

A Case Study of Drawing Therapy

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Abstract: Psychographic therapy refers to a method in which the client presents his subconscious personality, needs, emotions, complex and other information through painting, and gets relief, awareness, comprehension and integration in the process of painting and consultation, so as to improve self-confidence, enhance strength and discover resources, and finally achieve healing and growth. (Ji Tianshu, Li Yanli, 2016).

Keywords: Psychological painting; Awareness; Consultation

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Since China and South Korea established diplomatic relation in 1992, it has the largest number of Chinese people among foreigners in South Korea (이매화, 2019). As a country with internationalization of higher education, South Korea has similar geographical location and cultural environment with China. The application procedures for studying in Korea are convenient and the cost is low. Besides, its government implements employment support policies and scholarship system to enroll foreign students. And it also has advantages of high-quality education, convenient infrastructure and high popularity. Consequently, many Chinese students give preference to study in South Korea(강유린, 2018). According to the survey, 50 percent of Chinese students in South Korea have emotional problems. And when they have emotional problems, they will go to the school counseling center (조용비,

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Corresponding author: Yanli Li (1972-09), Female, Han nationality, native place: Fengnan District, Tangshan City, Hebei Province, Title: Associate Professor, Master's degree, Postgraduate degree, Research Direction: Psychological counseling.

2016) . Their main problems are psychological such as not adapting to the new environment, unable to face the pressure directly, obvious emotional fluctuations and so on, which will lead to the decline of their enthusiasm in daily life and the lack of personal sense of self-worth. Improving emotional problems can maintain physical and physical health and help individuals enhance their adaptability in a rapidly developing and changing society, so as to better complete their academic tasks during studying abroad.

Psychological painting therapy refers to the method that visitors present various information such as personality, needs, emotions, complexes and conflicts in their subconscious mind through painting, and obtain relief, awareness, understanding and integration in the process of painting and consultation, so as to improve self-confidence, enhance strength and discover resources, and finally achieve healing and growth(姬天舒 , 李艳丽 , 2016). Painting can stimulate the human right brain and present the inner world that the visitor has never found through the joint participation of consciousness and subconscious. Under the guidance of consultants, visitors realize the two-way process of subconscious conscientization and conscious subconsciousness(姬天舒 , 李艳丽 , 2016).

Psychological painting therapy is composed of art consultants, visitors and painting works. Among them, consultants can provide visitors with a variety of painting themes and a suitable creative environment. Visitors can present and vent their inner feelings through artistic forms such as theme painting and free graffiti(刘晓亲 , 龚定宏 , 2018). Emotional problems can cause psychological depression. In many cases, emotions cannot be extracted by words or language, but they can be expressed in the form of painting. Psychological painting of visual perception solves problems more easily(刘晓亲 , 龚定宏 , 2018).

We found that psychological painting can project the complex emotions onto the paper. Painting is a medium and a bridge. It can realize the transformation from invisible to tangible, and turn the invisible, illusory and elusive psychology into real, vivid and concrete paintings. The emotions and feelings of individuals in the subconscious are activated through psychological painting. Psychological paintings like a “mirror”, in which visitors are more likely to see themselves . Therefore, we try to explore the transformation and healing process of emotional problems through the case of psychological painting therapy.

1. Background

(1) Basic Information

W, female, 24 years old, is a senior Chinese student in a Korean University, majoring in game design, and likes painting and language. W was pestered by a

Korean friend (a female classmate) with phone calls and information from various channels. She was depressed and couldn't sleep normally (She fell asleep at 4 a.m. for a week in a row).

(2) First Impressions

The visitor is thin. She wore a white hat and black clothes (There were some white things on the clothes and looked unclean), and dressed in neutral. When she entered the consulting room, the consultant did not judge her gender within 30 seconds. The consultant observed that W's hands were larger than those of ordinary girls. And W was expressionless. She sat on a chair and took off her hat. She kept her head down and her clean hair was drooping and covering half of her face.

(3) Growth Experience

W was the only child in her family and grew up with her parents. Both parents are middle school teachers. According to her statement, her parents' relationship is "OK".

(4) Counseling motivation and Expectation

Because of her emotional problems, the school teacher suggested she receive psychological counseling. After twice psychological painting consultations, W changed from negative to positive. W is eager for her mood to return to calm and not affected by others.

2. Psychological Assessment

Symptom checklist 90 (SCL-90) and House-Tree-Person (HTP) were used for evaluation.

(1) Measurement Evaluation

Symptom checklist 90 (SCL-90), the most widely used mental illness examination scale, was used for visitor. This scale can insight into visitor's psychological health from nine aspects. From the score of the scale, comparing with the norm score, it is not difficult to find that the somatization factor ($2.3 < 2.83 < 4$), obsessive-compulsive factor ($3 < 3.10 < 4$), anxiety factor ($2 < 2.4 < 3$), phobia factor ($2 \leq 2 < 3$), hostility factor ($2 \leq 2.17 < 3$) and depression factor ($2 \leq 2.31 < 3$) of W are in an unhealthy marginal state or have been in an unhealthy state. (The scale is calculated by 1-5 points)

The examination showed that there was no organic injury or lesion in physiology.

(2) Psychology and School environment

The great majority of her friends are international exchange students, and most of them have returned home. Now she had other friends. W received free psychological painting consultation at school.

(3) Assessment

Among the nine factors, six factors of W (somatization, obsessive-compulsive disorder, anxiety, terror, hostility and depression) are between severe dysfunction and good function, and the other three factors (hostility, paranoia and psychosis) are in good function. In this case, psychological counseling can be carried out by means of psychological painting.

3. Media and Program Settings

(1) Media

① Consultation place: International Student Service Center - psychological consultation room.

② Painting media: A4 paper, sketch paper, oil painting stick, watercolor pen, etc.

③ Assessment tool: test the symptom checklist 90 (SCL-90) on a laptop.

④ Content record: the consultant assistant shall write down the whole process.

⑤ Mobile camera: take photos only for the works of the visitor.

(2) Psychological painting tutor

Ms. Li, an associate professor in psychological painting and registered consultant of the Chinese Psychological Society, has received a complete and systematic training of psychological painting consultation and has more than 10 years of clinical experience in psychological painting. At the same time, she is an exchange visiting scholar at Jeonju University in South Korea.

(3) Program settings

The consultation is based on psychoanalysis, humanism and positive psychology. It mainly establishes the consultation relationship and explores the visitor's subconsciousness in the way of psychological painting, supplemented by relaxing hypnosis, on the basis of respect, acceptance, listening and empathy. And it aims to release and alleviate negative emotions and stimulate positive emotions. From April 14th to June 9th in 2021, the reception lasted for 8 weeks, basically once a week. And a total of six consultations were conducted (Due to catching up with the Korean Festival, there was a lack of two consultations.). It was an individual case of short-term psychological painting. (Note: the consultation

process and results of this case are used with the permission of W.)

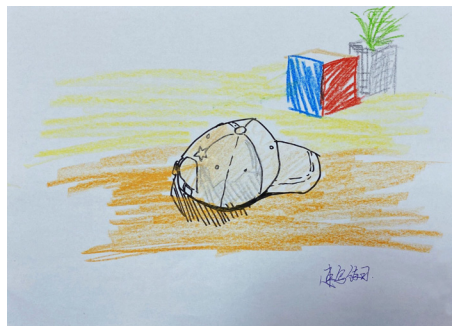
4. Key Points of Psychological Painting Consultation Process

According to the different states presented by the visitors each time, the whole consultation process can be divided into four stages : the establishment of a sense of trust in consultant and visitors (the first visit), the presentation of emotional problems(the second visit), emotional conflicts and struggles (the third and fourth visits), and problem solving (the fifth and sixth visits).

(1) The establishment of a sense of trust in consultant and visitors(the first visit)

First, the counselor and her assistant introduced themselves, and then learned more about the personal and family information of W. During the consultation, W couldn't answer open questions, but could only answer selectively, such as "yes", "no" or "um". She was very cautious and depressed. In the early stage of the consultation, she kept her head down, occasionally looked at the consultant, and then bowed her head immediately. Her voice was as low as a murmur. she felt introverted as a whole.

She said that she fell asleep at 4 a.m. and woke up at noon the next day. And she felt very tired after getting up. Her physical condition: she had headache and cold this week. She had never taken psychotropic drugs, and there was no history of mental illness in her family. Tested with symptom checklist 90 (SCL-90), which the consultant told she some matters needing attention and how to answered it before, she answered 90 questions in about 6.5 minutes. Then the "finger separation" game was used to test the difficulty of subconscious communication for her. In testing, all her fingers were close and shaking, indicating that she can communicate subconsciously through hypnosis, but there may be resistance at the beginning of entering.



Name: Sketch Exercise; Duration: 5mins (April 14th, 2021)

During the first visit, W completed two paintings. In the first painting, the

consultant conducted an open-ended guidance without proposition and invited she to paint freely. She created the free painting “Sketch Exercise”, which presented her hat and the still life on the table in consulting room. This painting did not expose the problems that she wanted to solve, and showed that she suspected the consultant; However, when inviting her to paint, she showed active cooperation. Then the consultant invited her to draw a picture of “House-Tree-Person”. Consultant guidance: please draw a picture of “House-Tree-Person”. You can draw as you want. The consultant did not set too many restrictions. After a pause for about 40 seconds, she began to paint and completed it in 6 minutes (as shown in the figure).



Name: House-Tree-Person; Duration: 6mins (April 14th, 2021)

In the process of painting, she was decisive and vigorous, which was very different from her expression. After painting “House-Tree-Person”, the consultation time is over. And the consultant invited her to appreciate this painting at the same time next week.

House-Tree-Person (HTP) is not only a communication tool, but also a psychological counseling technology. A picture is worth thousands of words. We don't need words to feel the emotions of the visitors. In the first consultation, we found that the visitor didn't answer questions involuntarily, but her language expression was seriously blocked in the communication. Psychological painting was very suitable for W because it could make her expression fluently. Her painting had coordinated colors, reasonable composition, large picture and a sense of energy, which may be related to her professional art training. But the picture also presented some problems. The house was small and showed her heart was not open enough. The house was covered with slashes; The door was closed and had no handle. It expressed that she didn't want others to disturb her and was not ready to let people into her heart. The house didn't have windows and indicated that she didn't want to communicate with others. The crown size is suitable for the whole tree, and it expressed that she had ability to use resources. The house, tree and people are in a straight line, indicating that she lacked a sense of security and should improved

her adaptability. The two birds in the sky reflected she longed for freedom and accompany. The sun expressed her expectation of love and warmth.

(2) The presentation of emotional problems(the second visit)

The consultant asked her about her basic situation this week. She said that her sleep improved this week, but she still felt tired and dizzy. Next, the consultant and W appreciated and analyzed the painting “House-Tree-Person”, which was painted by W last week. Through the painting she could see her advantages, be full of energy and establish a trust relationship with the counselors.

(This is an excerpt from the second consultation)

Consultant: “Is there anything you pay close attention to in this painting? Or is there anything that can move you?”

Visitor: “No.”

Consultant: “But there is something in the picture that moves me very much. Guess what it may be?”

Visitor: “Sun.”

Counselor: “The sun is energetic and warm. And warm things have love. These include the love of parents, friends and classmates. Can you talk about love and warmth?”

Visitor: “Hmm.”

The consultant waited for half a minute and the visitor did not continue the topic.

Consultant: “Don’t you want to talk?”

Visitor: “I don’t know how to talk.” (the consultant tries to guide the visitor to talk about Korean girls. At this time, the visitor should be resistant to talking about it, so he doesn’t know how to talk about it.)

Consultant: “In addition to being interested in the sun, I am also interested in the person in the painting. Usually, painting people is more complex. You grasp the key characteristics of painting people and draw the characters with a few simple lines. The person who uses this painting method is intelligent. And they can simplify complex things.” (The visitor smiles for the first time).

Consultant: “A famous man once drew a picture called “sunrise on the sea”, which was completed in one second. Can you imagine what his picture is like?”

Visitor: “Half a circle, a wavy line?” (W speaks a long sentence coherently for the first time).

The consultant smiled and replied, “Yes, it can simplify complex problems. He is a wise person. Do you know who this person is?”

The visitor looked up expectantly at the consultant.

The consultant smiled and said, “His name is Mao Zedong.”

The visitor was surprised and then smiled.

Consultant: “Do you feel dizzy now?”

Visitor: “No.”

The consultant joked: “Yes, you are a wise man. You don’t need to be dizzy, ha!”

The visitor burst into laughter.

Consultant: “Did you feel nervous or uneasy?”

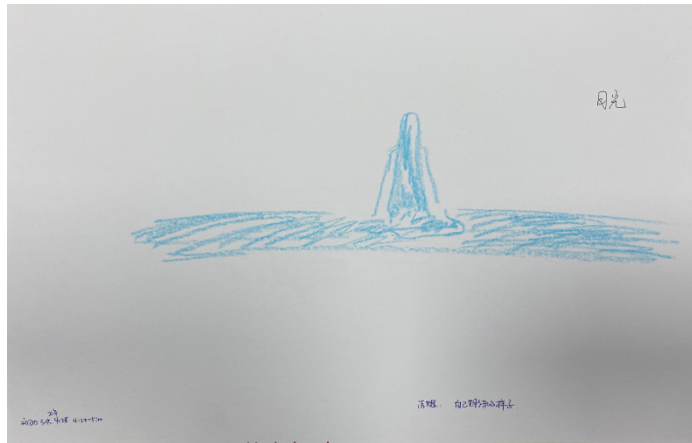
Visitor: “Well, I was very upset when I received a harassment call on April 8th.”

Due to the establishment of trust relationship between consultant and visitor, the emotional problems of visitor can be presented. What happened is that W received a harassing call from a Korean girl (called S). W was associated with S for half a year, but the relationship broke down (the reason was not mentioned). W was meant to suicide by cutting her wrist. During the hospitalization, she was accompanied by two Chinese girls. After this incident, W did not want to contact S anymore, but S harassed W through various channels. W came to consult because S called her China’s mobile phone number, which is not easy for a Korean to obtain. S took a lot of effort to get her phone number; Since the binding of various information uses this Chinese mobile phone number, it can’t be changed casually. W thought that S can harass her at any time and she can’t get rid of it. So she was very anxious and unable to sleep. She was going to collapse.

In this consultation, W was able to express more coherently. Psychological painting has successfully helped the counselor and the visitor establish a trust relationship, so that W can decrease resistance and exposed her problems more easily.

(3) Emotional conflicts and struggles (the third and fourth visits)

This is the third consultation. The consultant asked about W's situation this week. W felt a little better overall: if the severity of sleep problems was 10 points when he came to the consultation last time, it reached the level of 7 and 8 points this time. With regard to the sleep problems of the visitor, the consultant brought W into a peaceful and peaceful emotional experience by using hypnosis and psychological painting. In the process of hypnosis and relaxation, the consultant invited W to open her eyes and express her emotions through painting. Her painting showed a man sitting in the moonlight. The work "Moonlight" is as follows:



Name: Moonlight; Duration: 2mins (April 28th, 2021)

W said that she was in a stable and felt the peace she had not seen for a long time.

After the completion of the painting, the consultant once again hypnotized and relaxed W more deeply, and then W presented the scene she felt again. She still painted a man sitting alone in the courtyard with bright moonlight. The work called "Under The Moon".



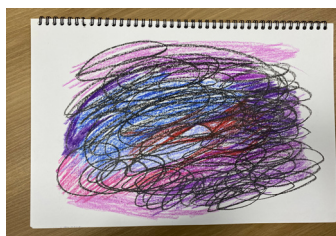
Name: Under The Moon; Duration: 6mins (April 28th, 2021)

This painting was more colorful than the previous work "Moonlight". In this

work, A cicada (the black spot on the right side of the tree crown) was added to make the picture more lively, but also symbolized the transformation and rebirth of W. When creating “Under The Moon”, W framed the content to be painted in a square to seek the expression of a sense of security.

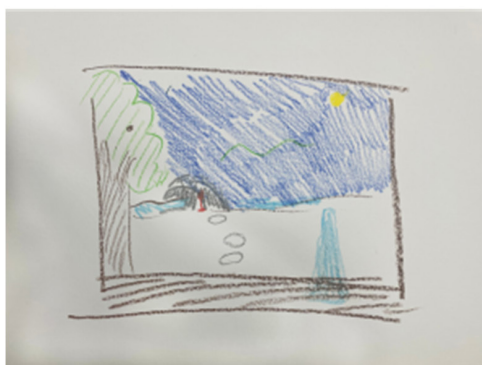
W said that she hoped that she could enjoy peace, get sober thoughts, have an undisturbed life, and yearn to become what she expected.

During the fourth consultation, the consultant found that W was unexplained irritability this week. The consultant first asked W to express and release her negative emotion in the painting. After completing the work “Annoyance”, W was asked about the annoyance scores before and after painting. The degree of annoyance before painting was 8 ~ 9, and the degree of annoyance after painting was reduced to 4 ~ 5. The following figure showed her finished work :



Name: Annoyance; Duration: 7mins (May 12th, 2021)

After releasing her emotions, W was guided to appreciate the last painting. She said that she was not satisfied with the red color of the street lamp last time. When she heard that the work could be modified if she wanted to, she decided to modify the picture. The red street lamp was modified to black for the first time, because she thought the red seemed too “jumping” (too prominent and uncoordinated). And then she was dissatisfied with the “bridge” in the picture and modified it twice again. The bridge was finally painted into a thicker black.



Original drawing of last week
(red street lights beside the bridge)



The first revision of Moonlight: the red street
lamp is changed to black



The second revision of Moonlight: accentuate the black of the bridge



The third revision of Moonlight: accentuate the black of the bridge again

The consultant let W close her eyes again and enter a quiet state of relaxation, and wake up after inputting the relaxation information.

(4) Problem solving (the fifth and sixth visits)

A consultation was stopped in the middle because it coincided with the festival last week.

The consultant continued to follow up the contents of the last consultation and learned about W's situation in the past two weeks. W said her sleep and headache had been significantly improved. In the past she fell asleep at 4 a.m. , woke up at noon, and felt very tired after waking up. But now she fell asleep at 1 a.m., woke up at 10 a.m., and felt very relaxed after waking up. This was the ideal state that she expected.

This consultation moved on the last painting. The consultant felt that she was still dissatisfied with the bridge, even though she had modified it twice. In psychological painting, the more places are smeared, the more anxious the painter is. "Bridge" symbolizes communication. She modified the bridge many times. It suggested that she hoped to have better ability to communicate with the outside world. However, she was still dissatisfied with the painting. And her inner contradictions, collisions, helplessness and entanglements were displayed incisively and vividly in the process of repeatedly modifying the picture.

She finally followed the advice of the consultant and draw another new work called "Meditating Under The Moon".



Name: Meditating Under The Moon; Duration: 8mins (May 26th, 2021)

The overall color of the work was cool. The bamboo on the left represented her upward energy in life and learning. The gray lighthouse next to the bamboo and the yellow moon on the upper right all expressed her clear cognition and the longing for beautiful things. The grass led to the bridge in the distance, indicating that she hoped to live in new surroundings. Sitting on the brown floor showed she wanted to settle down. The ground was highlighted, and it meant that she concerned about a sense of security. Compared with the last time, she was more calm and relaxed.

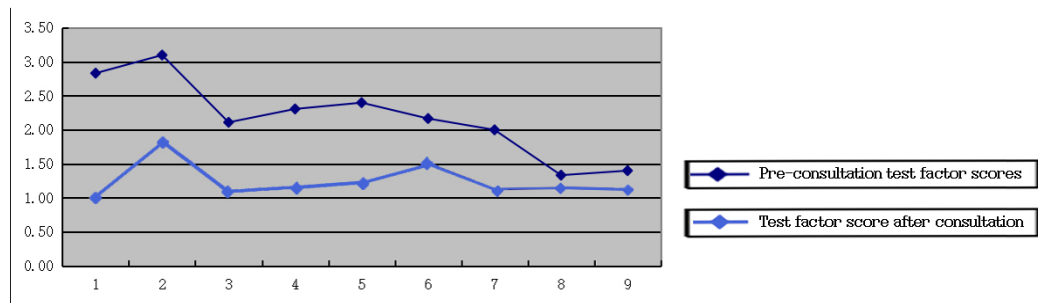
Painting is the process of building a spiritual world. We can draw what we yearn for. The psychological problems will be alleviated in varying degrees after painting.

In the 5th and 6th consultation, W talked a lot, and even taught the consultant how to learn Korean. W confidently showed her advantages at the moment. In the sixth consultation, the symptom checklist 90 (SCL-90) was tested again, and the test results were in sharp contrast with the first test. The comparison is shown in the figure below.

Symptom checklist 90 (SCL-90) - factor scores before and after intervention

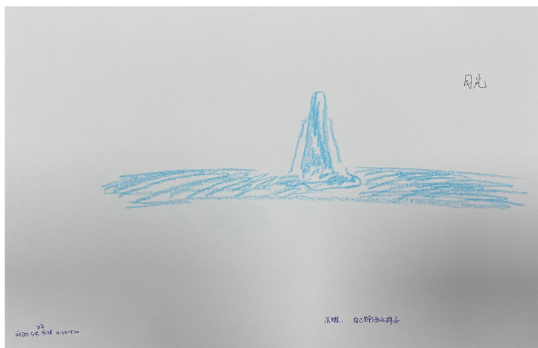
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	Pre-consultation test factor scores	Norm	Test factor score after consultation
Somatization	2.83	2.31	1.00
Obsessive compulsive disorder	3.10	2.75	1.80
Interpersonal sensitivity	2.11	2.85	1.11
Depression	2.31	2.66	1.15
Anxiety	2.40	2.23	1.20
Hostile	2.17	2.54	1.50
Fear	2.00	2.03	1.14
Bigoted	1.33	2.55	1.17
Psychotic	1.40	2.11	1.00

In order to evaluate the improvement of painting therapy on the emotional problems of individual cases, two tests were conducted before and after the intervention (see the figure below). The total score of symptom checklist 90 (SCL-90) before painting consultation was 187. The scores of somatization, obsessive-compulsive and anxiety were significantly higher than the norm, and the degree of depression was also higher in the normal range. After six painting consultations, the total score of SCL-90 was reduced to 102, and the scores of somatization, obsessive-compulsive, anxiety and other factors decreased significantly. According to the score and visitor's emotional state, W's mood was normal and good, which fully showed that psychological painting therapy can effectively improve emotional problems.



Symptom checklist 90 (SCL-90) - comparison chart of factor score trend before and after intervention

After that, the consultant invited W to make the last free painting. Compared with the first picture on the second visit, it had similarities. But they were more different.



The first work "Moonlight" in the second consultation , 2mins (April 28th, 2021)



The last work "A Leaf" in 6th consultation , 6mins (June 9th, 2021)

(the following is an excerpt from the sixth consultation)

Consultant: "What's its name? What are you drawing?"

Visitor: " It's called A Leaf. During the day, this leaf looks at the sky,

surrounded by vast grasslands.”

Consultant: “ Is there wind around?”

Visitor: “ Breeze.”

Consultant: “when is it?”

Visitor: “ Eight or nine o’clock in the morning.”

Consultant: “ Is there anyone around? ”

Visitor: “ No, there isn’t”

Consultant: “ Is it near your home? ”

Visitor: “ It takes about half an hour to home.”

Consultant: “ Who’s staying at home? ”

Visitor: “Myself.”

Consultant: “ What animals are there? ”

Visitor: “Nothing.”

Consultant: “how are you feeling now? ”

Visitor: “Quiet.”

Communicating with consultants, W said a few words. But her expression were concise and determined.

Compared with the “Moonlight”, A leaf let this picture full of hope and companionship; The breeze indicated a state of comfort without pressure. Eight or nine o’clock in the morning symbolized youth. Although she had an opportunity to growth, her emotional problems have been handled properly. W said that if S harassed her again, she can handle it calmly.

5. Conclusion and Discussion

The visitor went through four stages: the establishment of a sense of trust in consultations and visits; the presentation of emotional problems; emotional conflicts and struggles; and problem solving. The obvious changes in the color and structure of the visitor’s paintings and the comparison of the data from SCL-90 effectively

showed that psychological painting therapy can significantly improve the emotional problems of foreign students.

The establishment of a sense of trust is the first step to implement counseling and treatment. A good counseling relationship plays a role of support and companionship. When the counseling relationship is established, painting is a bridge of communication. It can quickly break the psychological defense between consultants and visitors, put down their psychological preparedness, and uncover their “mysterious veil”. Besides, it can help the consultant establish relationship with visitors in a suitable way. In the presentation of emotional problems, the consultant provides a positive psychological environment for the visitors who can safely vent their inner anger, sadness, boredom, shame and other negative emotions through painting. In the stage of emotional conflicts and struggles, the visitors complete the internal adjustment and improvement by repeatedly modifying and correcting the picture; Finally, under the guidance of consultants, they can explore themselves, take the initiative to find strength and resources, and finally solve the problem.

The psychological painting treatment took a short time. For some reason, it ended in a hurry. After half a year, the consultant paid a return visit to W. She reflected that the effect of consultation was stable. Even if she suffered from mood swings, she can calm down quickly. The analysis and projection of psychological painting works is a tool to judge the effect of painting consultation and intervention. Although we combine the language elaboration of the visitors in the research and carry out rational sorting and analysis as much as possible, it is inevitable that the analysis will be affected by the consultant’s subjective experience. How to improve the reliability and validity of psychological painting analysis is the key point to be broken through in the future.

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