girlfriend which lasted for a few days, an instance that inspired his third entry. Through the expression and pouring of his emotions, he accomplished this entry.

While making his entry, Ocean came to realize that the meaning of his poem changed, from answering the question: “What are stars?”, it became: “Stars are us”. He felt proud of having accomplished the entry despite being busy, and listed down the metaphors, as a means of reflecting on his entry.

In his list of metaphors, the sky represents the world; the stars are humans and human experiences; and the glimmer of the stars is liveliness. Ocean’s entry talks of humans as akin to stars. Stars appear and disappear; they shine and become dull; eventually, like stars, humans disappear and appear, and shine and become dull. The poem is a story of wonder and awe at stars, and eventual realization that humans are stars.

His poem read:

*The night sky
Filled with the heavens
The moon and the stars
How beautiful are they
Sprinkles in the moonlight
Shine brightly upon me
And I wonder how it'll be
To be a star above me
A star shines brightly
And tomorrow, once again
Yet as time passes
That star has loses its luster
After one appears, another disappears
Time and time again
The light grows and fades
And I wonder
If I am that star.*

Ocean's thoughts composed of focusing mostly on the stars as he made his entry. How there are so many stars in the sky yet they continue to disappear and new ones appear. Furthermore, he realized that his poems are more philosophical and held more meaning than he initially thought. This entry was the most significant, as he always thought of himself as an insignificant star.

In his fourth entry (Figure 41), Ocean wrote his poem before drawing an image, contrary to his usual routine of drawing an image before writing his poem. Through this, he realized that it was easier for him to visualize an image when he writes the poem beforehand. He felt happy and proud that he wrote a poem without being confined to having to relate it to his drawing, as he knows what he has written comes from deep within himself.

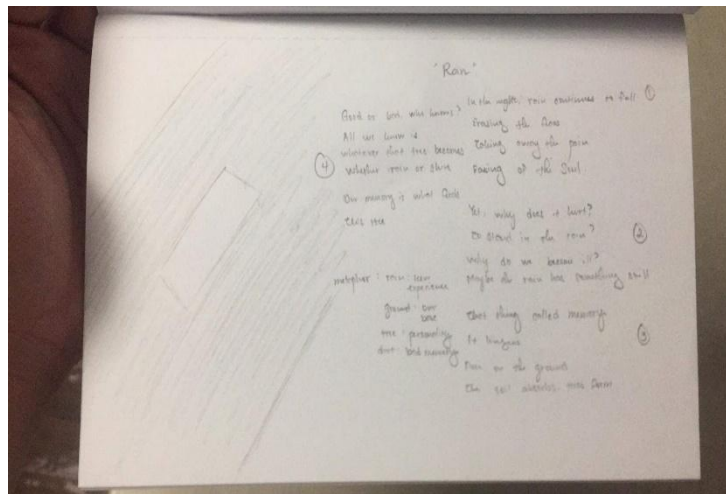


Figure 41. Rain

Ocean's fourth entry is an image of a road, representing the experiences in his life he goes along on. During this time, he was in an argument with his girlfriend, which he considers the main inspiration for his entry. Furthermore, while making this entry, his thoughts centered on the idea that memories can be good or bad. After accomplishing his entry, Ocean thought: *"Is this really gonna be the last one I'll make? If I continue, I can learn more about myself"*. Ocean

enjoyed his visual art journaling, and one significant learning from his participation in the study was slowly discovering new things about himself. Furthermore, Ocean realized that his entries are full of life lessons. Lessons from his experiences that come and go, and that these experiences contribute to his growth as a person.

His poem read:

*In the night, rain continues to fall
Erasing the fears
Taking away the pain
Easing of the soul.
Yet, why does it hurt?
To stand in the rain?
Why do we become ill?
Maybe the rain has something, still.
That thing called memory
It lingers
Even on the ground
The soil absorbs, trees form.
Good or bad, who knows?
All we know is
Whatever that tree becomes
Whether rain or shine
Our memory is what feeds
This tree.*

Ocean enjoyed his visual art journaling experience. He realized his poems mean more than he initially thought, making him feel happy as it came from within himself. He prepares by sitting down and thinking about how his week went by, and what experience affected him the most. He maintains being more comfortable with using poetry as a way of expression by finding metaphors in his poems and building on them, but he tries his best to paint or draw.

Ocean's initial impression of visual art journaling was that it required drawings or paintings, consisting of colors and images; however, he realized that words can be art, as well.

Furthermore, Ocean has developed a liking to visual art journaling as it was another way for him to get in tune with his feelings and to reflect.

Ash

Ash, 20, is an Interior Design graduate. During his participation, Ash was preparing for the board licensure exams for Interior Designers.

Ash has been engaged in arts since childhood. He was influenced by his father, an engineer who used to draw to him to lull him to sleep. He has always been interested in drawing and tried his hand at it at an early age. He was also an editorial cartoonist for the school publication of his high school. In college, Ash pursued Interior Design to further his knowledge about art. In one of the sessions, he mentioned that he also intends to study Architecture in the future.

When Ash started visual journaling, he was feeling a lot of anger and resentment. He had gone through a rough patch, and the initial session was the first time he acknowledged the anguish that was building up inside him. As evident in his first entry, feelings of anger dominated his thoughts. His entry (Figure 42), was of a clenched fist that is bleeding from breaking a brick.



Figure 42. Kamay na Bakal (Iron Fist)

The words “pain”, “uncertain”, “anger”, and “hatred” punctuate the drawing, because he believes those perfectly sum up the emotions that he has been feeling the past few months.

Ash said he was surprised the drawing came out. When asked what made the drawing come out of him, he alluded to the mindfulness exercise done with the researchers. One story that emerges from his entry is about strength. He said the person with the clenched fist thought that breaking the brick would mean he is strong but he does not realize how much it would hurt.

When asked about his initial experience, he shared that being able to draw that image made him feel a little lighter and afforded him the realization that he was able to express himself and that he had a lot of questions in his mind, but that he was also capable of answering them, starting by accepting that some things in his mind will not happen.

In what seems to be a detour from the theme of his first entry, Ash transitioned to home interior and furniture sketches on his second week. The focal point of his entries that week was the curvilinear pattern (Figure 43) which he incorporated in two of his sketches.

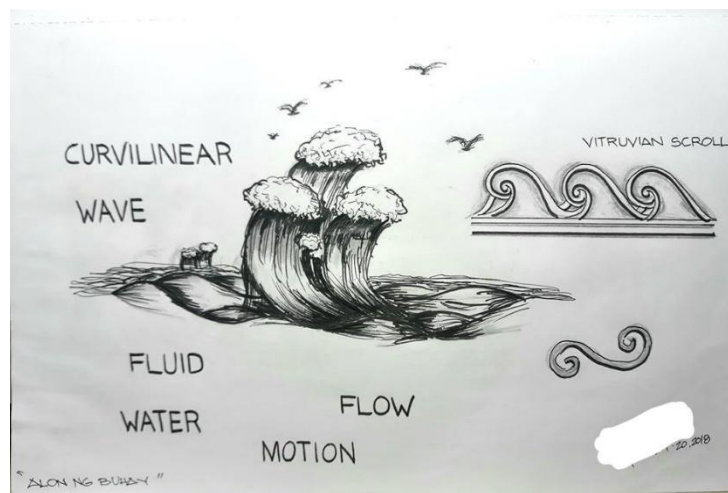


Figure 43. Alon ng Buhay (Waves of Life)

The pattern reminds him of waves, which he deems symbolic of motion reminding him to constantly move and go places, literally and metaphorically.

While participating in this research, Ash was also preparing for his board exams. Thus, to better his skills, he produced wave-inspired sketches of chairs (Figure 44).



Figure 44. Mga Upuan (Chairs)

He also sketched an interior perspective (Figure 45), as a way to share how his preparations for his board exams were keeping him preoccupied.



Figure 45. Interior Perspective

Being able to draw something in his journal has given Ash a sense of fulfillment, which prompted him to make another entry. Ash mentioned that he would continue visual art journaling after the study. Since he was not attuned to his feelings, the activity has taught him to express himself and has lessened the stress he feels, making his emotional baggage lighter.

Ash consistently felt feeling trapped and wanting to break free. He was feeling lonely because he was not used to being on his own. He secluded himself from friends when he was in a relationship, he now has no one to spend time with other than his family, especially because his friends are busy.

Ash wanted to break free from feeling torn because a part of him wants freedom from obligation, yet another part of him longed for a companion. The image below (Figure 46) illustrates his desire for freedom.



Figure 46. Kalayaan sa Kadenang Bakal (Freedom from Iron Chains)

Ash copes with his loneliness by keeping himself busy with visual art journaling, the activity also makes him feel less alone. Reiterating his previous responses, the activity has served

as an avenue for self-expression, and being able to draw about his feelings readied him to move forward.

By the final week, Ash made six sketches with varying themes and further reflected on each entry before sending a detailed description of each to the researchers. The entries that follow are accompanied by Ash's explanations.

“Pakawalan sa Kawalan” [to free in nothingness], is the continuation of Ash's previous work which features chains and exclaims freedom (Figure 47). It symbolizes a person trapped in his own bad thoughts, represented by the breathing device, and trying his best to let loose and be free from obligations, to do what he is destined to do.



Figure 47. *Pakawalan sa Kawalan* (to free in nothingness)

His next entry is “*Paslangan sa Lansangan*” [killings in the streets] (Figure 48).



Figure 48. *Paslangan sa Lansangan*

It has two meanings, as it depicts suicide related cases and the extrajudicial killings prevalent in the country. He explains, *“It’s alarming and disturbing in a way that many decide to end their life in one petty way, which is to commit suicide. The artwork branches out to people who are heartbroken and don’t know what to do with their lives and decide to end it instead. For me, I reached the point of ending my life too but I decided not to but instead moved on with life and looked forward for my own future to make. After all, I realized that there are a lot of options to select from and whatever hardship you’re going through right now is just an obstacle to prepare you for a much harder battle you have to face in the future. Therefore, this artwork tells everyone “na mag-ingat [to take care]” in general, and “mag-ingat sa mga tao sa paligid at mag-ingat sa mga bawat desisyon na iyong pipiliin [be careful of the people around you and the choices you make]”.*

For his next entry, Ash made a quick sketch and explains that “Krokis” in Architecture & Design (AD pertains to Quick Sketch. The entry on the next page (Figure 49) shows a sketch of a

house located in a woodland area drawn in pens and rendered in markers. It represents his thoughts on taking up a second degree in Architecture. He said he is a frustrated architect, and envisions having a double degree on top of taking post graduate studies in the same field.



Figure 49. Krokis

Ash continued to reflect on various topics as he sketched Midnight Thoughts (Figure 50).



Figure 50. Midnight Thoughts

The image shows a plane in the night sky captured in the lens of a viewer at the foot of different skyscrapers. The image reflects on his childhood dream of becoming a Pilot. Apart from Architecture, he also had visions of pursuing Aviation, but the constraints of a slightly poor eyesight, forced him to give up on the dream and pursued his passion, which is Art and Design. Ash explains, the phrase “*Dumaan at Lumipas... mga Sandaling Tumatakas* [passed by and gone...moments that flee]”, says that life goes by quickly and we should spend it the right way”. He adds, “*As a person, I really want to do a lot of things for my future but time is limited and I can only do and achieve limited things. For me life is very short and we just have to make the most out of it*”.

His next entry, LSS (Last Song Syndrome), shows a girl under a lamp post, under the bright yellow moon (Figure 51).



Figure 51. Last Song Syndrome

The drawing depicts the literal translation of a song with the phrase, “*Ang iyong ganda'y umaabot sa buwan* [your beauty reaches the moon]”, which Ash says reminds him of his former girlfriend. Ash mused about his former girlfriend throughout the study and repeatedly mentioned

that his entries are influenced by how he copes with the emotions he feels after they ended their relationship. He constantly talked about how he was working on getting over her and how there are still times when he would feel sad about what happened to their relationship.

Meanwhile, “*Pag-dadalawang isip* [second-guessing]”, his next entry, shows a man who questions himself “tatalon ba ako o hindi [do I jump or not]?” before jumping off the cliff. The entry supposedly shows his mental state as he prepares for his board exams, as he has been losing confidence and mental toughness (Figure 52).



Figure 52. *Pag-dadalawang isip* (Second-guessing)

To end his journaling, Ash sketched “*Hagdan ng Pagsubok*” [Stairs of Trials] (Figure 53).



Figure 53. *Hagdan ng Pagsubok* (Stairs of Challenges)

“*Hagdan ng Pagsubok* [Stairs of Challenges]” (Figure 53) paints a silhouette of man trying his best to climb up the stairs going to “IDr.” (abbreviation for Interior Designers), and shows how he just made a big leap in a huge gap, which he calls “pit of doubt”.

He explains, “*it shows that after internalizing everything, I regained my mental toughness and confidence and [myself] exclaiming "Kaya ko 'to! [I can do this]"*. Upon my reflection, I prayed for guidance and lightness and realized that this is not the end of everything that there is still time to improve everything rather than wasting my time crying and spacing out, I started reading my modules for the exam and little by little I recalibrated myself and gained confidence”.

As evident in his last six entries, Ash was able to reflect about various aspects of his life through visual journaling. In his entries “LSS”, “*Pakawalan sa kawalan*”, he was able to explore

his emotions, whereas in “*Paslangan sa lansangan*”, he reflected on current social issues and tried to relate it to his personal experience. When asked if he still has suicidal thoughts, he said that he is over that phase in his life and that there is nothing to worry about now as he is now able to process his emotions well.

In “Midnight thoughts” and “Krokis”, he delved into his other interests in life. It is also notable how his entries ended with one that showed a person in doubt, as seen in “*Pagdadalawang isip*” and ultimately ended with one that has a positive, optimistic tone in *Hagdan ng Pagsubok*.

As for his visual journaling process, Ash said his insights always arose in different times throughout the process. For instance, an idea would make sense to him while sketching, while some emotions became clear when he takes a look at his finished product. During the third session, Ash said he prefers having someone to do the visual journaling with, because he gets to produce more meaningful entries and it allows him to have deeper reflections.

Ash used ink as his primary medium as that is what he is most comfortable with. Ash said being around other people during the orientation inspired him to do his best. He mentioned that he thoroughly enjoyed visual journaling and plans to continue doing it even after his participation in the study, as he sees it beneficial to the way he processes his emotions.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION

This Chapter analyzes and interprets the results gathered. Results showed emerging themes from the participants' visual art journaling experience; significant experiences; and narratives arising from their journal entries, which would be discussed in detail, in light of existing research regarding the topic of visual art journaling and adolescents.

The responses of each participant were first coded three times and categorized into themes, then further categorized into general themes present across all the participants. Results showed that before participating in the study, all of the participants were already engaged in the arts. However, these activities differed from visual art journaling in that, a) these existing activities did not center on reflection and b) were not necessarily in the realm of visual arts journaling. During the study, the participants developed varying degrees of liking to visual art journaling. After the process, the participants discovered how visual art journaling affected them and found meaning in their entries. The participants also reportedly learned how to self-process. The participants had the following similarities in terms of significant experiences: having a clearer understanding of their personal issues; surfacing of and confronting these personal issues; and discovering a venue for one to come face to face with the self.

Meanwhile, the recurrent themes that emerged were: discovering meaning and metaphors in seemingly meaningless situations, learning to self-process, reaching acceptance from being in a state of denial, and eventually expressing desire to move forward.

To better represent the findings of this study, the researchers commissioned an art piece by Elizabeth Yang. The painting (Figure 54) symbolizes the journey of the participants from being unaware of their issues, to becoming slowly attuned with what is happening with them

internally, and eventually expressing the desire to move forward from issues they learned to acknowledge.



Figure 54. Visual Journaling Journey

The interview responses reveal the artistic inclinations of the participants prior to joining this study (Figure 55).

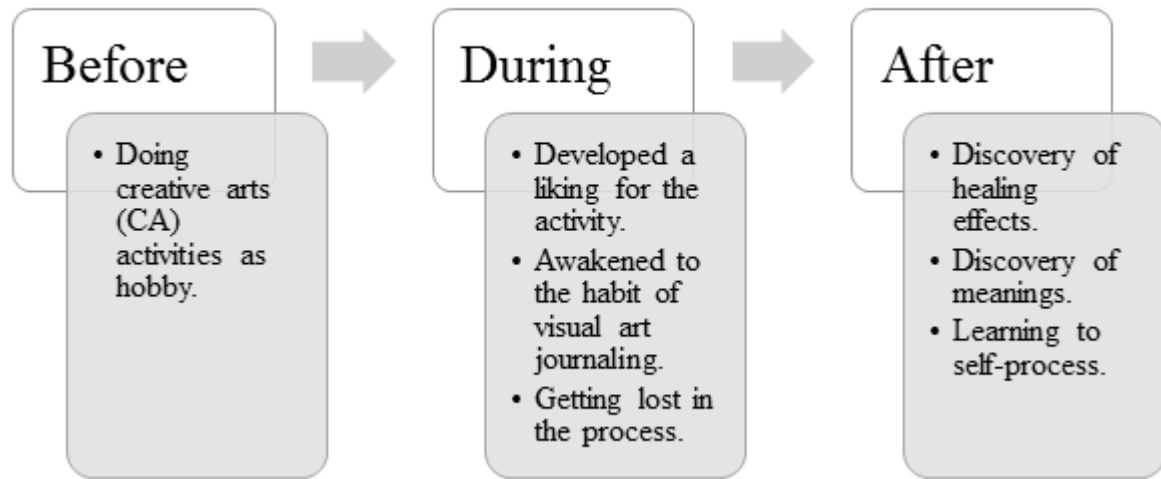


Figure 55. Summary of Visual Art Journaling Experiences

Visual Art Journaling Experiences

Before Visual Art Journaling. Some of the participants were engaged in visual arts such as sketching and painting, while some have a background in literary and performing arts. Two of them took art-related programs in college while some like Ivy and Sunny, have taken painting lessons in the past. Others, like Hazel, have a habit of writing daily in her journal, and another is Sapphire, who is familiar with visual art journaling, given that she has friends who dabble in the activity.

Most of the participants, especially those in art programs, have long been adept in the arts. However, all of them, with the exception of Scarlet, have never used it as an activity for reflection, but merely as a hobby. None of them have engaged in visual art journaling before. During their interviews, the participants revealed that they joined the study because they wanted

to find a new way to explore the arts, others joined because they were curious about visual art journaling.

Some participants expressed feeling initially confused and intimidated regarding the process, since they had no prior experience in visual art journaling, and initially thought that their artworks would be scrutinized and felt the need to create striking artwork. However, as each participant made more entries, they soon developed their own way of visual art journaling, forgetting their desire to create striking artwork, and grew to like and appreciate the activity.

Malin (2015) posits that art helps adolescents connect and relate by means of “self-expression; sharing ideas, emotions, and observations of the world; and building community through personally meaningful interaction”, and emphasized the need for the youth to be given the agency to “pursue purpose in an art form that they love”.

During Visual Art Journaling. While visual journaling, the participants became deeply engrossed in the process. They mentioned being delighted by the realization that art can be used to tap into their emotions and transform them into art forms. This stays true to the statement of Crookes (2007) that adolescents veer towards music and imagery and need these to externalize their inner feelings.

Furthermore, the participants felt a sense of being productive after accomplishing a journal entry. Violet felt a sense of productivity as she was able to finish an artwork, since she usually becomes too preoccupied to finish other artworks. Meanwhile, Sapphire felt productive as she was able to create something while relaxing and briefly forgetting her worries, as opposed to being completely idle. Ash transitioned from being oblivious to being genuinely interested in the process, as creating entries gave him a sense of fulfillment.

Similarly, Scarlet also expressed heightened interest in the activity as the weeks went by. Others, like Hazel and Ocean, also delighted in the prospect of having another means of self-expression.

For some participants, visual journaling enabled them to foster a habit of doing art. Most of them expressed gratitude because it has allowed them to create art frequently and regularly, and while some were uncertain if it can only be attributed to the expectation for them to create one entry per week, they claimed that they have definitely become more inspired to produce art.

Yet again, Scarlet was one of the participants who became deeply engrossed and felt inspired to create entries regularly, the same situation is true for Violet who was inspired to finish artwork she has started on. It also allowed Ivy to create her own art, which came from her own thoughts and feelings, as opposed to her usual habit of having a reference image for inspiration. Others, like Ocean, discovered that drawing and poetry complement each other. An underlying reason for the enthusiasm of the participants might be explained by Elpus' (2013) claim that arts positively impact adolescents and foster optimistic thinking.

Moreover, the participants expressed feelings of "getting lost in the process", where they felt very engrossed in the process, feeling as if their hands had a mind of its own, and came up with their sketches organically without them having to put a lot of thought in it. In Focusing-Oriented Expressive Arts Therapy (FOAT), this is referred to as "felt shift" (Rappaport, 2009), which pertains to being able to be deeply in touch with, and convey their inner "felt sense" through external symbols.

Evidently, the activity has allowed them to transcend their current surrounding and tap into the innermost working of themselves, producing entries that surprised them. This was first expressed by Violet, who felt lost in the moment, and let her hands draw for her, allowing her to

create artwork she did not think she could create. Another is Sunny, who was able to produce random images while deeply immersed in the process. Ivy, as well, expressed feeling surprised at the images she produced, without needing a reference image to start with.

The participants shared that being engrossed in their visual art journaling allowed them to briefly forget their worries, relax, and clear their heads before taking on the demands of school or work. Furthermore, the experience allowed participants to explore and discover new forms of art, as well as learn more about themselves, contributing to their creative growth.

After Visual Art Journaling. This section also explores the themes that rose across all participants, including: discovery of meanings and metaphors, learning to self-process, acceptance of situation, and expressing the desire to move forward (Figure 56).

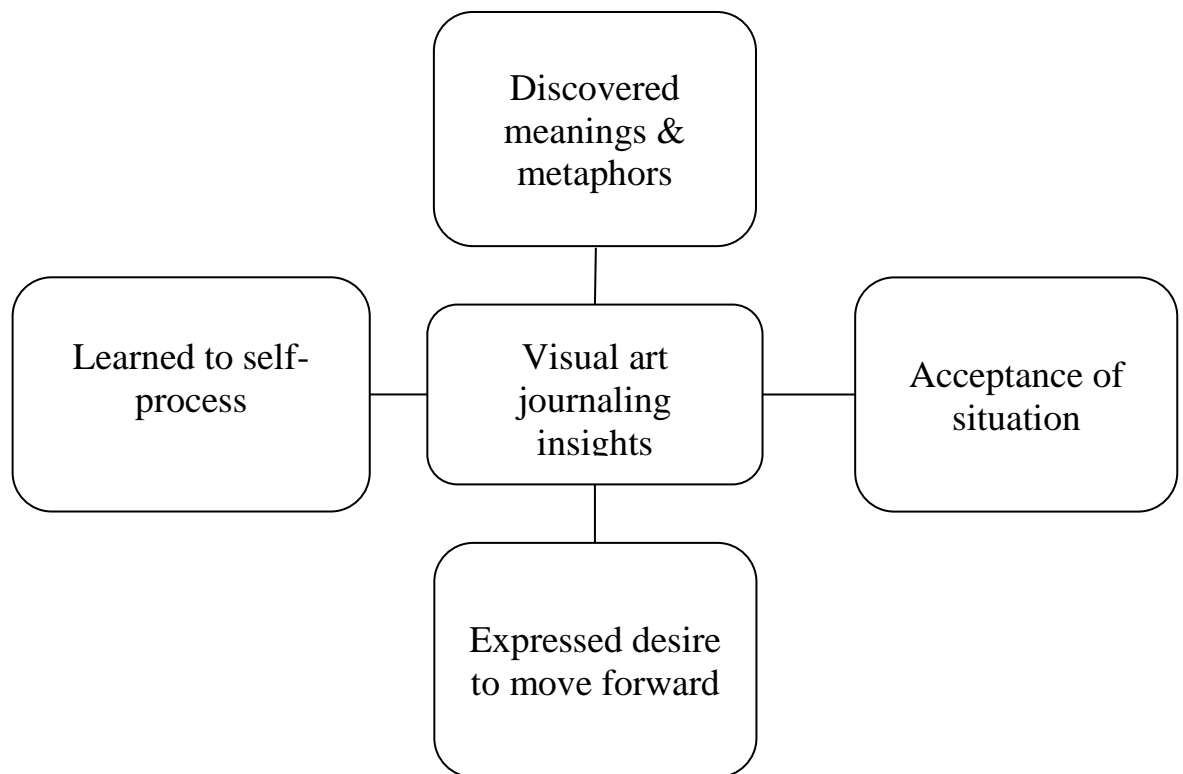


Figure 56. Visual Art Journaling Insights

Discovery of meanings and metaphors. Participants shared how they made sense of their artwork and shared the messages they received from their entries. During their participation, the role of art in their lives transitioned from being a mere hobby to being an outlet for their inner feelings to send them a message.

The discovery of meanings and metaphors highlights the uniqueness of each participant's narrative, and affirms George Kelly's claim that people's experiences, thoughts, behaviors, and feelings are shaped not just through reality but also by efforts to predict the world to develop a structure on how they make sense of their lives (Grainger, 1990, as cited in Brillantes-Evangelista, 2013).

Scarlet, who was very comfortable with symbolism and metaphors from the beginning, eventually came up with more organic representations of her feelings as the symbols came from the inside out, instead of actively thinking of symbols to try to fit it to her situation. In the case of Hazel, there was gradual attachment of meaning to her art, which reflects the emotional area of growth discussed by Lowenfeld and Brittain (as cited in Hughes-Brand, 2007), as she expressed being more involved in her art as time went by, and transitioning from repetitions to what she considered more meaningful entries.

Meanwhile, the more Violet allowed herself to create freely, the more abstract her art became, and the more personal it was for her. Moreover, allowing herself to let go, allowed her to create art in a different form yet still understand the thoughts, and feelings behind it. As for Ivy, visual art journaling allowed her to delve deeper into her hidden thoughts and feelings, and eventually express them in tangible form.

In contrast, Ocean, who tends to lean more towards poetry, made more sense of his entries when he accompanied them with his poetry. The process of adding a drawing to

complement his poems, added more meaning to his poetry, and helped him construct his metaphors. Meanwhile, Sapphire found meaning in her art with the help of the environment around her. The environment in which she creates her entries, allowed her to reflect deeper about herself and her situation in life.

The results are true to the expected outcome of Focus Oriented Art-making that Rappaport (2009) mentioned which is “finding underlying meanings”, seeing as the participants have deduced meanings and metaphors from their respective entries. The process of finding meaning has set the tone for the journey of the participants, it has made this activity relevant to their lives, as it complements the emotional needs required as they course through the challenges of adolescence. Another principle of Focus Oriented Art-making is also “receiving” the message of the art, which was what paved the way for the participants to understand their inner feelings as they saw it through their entries. For Hughes-Brand (2007), higher levels of involvement and attachment of meanings and feelings to art corresponds to a person’s *emotional growth* (p. 35). The fact that they were able to see their situations clearly through metaphors reflects the emotional growth that Lowenfeld and Brittain (as cited in Hughes-Brand, 2007) pertains to.

Learning to self-process

Externalizing issues. In this study, the surfacing of personal issues and their response to it became central themes to the narratives of the participants. The use of symbols has paved the way for them to clearly express and understand their inner feelings, and translate them into art that they can process. The participants mentioned having a clearer grasp on what is going on inside them, and hidden personal conflicts that they could not identify before.

The participants also discussed issues regarding their families and peers, navigating the demands of universities and the workplace, dealing with relationships, and pursuing short-term

and long-term goals. All of which support the assumption of Eccles and Gootman (as cited in Zarrett & Eccles, 2006), that the primary challenges of the adolescence include the following: “(1) the management of demanding roles, (2) identifying personal strengths and weaknesses and refining skills to coordinate and succeed in these roles, (3) finding meaning and purpose in the roles acquired, and (4) assessing and making necessary life changes and coping with these changes” (p. 15).

The narratives show that the participants were dealing with issues linked to adolescence. These issues all confirm Erik Erikson’s (1950) claim that adolescence is a period wherein one is expected to deal with the issue of identity versus role confusion, and carve an identity which highlights their uniqueness and seek an environment where healthy social relationships are fostered (Chen, Lay, Wu & Yao, 2007).

It is important for adolescents to have tools and environments that cater to this need because Spier (2010), asserts that “avoidant or ventilating coping styles or behaviors” cultivate conflict and unresolved stress, whereas “transformational coping styles or behaviors that utilize adolescents’ cognitive and social resources” may help reduce or resolve stress. The participants discussed the different ways they coped with their circumstances, and some of which seemed unhealthy and avoidant in nature. Scarlet and Ocean already had set ways that they turn to in order to cope with their personal issues. While some, like Ash, Sky, and Ivy were bottling up unresolved conflict. In this study, both cognitive and social resources were tapped as the participants worked on an external release.

Most of the participants reported moments of epiphany when their internal conflicts became clear to them as they went through this journey. For instance, Sunny became deeply engrossed in the process because it helped her make sense of her emotions, visualize them, and

eventually deal with them. Confirming the assertions of Franklin (2000), Kahn (1999, as cited in Crookes, 2007), Hughes-Brand (2007), and (Emunah, 1990), the process of externalizing their felt sense through visual journaling painted a clearer picture of their inner conflicts and personal issues.

Being able to externalize their felt sense falls under the creative growth that Lowenfeld and Brittain (as cited in Hughes-Brand, 2007) speaks of, as the participants utilized the art experience as a way to explore the self. Riley (2001) explained this by saying that the art that adolescents make can help individuals gain some idea of the adolescent or youth's concerns, conflicts, and generally, life circumstances, especially the ones that are too sensitive or personal to share.

Emunah (1990), upholds that the intense and complex experiences of adolescents create an inner turmoil, and the direct yet non-threatening form of expression through creative arts, complements well with the inner explosiveness of the unexpressed turmoil of an adolescent. Robertson (2001) and Silvan et al. (1999, as cited in Crookes, 2007), opine that an external release is essential to help adolescents manage their internal conflicts. Ogena (2014) claims that this need applies to Filipino adolescents as well. Creative methods that allow self-exploration and self-awareness, such as visual art journaling, help adolescents develop a meaningful sense of self (Laurence, 2017; Beaumont, 2015), through the process of art making that requires introspection, and which taps into one's creativity. The genuine enjoyment one feels when dabbling in the arts contribute greatly in helping one make sense of what they feel and who they are (Devlin, 2010).

In their interview responses, the participants expressed feeling relaxed, soothed, and tranquil after accomplishing their entries, true to the assertions of Abidah and Zakaria (2015) that relief can be achieved when one is able to express and explore conflicts in symbolic and

metaphoric pictures. Their entries allowed them to see their feelings and thoughts as entities that are separate from them, which gave way for them to process and acknowledge these issues, and eventually find a solution to these issues. Talking to the researchers about their entries also contributed to participants' sense of relaxation, supporting Riley's (2001) notion that, when combined with verbal dialogue, art aids in finding more successful solutions to difficulties.

One notable experience was of Hazel's, who felt frustrated about her delayed menstrual period. However, upon being able to discuss her frustration through art making and talking to the researcher, her period came. This could be seen as an indication of a more relaxed disposition. Similarly, Ivy felt happier and less stressed towards the end of the process, as the process of meditating and tapping into one's inner workings and translating them into art allowed her to let go of emotions, and eventually self-acceptance.

However, Brillantes-Evangelista (2013) forewarned that art has evocative components which could either be helpful or harmful. Despite that, the participants in this research exhibited and reported that towards the end of the study, they have learned more about themselves, specifically, their inner conflicts, thoughts, and feelings. The process of looking into themselves and asking themselves: "How am I feeling right now?", before translating these into artwork, allowed the revelation of these underlying conflicts, thoughts, and feelings. Such is the case with Violet, Hazel, Ivy, and Ocean.

Self-regulation. As notable from the narratives, visual journaling coupled with the mindfulness-based focusing exercise has allowed the participants to develop a non-threatening way to confront their issues and consequently, reduce stress that stems from not being able to deal with it correctly. Hutson (2007) claimed that creating art enhances self-esteem and instills a sense of control.

The activity is considered non-threatening as it posed no harm to anyone in the process, and because the participants were not coerced to address any issue that they were not ready to address. The participants dealt with their issues with a relaxed manner. Moreso, while they were guided throughout their journey, their personal journey allowed them to process themselves at their own pace, aided them in understanding their inner conflicts on their own by means of finding meanings and metaphors, and taught them to regulate the way they deal with said conflicts in a calm and relaxed manner. These results fall in line in the literature of Coholic (2011) that suggest that youth can benefit from mindfulness-based, non-threatening manners of expression, as it develops their self-awareness by allowing them to focus on their feelings and thoughts without judging these experiences. In turn, the development of self-awareness builds their coping and social skills, problem solving skills, and self-esteem (Coholic, 2011). This outcome makes sense as Sibinga, Copeland-Linder, Webb, Shields, & Perry-Parrish (2016) agree that mindfulness, which was employed in this study through focusing, improves “self-regulation of emotions, behavior, and cognitive processes”. They also explained that the “psychological shift” brought about by mindfulness “may contribute to improvements in associated cognitive, emotional, social, and behavioral domains”.

This is evident in the way they handled the emotions that surfaced. Gross and Thompson (2007) define emotion regulation as goal-directed processes which dictate and control the “intensity, duration, and type of emotion experienced” and that control was exhibited by the participants as they dealt with the emotions that surfaced as they went through their visual journaling journey.

It also supports Larson and Brown's (2007) assumption that art is beneficial in "helping the youth manage their emotions", as very much evident in the responses of Ash, Ivy, Sky, and Violet, who attribute their control over their emotions to visual journaling.

Acceptance of situation

Results suggest that visual journaling has helped the participant's process themselves, and go beyond understanding what was going on inside them. Once they received the message of their artwork, they became more attuned with their situation and started to slowly accept it.

Ash, who started his visual journaling entry with a lot of anger and resentment, eventually ended on a positive tone. He was also a lot more open and congenial during his last interview, a stark contrast to his guarded and aloof attitude during his first interview. Going through the journey helped him acknowledge and understand what was causing his emotions, he was then able to address his emotions, and while he oscillated between wanting to stay where he was and trudging on, he ultimately arrived at acceptance and has decided to direct his energy to moving forward.

The same is true for Sky who has been able to process himself, and is no longer bothered by the issues that surround him and has accepted that there are things he could not control, including the way others deal with him. He has resolved to focus on growing with the ones who have always been there to support him, and channel his energy to achieving his goals.

Similarly, Hazel was initially indifferent to the process of visual art journaling, and only showed two distinct emotions: sadness and happiness, but by the end of the study, her two emotions gave birth to more emotions. Furthermore, as she progressed, she enjoyed and learned to appreciate visual art journaling as it allowed her another avenue for self-expression. Compared

to her usual written journaling, she was able to acknowledge and manage her thoughts and emotions, and eventually feel relieved through visual art journaling.

Acceptance was also a key theme in Violet's journey. During her first interview, she mentioned that the process made her feel uneasy because she did not know how to deal with the issue that surfaced. However, it is notable how she has eventually transitioned to being more accepting of her situation and how she diverted her attention to other things and chose to move forward.

In Ivy's case, bottled up emotions punctuated the beginning of her journey, she slowly expressed these emotions through her entries, allowing her to acknowledge these emotions and thoughts. By the end of her journey, she felt happier and less stressed upon learning more about and being more accepting towards herself.

Accepting their situation also allowed participants to discover new things about themselves, such as the case with Ivy and Ocean who expressed that as they continued to do visual art journaling, they discovered new aspects of themselves. These results affirm Gladding (2011), who asserts that art helps others establish a new sense of self through gaining a fresh perspective of themselves; and functions effectively as a means to provide concreteness and insight, and as a way to build socialization and cooperation. Furthermore, art promotes self-discovery and healing as it is a constructive way of managing emotional and physical disturbances (Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health, 2012). It allows one to discover a part of themselves through, according to John Dewey (1934), the rawness and authenticity of the level of expression found in the artistic process that allows an individual to express their inner thoughts and feelings in their pure forms (as cited by Kniveton, 2017).

Expressed desire to move forward

Results show that participants went from finding meaning in their entries, to discovering healing effects of the activity, and eventually learning how to manage arising emotions and inner conflicts by themselves. For instance, mastery of emotion was a dominant theme in Sunny's narrative and one she took pride in.

In the same respect, a notable progress was that of Ash's transition from showing signs of unreleased anger to being able to confront his felt sense, and process his emotions in a healthy manner. Such progress stays true to the "magic power of image" which Rubin discussed (Hughes-Brand, 2007), as Ash repeatedly attributed his progress to being able to translate his emotions into works of art. Being able draw their felt sense also gave Hazel, Ivy, Ocean, Sky, and Violet, a clearer image of what they were going through and what actions they could take to react to, enhance, or correct a situation.

Moreover, learning to self-process allowed Hazel to express more emotions, borne from the two initial emotions - sadness and happiness - she expressed in her first few entries. As notable from the participants' narratives, being able to visualize their inner felt sense has aided them in their problem-solving mechanisms.

Art was always believed to have healing effects as it allowed one to tap into their unconscious, explore inner feelings, express these into art, and possibly achieve healing (Huntington-Kaye & Peterson, as cited in Sanders, 2013), instead of overtly expressing these. The act of expressing through creative art, enables release of emotions, along with this, adolescents attain a sense of mastery over their emotions, which is an important task of adolescence (Blos, as cited in Emunah, 1990) and paves the way for adolescents to find avenues for moving forward (Emunah, 1990).

The narratives prove that creative art expression allows young people to see problems separate from themselves, and gives them a clearer insight into what they feel and think in that moment. It eventually allows them to process these feelings and broaden their range of possible solutions or options for moving forward from their conflicts (Emunah, 1990). The renowned personality theorist, Carl Jung, believed in the power of the arts to show and understand one's own unconscious (Dilks, n.d.). Furthermore, studies conducted by Abidah and Zakaria (2015), Moon (1994), Devlin (2010), and Curl and Forks (2008), found that the process of art expression, as well as the end product of these activities, benefitted participants psychologically, emotionally, as well as physically, and ultimately contributed to one's overall well-being.

Moreover, arts supposedly foster positive impact on the attitude of adolescents towards school and peers, and equip them with virtues such as optimism which prepare them for adulthood (Elpus, 2013; Kim, 2015), especially since adolescence is "when individuals begin to seek meaning in life and set life goals" (DeVogler & Ebersole, 1983; Massey, Gebhardt & Garnefski, 2008; Nurmi, 1991, as cited in Malin, 2015). This was very evident in the cases of Sunny and Ocean, who were juggling roles and switching roles, respectively. The rest of the participants also expressed their desire to focus towards growth as well as accomplish the tasks they need to accomplish without being bothered by things that used to drag them down.

It is important to note that the interviews with the participants centered on their processes and experiences with visual journaling. The results of this study show that all the participants ended their visual journaling on a more positive disposition compared to when they started, with all of them expressing a renewed view of their inner conflicts, and while their realizations were not always positive, they all reported varied levels of acceptance, and have expressed a clear desire to move forward. This suggests that visual journaling helps foster positivity in a person

and readies adolescents for the emotional demands of fulfilling their roles as one and dealing with the demands of this stage. This also indicates that visual journaling equips a person in dealing with issues in life, making it a powerful, non-threatening tool in harnessing readiness to face adversity and dealing with it in a healthy and productive manner.

Implications of the Study

The current stream of research in visual journaling does not talk about how adolescents receive it nor has it been widely studied with an adolescent population, especially the late adolescents whose emotional regulation are established but still experiences psychological stress (Bhandarkar, 2006; Blum, 2016). Thus, the researchers believe that the findings of this study could potentially help in discovering the effects of visual journaling as a creative outlet for the youth. The researchers are especially hopeful since past research has established the positive impact of being able to externalize internal conflicts. The results might be useful for schools, organizations, communities, institutions, families, and the youth who seek to find other means of self-expression and foster the freedom to communicate in non-verbal ways.

Theoretical

This study employed a non-directive approach to see how visual journaling will be received and impact adolescents. It advances the scholarly interest in the beneficence of art among adolescents. The results support the assertions that creating images and artworks serve as an effective outlet for addressing internal hidden conflicts, which might prove to be beneficial when dealing with people with repressed emotions or those who are generally not comfortable with self-expression.

It establishes the potential of art to serve as an avenue for expression that caters to the needs of a demographic that naturally veers towards images.

Because the results reveal positive outcome, this study could be beneficial in future studies in the field of Developmental Psychology, Social Psychology, and Positive Psychology, especially with ones involving art and development.

For Developmental Psychology, the Psychosocial stages of Erikson can be enriched with the results of this study and how it relates to Lowenfeld and Brittain's (1987) claim that age plays a factor in informing the creative output of people and reflects where they are in their development.

In Social Psychology, it is found that extracurricular activities, specifically in activities such as dance, music, drama, and visual arts, increase positive social behavior, particularly social skills and peer interaction, and facilitate a change to healthier lifestyles by increasing the adolescent's sense self-worth, self-esteem and confidence (Bungay, 2013). Furthermore, extracurricular activities contribute to positive youth development, as extracurricular activities have been shown to include many of the growth promoting features of positive youth development, specifically: learning physical, intellectual, psychological, emotional, and social skills, when "in the presence of warm and nurturing relationships that enable social integration and belongingness, and offer adult guidance and limit setting along with physical and psychological safety" (Mahoney, Larson, Eccles & Lord, 2005; Metsäpelto & Pulkkinen, 2012; Molinuevo, Bonillo, Pardo, Doval & Torrubia, 2010, as cited by Metsäpelto & Pulkkinen, 2014).

In Positive Psychology, it helps in human flourishing, and positive youth development. In human flourishing, art making promotes positive emotions, capitalizes on the healing effects of flow, and highlights an individual's strengths; all these contribute to an individual's overall

psychological well-being (Wilkinson & Chilton, 2013). Positive youth development is focused on improving the lives of children and youth through understanding the factors that contribute to their development as well as what the role the child or youth has in shaping and directing their own development (Metsäpelto & Pulkkinen, 2014). Art facilitates positive youth development by allowing youths a safe space to express and examine their world, may it be internal or external (Conrad & Sinner, 2015, as cited by Forenza, 2017). Furthermore, it has been established that art enhances one's confidence, self-esteem, and emotional awareness, as well as one's personal, spiritual, and social realms, all of which contribute to one's overall development (Litell, Kapitan, & Torres, 2011, as cited by Forenza, 2017).

Practical

Data gathered from the research showed that visual art journaling helped in the expression of inner thoughts and feelings, allowing participants to introspect, reflect, and eventually unfold new discoveries about themselves with regard to their identity, emotional state, and conflicts. These findings are found to be in line with other studies mentioned in literature, asserting the positive effects visual art journaling and art expression. Results imply that visual journaling holds a potential in facilitating positive emotions and attitude among adolescents.

With this knowledge, professionals working with adolescents could consider visual journaling as a way to encourage expression among adolescents and get to know their inner conflicts in a non-threatening manner. It could also be beneficial in fostering healthy dispositions of adolescents as they navigate different settings such as school, and other places for extracurricular activities.

Limitations of the Study

This study focused on visual journaling as a creative outlet for Filipino adolescents and the results might be true only for this population. It was not studied in any other context such as art therapy. The researchers borrowed some procedures from Focusing-Oriented Expressive Arts Therapy. While the researchers provided starting art kits for the participants, the contents and acknowledges that the materials given to them might have had some slight impact on their output. Furthermore, the researchers employed a narrative/constructivist approach; consequently, the results are reported only through its principles.

The suggestions of the participants imply a call for a more structured approach to visual journaling, which is what is employed in art therapy. Future researchers should consider a more rigid structure to the activity should they choose to implement it in a non-clinical setting, as done in this study. One participant dropped out during the study, while it did not affect the results greatly since the focus of this study are the individual narratives, the researchers suggest getting more participants to ensure the initial targeted number of narratives are met in the future. Participants with inclination towards arts were chosen because others were intimidated by the idea of visual journaling during recruitment.

Implications for Further Research

In preparing for this study, most of the literature reviewed were focused on art therapy and were literature from the West, the results of this study could help in defining the beneficence of art in a normative setting, with focus on the Philippine context. Moreover, the data gathered could help supplement the relatively few existing studies regarding the benefits of visual art activities among adolescents, especially in the Philippine setting. The researchers suggest the

exploration of the topic of the effects of visual art journaling in the Asian setting, especially in the Philippines, where there is a lack of studies exploring the topic. Furthermore, one participant saw potential in the activity for adolescents dealing with mental health issues, particularly the ones dealing with depression, and suggested that the activity be introduced to that demographic.

The study was also pilot tested on people with no art inclinations, and they found the activity helpful and enjoyable. Thus, future researchers could consider replicating this study with participants who have no artistic inclinations.

Summary and Conclusion

To recap, participants initially dabbled in creative arts as hobbies, not as a reflective activity. Over the course of the study, participants developed a liking to visual art journaling, were awakened to the habit of visual art journaling, and found themselves getting lost in the process. By the end of the research, participants discovered the healing effects of the activity, found meanings in their work, and learned to self-process. The visual art journaling journey has helped the participants externalize hidden concerns and address them in a non-threatening manner. The process had lead them to find an avenue to represent their inner felt sense through symbols, which helped them process themselves better and gain better understanding of what is going on inside them. It has also facilitated a journey towards acceptance, and moving forward.

The results amplify the potential of visual art journaling to be a powerful and helpful outlet for adolescents, and sets the ground for future researchers to consider replicating this study and observe its benefits for other populations.

Reflexivity

Jenny Kristine A. Ferrer:

Acknowledging and sharing the load

This topic was borne out of our desire to study trauma-related interventions which we deemed timely for our country. However, due to ethical considerations, we had to find a population that is non-clinical and focus on something preventive rather than reactive. It was natural for us to veer towards arts as that is where our inclination lies. Recruiting participants was relatively easy as we had friends who kindly introduced us to people who are genuinely interested in the study. The process of meeting five to six participants in a week was tedious but felt rewarding, as the participants warmed up to us and generously opened up and shared with us their journey.

The study affirmed the literature we reviewed and it has become very real because it came from real people that we get to talk to firsthand. The participants also did not give us a hard time and were very honest about their experience. We are deeply grateful for their willingness to meet with us every week. Some of the participants also expressed so much gratitude as they say, they have found a way to deal with their emotions and have become acquainted with what is going on inside of them. They also said that they have found new friends in us.

The study has reminded me of the beauty of sharing the load and the healing powers of arts. While this research demanded much time from us, I never saw it as a complete burden as we grew as people together with this study. In the end, I saw how potentially impactful this study could be, and I hope it inspires others to use it in fostering a positive environment and mental health for the youth.

Marie Angela M. Bañez:

Partnership and fulfillment

Brainstorming for this topic was one of the most tedious processes of the whole study. It was quite a challenge to agree on a topic and find the most suitable topic to study. Moreover, despite the fact that understanding its importance as a whole was absent in the beginning of this study and was thus, somehow, underestimated, we slowly understood just how important this topic is and the potential it had, as we progressed. We decided that our topic was to be related to the arts because both of us had inclinations toward the arts, specifically performing arts, although we both shared an interest in visual art, as well.

Throughout the course of this study, there have been highs and lows; frustrations and celebrations, but overall, the experience was fulfilling, and I am thankful for my partner for being patient with me. Recruiting participants, was thankfully, quite an easy task as we had friends who were willing to join and spread the word. Writing the last few chapters was tedious, as well, but we managed to pull through. This study, has been and will always have a place in my heart. It has made me realize the depth of the healing effects of art, as I have dabbled in it as well when I was in need of an outlet. Listening to the stories of each participant and being part of their healing process was a most memorable experience. Meeting with them, listening to their stories, and seeing their entries were the highlights of the whole study. We hope this study helps in propagating more studies on this topic, especially in the Philippine setting, and most especially, aid in real life application as well. Application of this phenomenon is, after all, one of the goals of the study.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

Consent Form

Greetings!

We are Marie Angela M. Banez and Jenny Kristine A. Ferrer, taking up BS Psychology from Miriam College. We are humbly asking for your participation in our study. You are free to accept or decline our request. There would be no negative consequence for declining. Before you arrive at a decision, we would talk to you about the study and give this document for you to read. If you do not understand the contents, we strongly suggest that you do not sign it. Please feel free to ask us for clarifications and raise questions regarding the contents of this form. If you agree to participate, you would have to sign this form and would be provided with a copy. Please keep this form as this contains contact information and information regarding the study.

This study about the experiences of Filipino adolescents in visual art journaling, is a thesis for an undergraduate degree in Psychology. You have been selected because you met the criteria we set for our participants: 17-24 years old, must be a college student, has an inclination towards the arts, and must not have any pre-existing psychological condition/s. The reason for the last provision is the sensitivity of the study.

Your participation entails doing visual art for an entire month. You would first have to attend an orientation regarding visual journaling with a licensed Psychologist at Miriam College.

This study could be of help to studies about adolescents in the Philippines and your participation would be very much appreciated and instrumental. There are certain risks or

discomforts that might arise from this study. This might include cropping up of unwanted memories and unexpected emotions. However, rest assured that your well-being is our priority, thus, the following measures would be done to keep risks at a minimum: avoid visual journaling prompts with potential triggers, one-on-one debriefing once all the sessions are done, and a debriefing whenever needed. All the things we will do are pre-approved by registered psychologists, and referrals could be done should the situation call for it. The researchers will shoulder the professional fees of a psychologist should you need one as a result of his/ her participation.

The Code of Ethics imposed upon by the Psychological Association of the Philippines and the Philippine Health Research Ethics Board will be strictly followed. Rest assured that the data that we will gather would not be used for any purpose other than this study and our future reports about it. Your identity would be kept private throughout the process. The data would not contain your real name, instead, code names would be used. However, we would have to include your art journals or selected works to aid our results section. Voice recording, for the perusal of the researchers, would be obtained but you could choose to participate and refuse to have your voice recorded. The extent of confidentiality ends when a participant discusses a plan to harm self or others, in which cases we would have to inform the family or friends for the former, and the people involved for the latter.

Should you feel any discomfort, you could inform the researchers. You are also allowed to opt out of the study should the need arise, just inform the researchers. You would face absolutely no negative consequences from your withdrawal.

Tokens of appreciation would be given to you once the entire process is done.

If you have questions or concerns regarding the study and your participation in it, contact the researchers through abnz0507@gmail.com (Angela Banez) or jkamianaferer@gmail.com (Jenny Ferrer). If you wish to talk to someone other than those working on the study, you may contact Grace Brillantes-Evangelista, PhD. at _____ for any question, concern, or complaint about your rights as a research subject. By signing this document, you are agreeing to take part in this research study.

Thank you!

Marie Angela M. Banez

Jenny Kristine A. Ferrer

Please check the appropriate box

- ☐ I fully understand the terms and agree to participate in this study.
- ☐ I fully understand the terms and agree to participate in this study but not with voice recording.
- ☐ I fully understand the terms and would not like to be part of this study.

Participant's signature over printed name

Date

Appendix B**Participant's Information Sheet****Participant's Information Sheet**

Name: _____

Nickname: _____

Age: _____

Birth Date: _____ Gender: _____

Citizenship: _____

School: _____

Contact person in case of emergency: _____

Have you ever been diagnosed of any psychological condition?

☐ Yes ☐ No

☐ I hereby acknowledge that the information written above is true and with the exception of my
and my parents' identity, could be used in discussing the results of this study.

Signature over printed name

Appendix C

Weekly Interview Guide

The following spiels and questions regarding visual journaling were lifted or patterned from the notes of, and approved by Dr. Brillantes-Evangelista, Ph. D.

Instruction:

This research explores the process of visual journaling to understand how it works for different people and how it affects everyone and in what way. Please look at your visual journal as you answer the questions and try to elaborate your answers as much as possible. Please let the researchers know if you are re-experiencing the feelings as you narrate them.

1. How are you today? What was your experience before coming here? What do you feel right now?
2. How do you find visual arts journaling so far?
3. Can you bring out your journal? Let's talk about it.
4. Choose an entry that you like the most or that has impacted you the most, and tell us about it, was it inspired by a certain event, person, place, medium, etc?
5. What did you experience while making this entry? What do you experience now that you see this entry and are talking about it?
6. Is there any particular medium or art form that you like best? Is there a reason for this?
7. When did you find yourself creative? What did the experience feel like? If there were any art forms involved, what were they?
8. Can you tell us your insights about the images, if any? Did the insight come before, during, or after the entry was made?

9. Are there any other things you'd like to say about your experience in visual art journaling?
10. If you were to tell one story based on your recent entries, what would the story be?
11. What are your most significant learnings from visual journaling?

Appendix D

Final Interview Guide

The following spiels and questions regarding visual journaling were lifted from the notes of and approved by Dr. Brillantes-Evangelista, Ph. D.

Instruction:

This research explores the process of visual journaling to understand how it works for different people and how it affects everyone and in what way. Please look at your visual journal as you answer the questions and try to elaborate your answers as much as possible. Please let the researchers know if you are re-experiencing the feelings as you narrate them.

1. What was your initial idea about visual journaling? What were your initial questions or concerns regarding visual journaling and were they answered?
2. Can you tell us your insights about the images, if any? Did the insight come before, during, or after the entry was made?
3. How would you want visual journaling to improve?
4. How did you find visual journaling? What was the experience like for you? What would be the most notable experience for you?
5. How did you prepare for your visual journal? Which entries did take you the longest to make?
6. Choose some entries you want to discuss and tell us whether there was a person, place, media, or event that inspired them?
7. What, for you, is the most significant entry? Can you walk us through it?

8. Was there an approach or style you followed? How did this impact your creation and reflection, if ever?
9. How did you decide on what media to use? What media did you use? What medium do you prefer the most?
10. What are your most significant learnings from visual journaling?
11. Do you see any connection among your entries?
12. If you were to tell one story based on all your entries, what would the story be?
13. Do you notice any similar themes in your entries, what are they and what do they mean to you?

Appendix E
Debriefing Statement
Debriefing Script

Thank you for participating in this study regarding the experiences of college students in visual art journaling.

To recap, you have made a visual art journal in a span of a month. Before the start of all the sessions, you were oriented about visual art journaling to aid in your own journaling, interviews were also conducted once a week and at the end of the month. These interviews were voice recorded, and journals were collected with your consent. All data collected were discarded after results were reported.

If you feel or have felt any discomfort in your mood, self-esteem, or overall psychological state, we invite you to contact either of us for support and would be provided with contact details for appropriate counselling services.

We followed the Psychological Association of the Philippines code of ethics regarding research practice throughout. If you have any concerns about this project please contact ***Grace Brillantes-Evangelista, Ph.D, Research Professor, Miriam College (590-5400)***