

## *Original Paper*

# Research on the Path and Significance of the Normal University in Art Healing Fusion Courses

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### ***Fund Project***

*Teaching Reform Project in Leshan Normal University, China: A Study on Advancing Curriculum Ideology and Politics via the "Three Sus' Culture" General Education Program (JG2024-86)*

Received: February 29, 2025

Accepted: April 09, 2025

Online Published: April 23, 2025

doi:10.22158/wjeh.v7n2p86

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/wjeh.v7n2p86>

### ***Abstract***

*Art Healing is widely used in the setting and practice of mental health education in universities. It often expands the applicable fields, material resources and practical cases of Art Healing through the integration with aesthetic education courses and traditional cultural courses. The material that Art Heals relies on - Chinese traditional art not only contains rich cultural spirit, but also involves a wide range of fields, which can be integrated into all aspects of Art Healing. Normal University carries the important task of cultivating a team of quasi-teachers, attaches more importance to students' mental health education, is committed to improving the level of normal students' emotional management ability, psychological adjustment ability and humanistic literacy, and strives to cultivate a healthier team of teachers for the basic education field. Therefore, it is necessary to seriously consider the path and significance of the Art Healing integration course offered by Normal University, and thus explore how to further improve the theoretical system and practical model of Art Healing.*

### ***Keywords***

*Art Healing, Fusion Ccourses, Normal University, Mental Health, Teacher Education*

Art Therapy was formally established with the public publication of The Bulletin of Art Therapy in the 1960s and is a relatively mature mental health therapy. In 1969, the American Art Therapy Association (AATA) was established. The association proved the feasibility and effectiveness of art therapy by collecting and studying art therapy theories and cases over the years. Compared with the professional characteristics of Art Therapy, Art Healing integrates many activities in non-professional fields, and

pays more attention to the use of methods such as healing, meditation, art appreciation and discussion for emotional comfort and healing, which can promote the recovery of mental illness and the protection of mental health. Therefore, Art Healing has distinct interdisciplinary attributes. It uses art as a medium to combine the appreciation, discussion, interpretation of artistic works with psychological treatment, mental health rehabilitation, self-psychological adjustment, etc., which will help improve self-cognition and promote personality improvement. The book "The Consolation of Art" co-authored by Alan DeBorton and John Armstrong proposes that "hope", "rebalance", "self-knowledge", "growth" and "appreciation" among the seven functions of "art" have all healing and motivating effects on psychology, which is consistent with the "respect and self-realization" level of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. John Dewey's book "Art is Experience" also explores the relationship between art and physical and mental health. Herbert Read's book "Education through Art" proposes that only by using art can education be free from the suppression of the human mind, achieve self-realization, and truly bring happiness to the future of mankind. Overall, previous generations of educators and psychologists all agreed that art is a transcendence of human survival dilemma and psychological disorders.

Specifically, Art Healing uses various artistic genres and uses non-traditional language methods to improve individual artistic cultivation and realize individual physical and mental health through immersive experience. Since its birth, Art Healing has had a prominent interdisciplinary attribute. Therefore, in the Art Healing curriculum and practice in normal universities, it is necessary to pay attention to expanding the application scope of Art Healing through discipline integration and other methods. As for various normal universities in China, artistic subjects such as music, calligraphy, painting, sculpture, architecture, etc. in traditional culture are often integrated into various general courses, which contain rich Art Healing materials. Compared with traditional direct intervention methods such as psychological counseling, Art Healing through course integration is easier to be understood and accepted by students, and the effect of mental health healing is better. Modern society attaches great importance to the overall level of the teaching staff and believes that this is largely related to the cultural and scientific level of the people of all countries and ethnic groups. Therefore, carrying out Art Healing integration courses in normal universities: on the one hand, it can subtly alleviate the physical and mental pressure of normal students, and on the other hand, it can also help cultivate a new generation of teachers with more humanistic care.

### **1. Fusion: An Important Path to Effectively Carry out Art Healing**

In the context of the era of globalization, artistic classics from all over the world have been included in the material of Art Healing, but traditional art is often more affinity and infectious because it carries the cultural genes, historical wisdom and humanistic care of its own nation, and its effect in Art Healing is the most obvious. Therefore, when many universities carry out Art Healing, they tend to integrate it with traditional cultural general courses. Specifically, in Art Healing, college students can not only communicate with artists through cross-time and space dialogue with traditional artworks, but also

build a spiritual habitat for them in the material world, helping college students today to more effectively cope with the increasingly severe spiritual dilemma of modern society.

In fact, the deep thinking logic of Art Healing is also consistent with the thinking of philosophy on the meaning of life. German philosopher Heidegger once used philosophical discourse to explain the profound connotation of the verse of "people live poetically" by the 19th-century romantic poet Halderlin, and proposed the survival ideal of "people live poetically on the earth", which is more valuable under the current dilemma of rapid development of science and technology and the continuous "alienation" of people in material society. The poetic space created by Art Healing can fully relax people's body and mind and effectively reduce the probability of psychological problems.

Chinese traditional culture advocates the realm of "harmony between man and nature" and attaches importance to seeking creative inspiration from nature; "Zhuangzi" proposes the dialectical relationship between "skill" and "Tao", giving artistic creation richer cultural and ideological connotations. Su Shi believes that when appreciating paintings, we should pay attention to its inner "god", which is of great inspiration to our understanding of the dialectical relationship between "body" and "heart". In addition, an important spiritual core of Chinese traditional art - "health preservation" focuses on cultivating the body and mind through art and avoiding "alienation" by the material world. Coincidentally, the European Renaissance movement also held high the banner of human nature and attached importance to the human nature, nature and the world with people as the center. Human value and dignity have been recognized unprecedentedly, and people began to believe that people can and should become the masters of their own destiny. Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo and Raphael embodies the Renaissance spirit with brushes full of humanistic concern. Therefore, using artists' art works to heal art can inspire people with mental depression to believe in their own value and power even more under the influence and inspiration of art.

On the premise of ensuring that the discourse between traditional art and mental health intervention and treatment is parallel, Art Healers can guide healing objects to participate in the art edification process through the interpretation and recreation of traditional art. This method is more flexible than traditional psychological counseling; at the same time, it can mobilize various senses to communicate with artists and art works across time and space, get self-emotional catharsis in Art Healing, realize self-adjustment of inner emotions, and then examine the world with a more rational and sober perspective. Especially for college students who are in the critical stage of life shaping and forming world outlook, outlook on life, and values, the effective integration of Art Healing and traditional culture will continuously build a healthy physical and mental world for college students.

## **2. The Significance of Art Healing in Teacher Education and Curriculum Model**

Art Healing uses art as a medium of healing, expanding traditional spiritual therapy, inspiring people's subconscious through art, helping individuals meet their psychological needs, and achieving liberation from mental difficulties. From the perspective of the function of Art Healing, it is closely related to the

traditional cultural general courses widely offered by normal colleges. The concept of "general education" was first proposed by P.P. Vergerio, a humanist in Renaissance Italy, in his article "On Gentleman's Demeanor and Free Discipline", emphasizing the need to cultivate students' qualities of independent thinking and understanding of different disciplines through culture - mainly traditional culture, in order to integrate knowledge of different disciplines and ultimately achieve the comprehensive development of the individual. "General education" is an effective supplement to subject and professional education. The traditional cultural courses in it can cultivate and improve students' sentiments because of their profound cultural heritage, and play an important role in promoting students' mental health development.

In fact, Art Healing is more of a preventive mental health intervention model, rather than playing a role when students encounter psychological problems. In the learning and understanding of traditional culture, Art Healing has already played a subtle effect. Today, with the continuous deepening of basic education reform, the spiritual character of teachers is particularly important. The integration of traditional culture and Art Healing has transcended the shallow function of supplementing knowledge. Instead, by building a more diverse and open knowledge picture and value coordinates, teacher students can continuously improve humanistic care in the process of learning educational theories and methods, discover the meaning of human survival in reality, and transform this concept into guiding students to build a more complete knowledge and value system, and continuously improve the educational logic of teacher education. In addition, the integration of traditional culture and Art Healing in higher normal colleges through courses also helps to cultivate students' critical thinking. Because in the appreciation of art, it is necessary to penetrate the appearance of the art works, understand their inner emotions and thoughts, and conduct multi-dimensional analysis. This can motivate teachers to no longer be satisfied with being "porters" of "knowledge", but lead students to understand the value of knowledge and discover the joy of learning in the process.

More importantly, the excellent ideological elements in Chinese traditional culture, such as lofty ambitions, diligence and dedication, strictness and kindness, strict self-discipline, and role model, will help teacher students establish a correct and rigorous professional ethics in advance. Traditional Chinese art often has a value orientation that guides people to reflect on themselves and pursue truth, goodness and beauty, which can inspire teachers to fight against the current "alienation" problem in the field of education through their own spiritual growth. By participating in Art Healing courses, college students at Normal University can also optimize their knowledge system, cultivate their humanistic literacy, and improve their understanding and expression ability of society.

In the current severe situation where artificial intelligence is constantly reshaping the form of education and technical rationality is constantly squeezing the humanistic space, the integration of Art Healing and traditional culture can effectively improve the cultural literacy and emotional flexibility of college students and enhance their ability to respond to real challenges. Only in the era of digital intelligence can we protect the educational essence of education and build a complete spiritual home in the wave of

fragmented knowledge, which is also the inherent meaning of teacher education.

### **3. How Normal University Can Achieve the Effective Integration of Traditional Culture and Art Healing**

Art Healing requires a comprehensive range of disciplines, and foreign universities set up related courses earlier, such as New York University in the United States for clinical evaluation and treatment of psychotherapy and visual arts. The Kingsmith College of University of London, UK combines students' cognitive understanding and practical experience with self-awareness in the theoretical research and clinical treatment of Art Healing. In comparison, various universities in China offered Art Healing courses late. The China Conservatory of Music began to recruit students majoring in music therapy in 1989, starting the process of building Art Healing majors in China based on music as a medium. The University of Hong Kong offers a master's degree in expressive art therapy, and the Central Academy of Fine Arts offers a major in art therapy. These are disciplines that combine art and psychology. In addition to these art therapy majors, Art Healing in many Chinese universities is carried out on the basis of combining it with the traditional cultural general courses. For example, traditional cultural elements such as Chinese classic poetry, calligraphy and painting, garden architecture, opera, intangible cultural heritage have been widely integrated into the general courses, student practice activities and other links of major Chinese universities. By providing students with opportunities to directly participate in art, students are guided to build a richer spiritual home. Taking calligraphy, the representative of traditional Chinese art as an example, calligraphy not only carries rich cultural connotations, but also has unique Art Healing functions. Chinese calligraphy comprehensively expresses the beauty of the personality of the calligraphy writer through the lines of the brush, the strength of the wrist, and the thickness of the ink marks. At the same time, in the process of calligraphy writing and appreciation, a kind of quiet power is also shown, which helps regulate emotions and relax the body and mind. Calligraphy is one of the basic courses of Normal University, and it is already invisibly taking on the function of Art Healing.

Taking the Su Shi cultural and art general course offered by Leshan Normal University as an example, we can draw good inspiration for the integration of Art Healing and traditional culture. Su Shi is a very influential writer and artist in Chinese history, representing a typical image of Chinese traditional culture. In 2000, *Le Monde* selected 12 "millennial heroes" around the world from 1001 to 2000 AD, aiming to commend historical figures who had a profound impact on human civilization. Su Shi was the only Chinese selected. Since the birthplace of Su Shi, Meishan, was under the jurisdiction of Leshan in ancient times. So Leshan Normal University has built Su Shi as a cultural brand, and through his optimistic and open-minded life philosophy, students are inspired to face setbacks in life bravely. Specifically, Su Shi's arts such as poetry, calligraphy, painting, and food are integrated into psychological healing, and by learning Su Shi's literature, art and other works, they have dialogues and resonance with Su Shi across time and space; learning Su Shi's spirit of achieving self-healing through

art in adversity, and introducing Su Shi's philosophy of life into the adjustment of psychological state. In addition, students of Leshan Normal University organize a "Su Shi Cultural Festival" every year to enhance the practicality, fun and radiation effect of traditional culture in Art Healing through student clubs, and explore the promotion and application of the integration of traditional culture and psychological healing in the second classroom. At present, digital media technology can also be used to create an interactive mode that integrates audio-visual senses and emotional experience. It can focus on refining the combination of virtual scene interactive experience, extracting the healing space factors of audio-visual tours, emotional resonance and meditation, and expanding the practical space of Art Healing.

The integration of Art Healing and traditional culture carried out in normal universities can also be extended to society. Because the main carrier of Art Healing is art, and the material in the field of art is extremely rich, and its threshold is not a profound professional term, but can gain spiritual inspiration and emotional cultivation through various sensory experiences of art. In the specific process of Art Healing, healers also use the physical and psychological experiences of the art appreciation process to carry out mental health interventions rather than focusing on the techniques and theories of artistic creation. That is to say, the focus of Art Healing is not on art itself, but on the same frequency resonance between artistic spirit and psychological healing. Therefore, healers can communicate with the audience based on their past healing experience and guide the audience to understand and grow themselves through art. At the same time, the audience does not have limitations such as age, occupation, and gender. The space for practice in society is extremely broad. It can even be said that people in the whole society can participate in different stages and directions in Art Healing.

Overall, art, as a tool for recording the times, integrates with psychotherapy to form an Art Healing course, inspiring individuals to express their true thoughts hidden deep in their hearts through "non-verbal" communication, avoiding the stiff intervention of direct psychological therapy. Art Healing can realize mental health education by integrating more diverse emotional adjustment, emotional comfort, psychological motivation and other methods. It can not only enrich the aesthetic education courses and mental health education courses of Normal University, and play a role in the psychological counseling and psychological counseling of college students; it can also be integrated with traditional culture and intervene in all aspects of mental health education of Normal University students in advance, effectively improving their emotional adjustment ability and psychological resilience intensity, which is of great significance to cultivating a qualified teaching team. Therefore, it has a broad application space in normal universities.

Of course, as an interdisciplinary mental health education model, Art Healing, still has a large room for exploration and improvement. The current problem facing China's Art Healing field is how to find a discipline integration model that is compatible with contemporary cultural contexts, and how to further integrate with local culture at the moment of rapid development of technologies such as artificial intelligence, so as to give Art Healing more characteristics of the times and national cultural

connotations. Compared with traditional spiritual therapy, Art Healing is obviously more humanistic. Especially after the COVID-19 epidemic, the social function of art needs to be reexamined. What kind of inspiration can art bring to the psychological state of the entire society? This is also a topic we urgently need to think about. The integrated development of Art Healing may provide a useful attempt for the healthy development of social psychology. Therefore, the services of Art Healing should also be extended beyond schools and further to the public. In this process, the role of teachers is undoubtedly huge. Therefore, it is very necessary to explore and promote the construction of integrated curriculum for Art Healing in Normal University, and it will also help further improve the theoretical construction and case practice of Art Healing.

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