

## **Introduction**

Hi, my name is Neela Govinden and I am a registered Art Psychotherapist.

### **What is Art Therapy?**

Art therapy is a way to explore our thoughts and feelings. It is a safe, creative therapeutic experience for people of all ages which uses art-making to enhance emotional and mental wellbeing. We can use art-making and the materials in a session as a way to express ourselves and to connect with ourselves.

### **How Does it Work?**

You don't have to be good at art to engage in art therapy. The art-making process can be used to help us to acknowledge and relieve difficult feelings and also to explore our wishes and desires. It can help us to gain insight into ourselves and our behaviours through looking at the art that has been made. This can help us to build self-esteem, emotional resilience and a sense of independence. The art therapist is there to support you throughout the process.

### **What Can I Expect?**

Within schools, there is usually a designated room in which the art therapy occurs. The art therapist may collect you from your lesson and walk back with you once the session has finished. The room will usually have a range of wet and dry art materials, tables and chairs. What you decide to make and how you want to make it is up to you.

Most art therapy sessions last for 50 minutes and are held once a week. Some people attend art therapy for a few weeks or months. If you decide that you would like to keep your artwork, you can do so once the duration of therapy has ended. If you don't want to keep it, this is okay, too. Most importantly, the sessions are guided by you and are for you.