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# The Essence of Open-Studio in Health Facilities, as Viewed by Art-Therapists

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The open-studio is an art-therapy format, offering individual art making in a group. The open-studio is a space containing a variety of art materials that can be used freely, without instructions, in the presence of others. The idea of the open-studio started in psychiatric hospitals, in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, and is based on the "art as therapy" approach, which emphasizes the healing quality of art making. There are a few different formats for the open-studio, based on the participants' characteristics and the therapist's goals.

This article studies the essence of the open-studio in health facilities, as viewed by experienced art therapists and art therapy students. Six semi-structured interviews were conducted, where the interviewees were asked to describe their open-studio, focusing on the components and goals of the studio, and on the therapist's role. The interviews were analyzed using Grounded theory, finding four major aspects: participant's characteristics, components of the open-studio, the open studio's therapeutic strengths, and the role of the therapist. The findings indicate that the open-studio has certain flexibility, allowing its adjustment to different populations and facilities. These findings point out to the necessity for a basic and comprehensive model of the open-studio, containing the studio's main goals and working method.

**Keywords:** art therapy, open-studio, group therapy, health facilities, art as therapy.

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