

# Exploring Trauma Through Expressive Art



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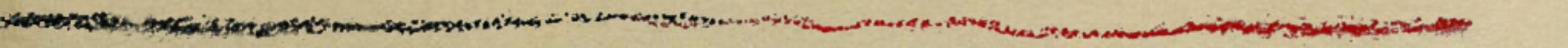
# Art Therapy vs. Expressive Art



*Practiced by individuals with a Masters in Art Therapy*

*Practiced by artists, educators, volunteers, therapists, students...*

# Art Therapy



- *Requires knowledge of and skills in usage of visual art (drawing, painting, sculpture, and other art forms) and the creative process*
- *Application of theories and techniques of human development, psychology, and counseling*

# Types of Expressive Arts

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- *Visual arts: drawing, painting, sculpture, collages*
- *Movement/dance*
- *Mindfulness: yoga & breath work*
- *Language arts: storytelling, essays, poetry*
- *Drama*
- *Play/sand-tray therapy*
- *Music & drumming*

# Expressive Art

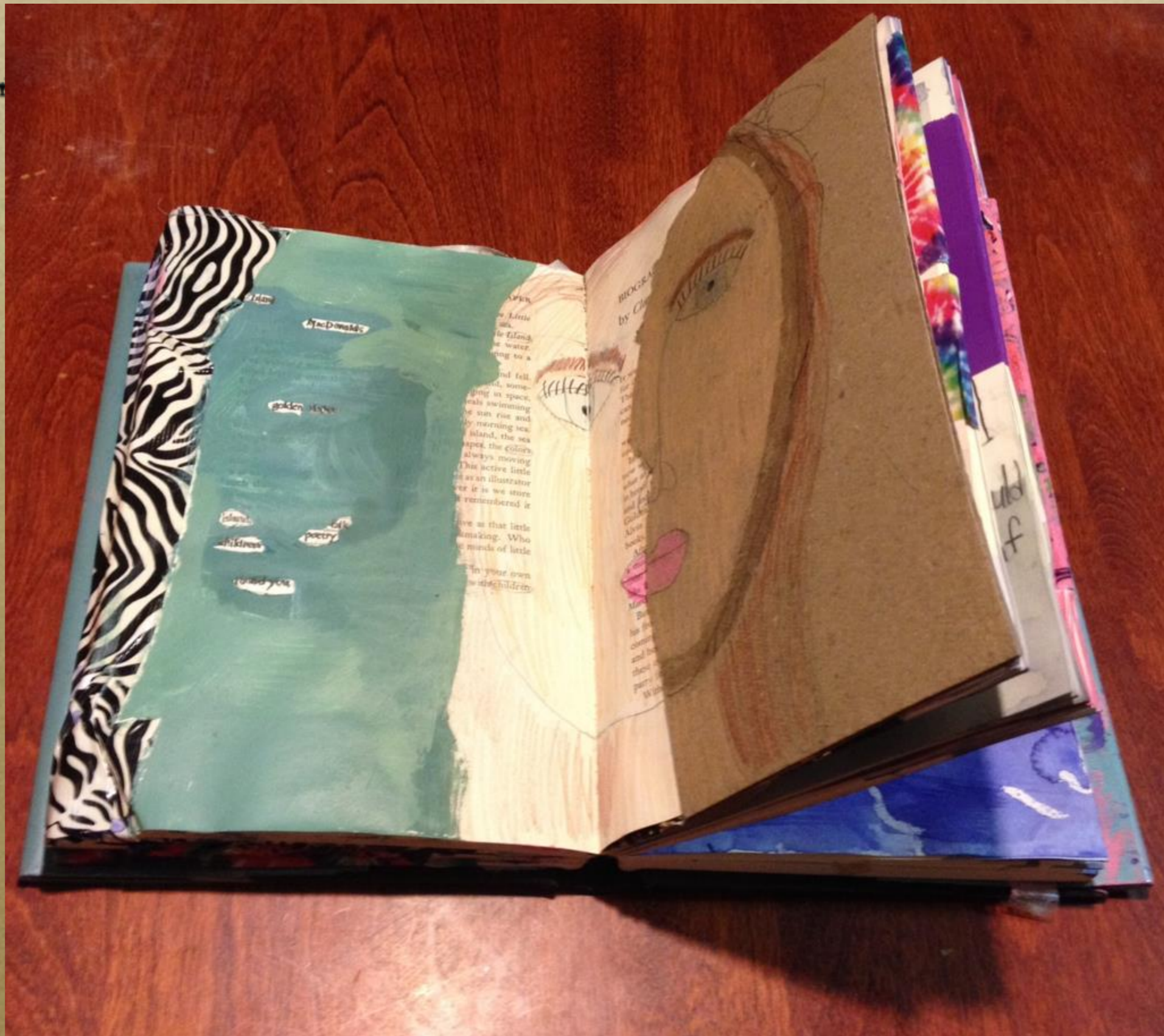


- *To gain trust and open conversation with students*
- *Vehicle for personal expression and healing*
- *Change representation of feelings*
- *Express feelings that are beyond words*
- *Soften experienced trauma*
- *Examine loss or trauma by creating something physical*

# *Soften Experienced Trauma*



# Gain Trust and Open Conversation

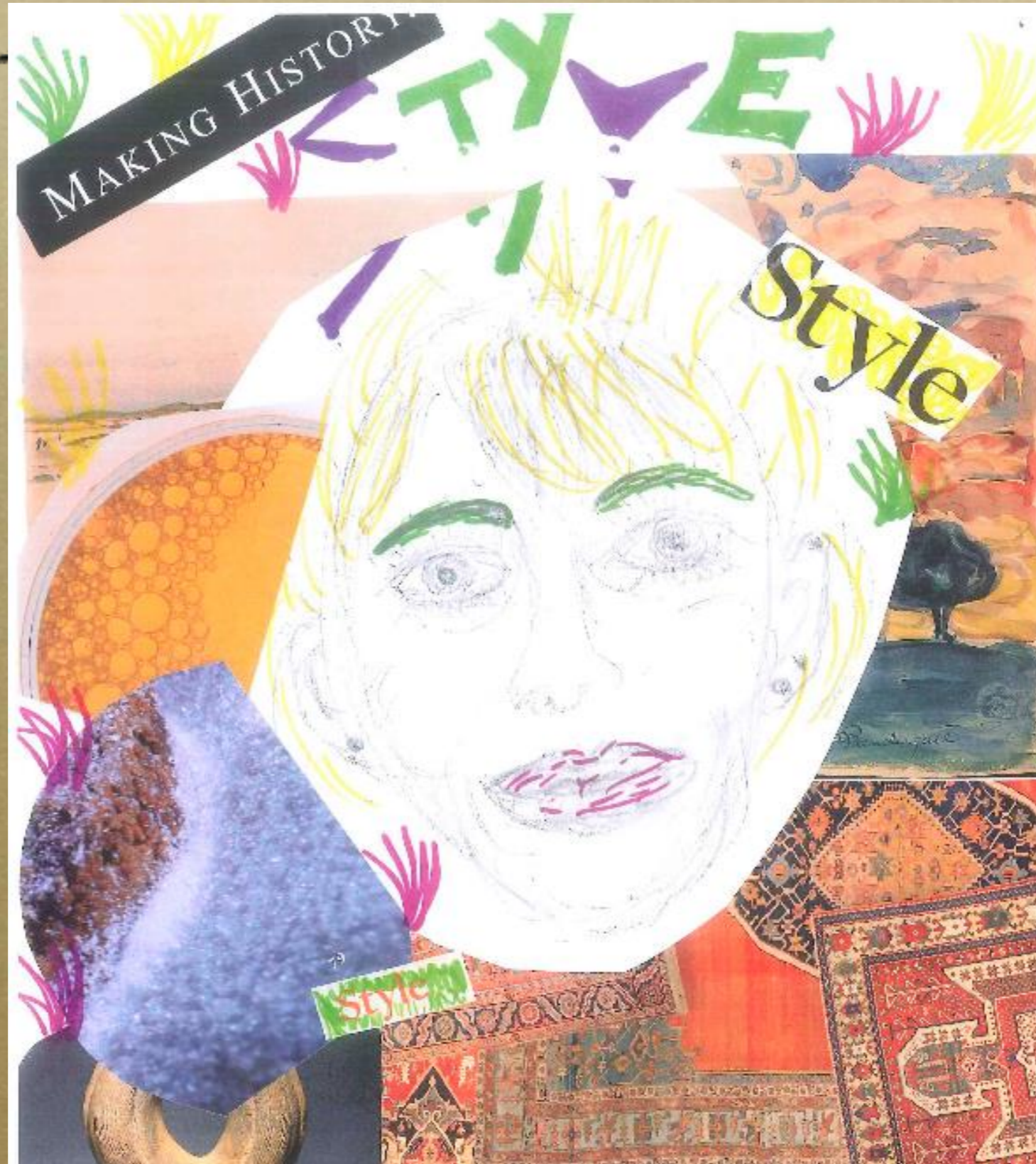


# Examine Loss by Creating Something Physical





# Vehicle for Personal Expression and Healing



# Change Representation of Feelings



"Art gives feelings a form. If we feel bad about something,... through art we can change the representation of those feelings."

# Express Feelings that are Beyond Words



- *“With song, brushes and buckets of paint, children in Boston are using the arts to try to express feelings about last week's marathon bombings for which even their parents do not have words”*
- *“...the children in our community sometimes need a place to express things that are beyond words, and using their hands and having a place to tangibly put their energy is really important.”*
- *“No more hurting people. Peace.”*

# Volunteers provided art projects at Ferguson library for displaced students



# Collage



# Basic Materials

- *Magazines*
- *Scissors*
- *Glue*
- *Paper*
- *Markers*
- *Pencils/Erasers*



# Find

- *1 or 2 images*
- *1 or 2 words*
- *1 or 2 textures*



# Textures





# Next...

- *Cut*
- *Glue*
- *Alter with color*
- *Be open and enjoy the process!*



# Drawing is Thinking



*“The only meaningful work that anyone ever does is work that is done while you don’t know exactly what you’re doing.”*

*Drawing is Thinking by Milton Glaser*

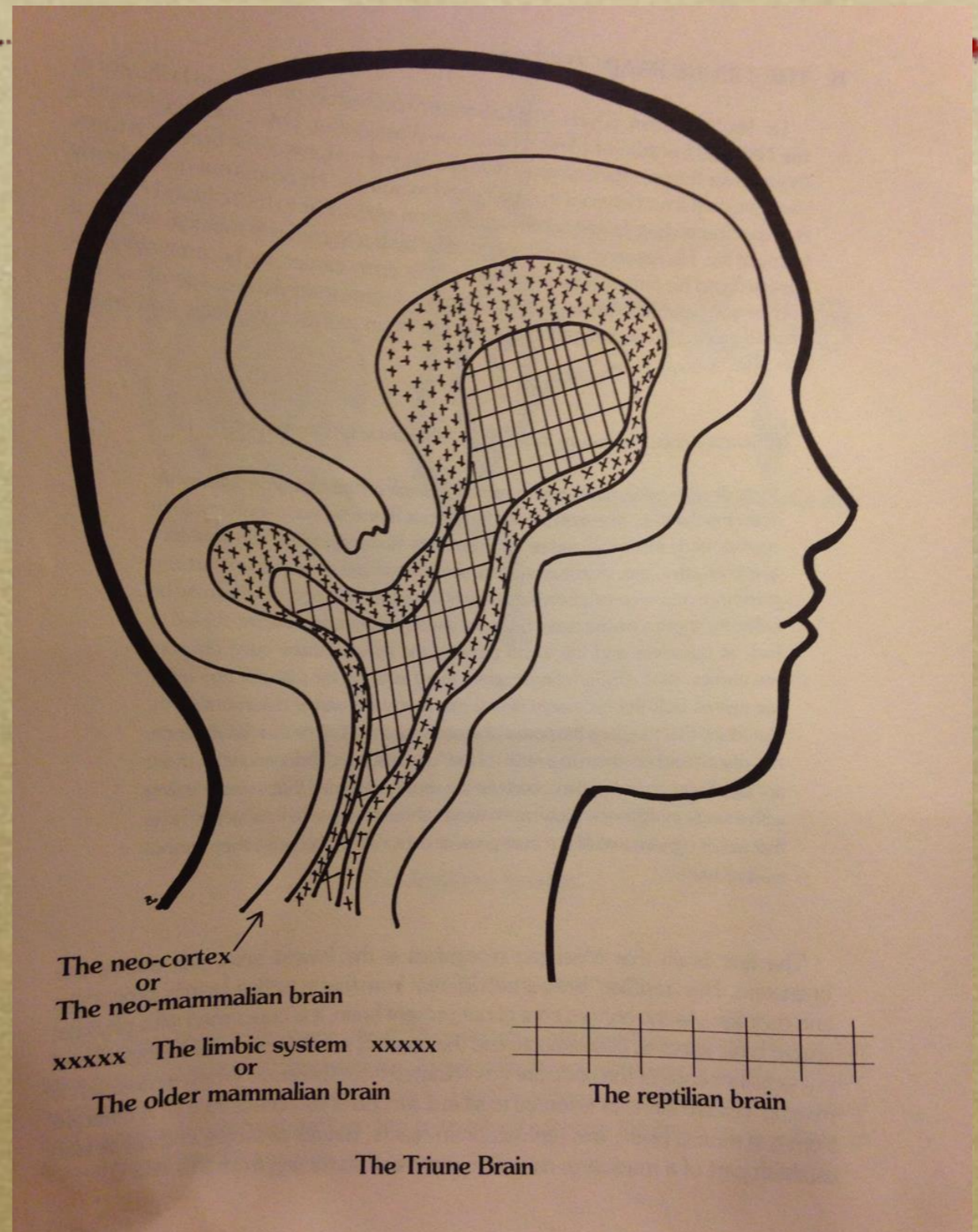


# How to Use Project



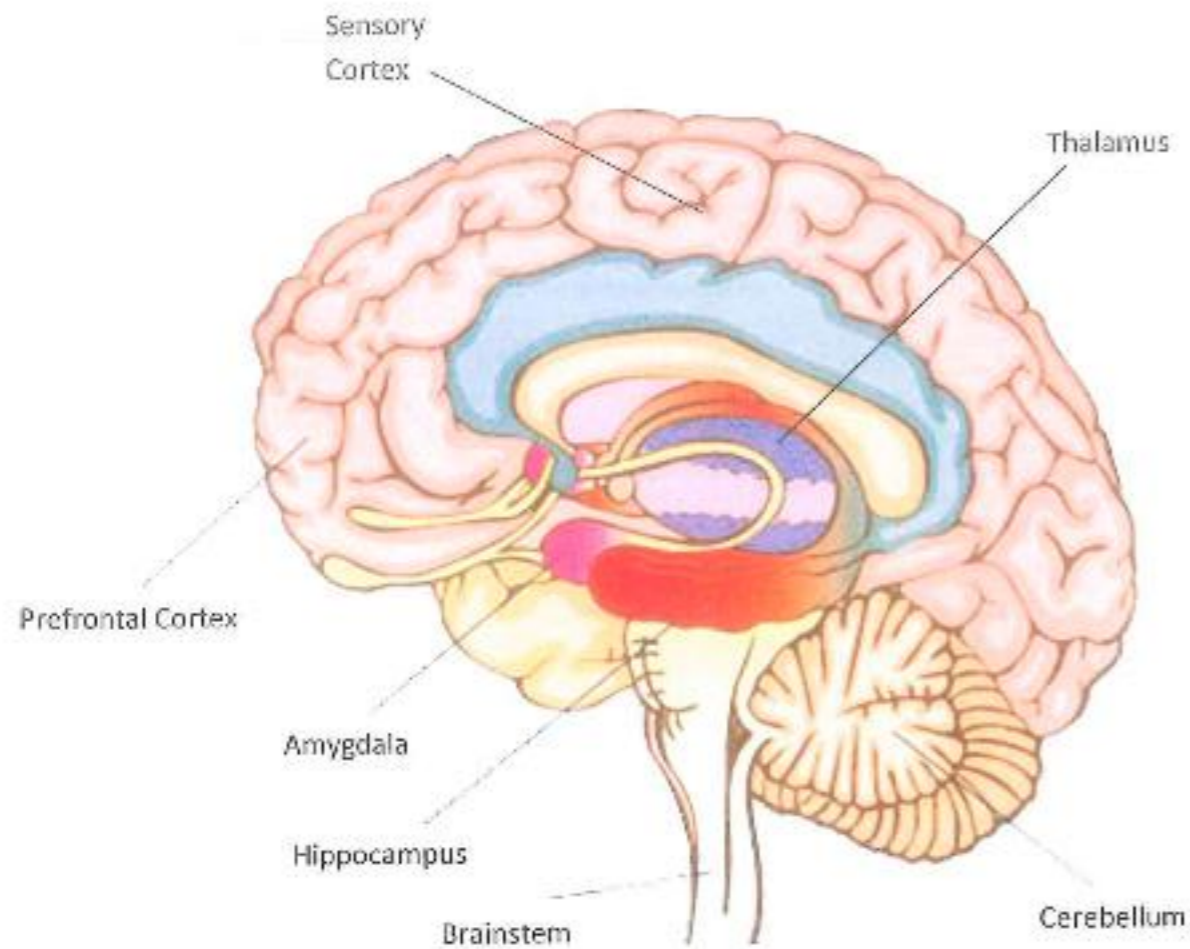
# Basic Anatomy of Brain

- *Triune brain framework (reptilian, mammalian, neo-mammalian)*
- *Key parts discussed: amygdala, hippocampus, pre-frontal cortex*



# Key Parts of the Brain

## Areas of the Brain



- *Amygdala*
- *Pre-frontal cortex*
- *Hippocampus*

# How Trauma Affects the Brain

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- *“Fight-or-flight “ mechanism activated; all systems “go”*
- *Neurons that fire together, wire together (Hebb’s principle)*
- *Key to healing from trauma is to open new neural networks*

# Neuroplasticity to Rewire Brain

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- *Neuro-revolution in what we understand re: the brain*
- *Huge capacity for regeneration and growth*
- *Access these new pathways (neural generation) through Expressive Art Therapy*

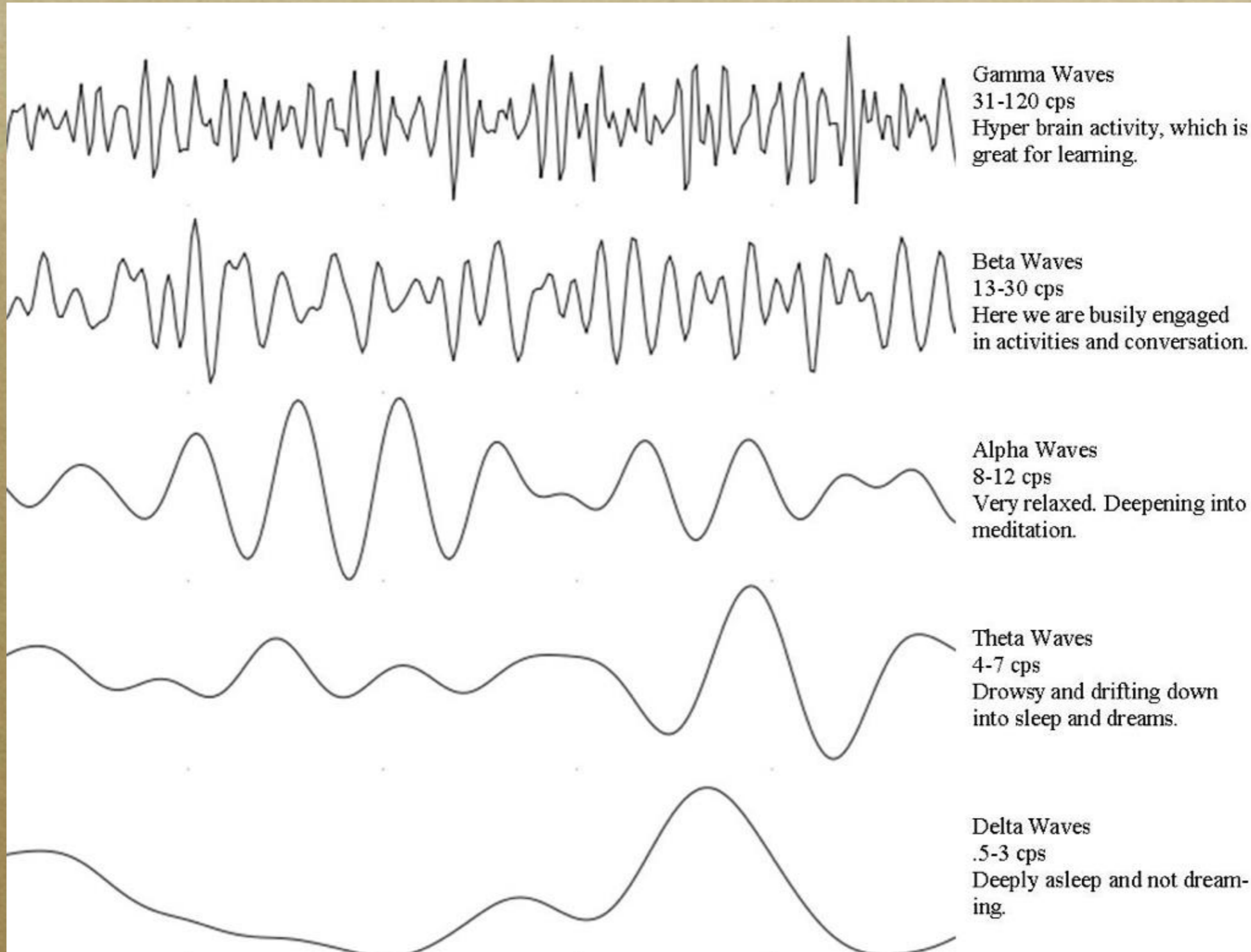


# How Art Can Alter the Brain in a Positive Manner

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- *Neurons firing & rewiring together*
- *Amygdala calmed and reduces in size*
- *Hippocampus regains normal size*
- *PFC accesses more blood flow and dopamine receptors*
- *Pathways opened up to executive functioning*

# Wave Forms of the Brain





Q & A

# Going Forward

