

---

**ABSTRACT**

Trauma counseling through art expression for the sufferer: The meaning of art-focusing as a trauma narrative technique

KASUGA, Naomi  
*Morioka University*

The purpose of this study was to apply trauma counseling for the sufferer through art expression including sandplay, collage work, art-focusing and picture book construction. I examined the effects involved in the release from trauma and the meaning of art-focusing as a trauma narrative technique. The client was a university student who had lost her friends and her hometown due to the tsunami of the Great East Earthquake of Japan. The trauma counseling included twenty sessions during a nine-month period by producing security, enacting trauma narratives and confirming a new life story. It enabled her to rid herself of trauma reactions and rediscover a normal daily life. In the trauma narrative, there were cognitive changes, which included the admission of trauma, the reconstruction of the meaning of life and the creation of a life story that incorporated the trauma experiences. It was noted that art-focusing through its two processes of visualization and verbalization of the “felt sense” had a strong effect in producing these cognitive changes.

**Key Words:** trauma counseling, trauma narrative, art-focusing, sandplay, picture book

---