Where Do Drama Therapists Practice?

Mental Health Facilities
Schools
Hospitals
Substance Abuse Treatment Centers
Adult Day Care Centers
Correctional Facilities
Community Centers
After-School Programs
Shelters
Adolescent Group Homes
Nursing Homes
Private Practice Settings
Corporations
Theaters
Housing Projects
Medical Schools
Training Organizations

How Does Drama Therapy Affect Participants?

The work I did in drama therapy gave me the stability and direction I needed to deal with personal issues stemming from child abuse, assaults and rape, and loss of self.

- CATHY H. (ABUSE SURVIVOR)

Drama showed me how to interact with others. Most of all, it gave me a way to have excitement in my life without the use of drugs.

- KURT M. (RECOVERING DRUG ADDICT)

Often our residents do not recognize their aggressiveness or hostility until it is explored in drama therapy.

- DUANE T. BOWERS
  DIRECTOR OF SECOND GENESIS RESIDENTIAL FACILITY

I cannot put into words how wonderful this drama experience has been for my daughter. I have seen the child we knew was inside, but which we rarely saw at home, come out.

- MOTHER OF ADOLESCENT WITH ASPERGER’S SYNDROME

As someone who is schizophrenic, I’ve always been told that I shouldn’t use my imagination. With drama, I get to use my imagination and it helps me.

- SUE P. (STUDENT)

Drama therapy is beneficial for individuals, families, and communities struggling with transition, loss, social stigmatization, isolation, illness, conflict, and trauma. It is an effective option for the treatment and prevention of anxiety, depression, and addiction, amongst other mental health concerns. Drama therapy promotes positive changes in mood, insight, empathy, and facilitates healthy relationships.
What Is Drama Therapy?

Drama therapy is the intentional use of drama and/or theater processes to achieve therapeutic goals.

Drama therapy is active and experiential. This approach can provide the context for participants to tell their stories, set goals and solve problems, express feelings, or achieve catharsis. Through drama, the depth and breadth of inner experience can be actively explored and interpersonal relationship skills can be enhanced. Participants can expand their repertoire of dramatic roles to find that their own life roles have been strengthened.

Behavior change, skill building, emotional and physical integration, and personal growth can be achieved through drama therapy in prevention, intervention, and treatment settings.

The North American Drama Therapy Association (NADTA) was incorporated in 1979 to establish and uphold rigorous standards of professional competence for drama therapists. The organization maintains requirements that must be met to qualify as a registered drama therapist (RDT). NADTA promotes drama therapy through information and advocacy.

As a member organization of the National Coalition of Creative Arts Therapies Associations (NCCATA), the NADTA is aligned with professionals in the fields of art, music, dance, and poetry therapies, as well as group psychotherapy and psychodrama.

What Do Drama Therapists Do?

A drama therapist first assesses a client's needs and then considers approaches that might best meet those needs. Drama therapy can take many forms depending on individual and group needs, skill and ability levels, interests, and therapeutic goals.

Processes and techniques may include improvisation, theater games, storytelling, and enactment. Many drama therapists make use of text, performance, or ritual to enrich the therapeutic and creative process.

The theoretical foundation of drama therapy lies in drama, theater, psychology, psychotherapy, anthropology, play, and interactive and creative processes.

Who Are Registered Drama Therapists?

Drama therapists hold a master's or doctoral degree in Drama Therapy from a program accredited by the North American Drama Therapy Association, or hold a master's degree or doctoral degree in theater or a mental health profession with additional in-depth training in drama therapy through NADTA's alternative training program. Board-certified registered drama therapists (RDT/BCT) train and supervise students in this alternative track.