



United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Open Pedagogy Fellowship

COVID-19 and the Dark Side of Life: Expressing Human Negative Emotions Through Art Expression

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Introduction:

You are a part of a collegewide effort to increase access to education and empower students through "open pedagogy." Open pedagogy is a "free access" educational practice that places you - the student - at the center of your own learning process in a more engaging, collaborative learning environment. The ultimate purpose of this effort is to achieve greater social justice in our community in which the work can be freely shared with the broader community. This is a renewable assignment that is designed to enable you to become an agent of change in your community through the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For this work, you will integrate the disciplines of English and Literature and Biology to achieve SDG #3: Good Health and Well-Being. With a focus on strengthening the capacity of all countries, in particular developing countries, for early warning, risk reduction and management of national and global health risks.

Learning Objectives:

The objective of this assignment is to provide students an opportunity to explore the role of artistic expression in various forms and its impact on life-threatening allostatic overload in relation to the current Covid-19 pandemic. Through drawing, painting, music composition, documentary production, writing, and poetry, the deep scars of our past and the new injuries experienced can have a formidable place in the educational environment and beyond without the threat to be extinguished, but rather promoted and supportive to heal ourselves and our communities. Ultimately, these forms of expression will promote the contribution and benefit of art as a substantive method for rehabilitating the health and welfare of a society plagued by the trauma and darkness of many things, but particularly now from the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Purpose/Rationale: Art is an important tool to express human emotions including great suffering, trauma and tragedies that hinder beneficial growth. Mental health practitioners often focus on diagnosis and treatment of disorders to alleviate such suffering (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001), while ignoring the much-needed management of emotions associated with the disorders. Furthermore, the health benefits of expressing human emotions have been well recognized by both art therapists and other mental health workers who have relied on artistic expression for years. “Art therapy is a unique kind of psychotherapy that uses the process of making and viewing art within the context of a helping relationship to increase well-being for clients of all ages” (Malchiodi, 2011). A study conducted by Coombs and his colleagues (2002) reported a positive result of exploring emotional experience within a therapeutic relationship.

Instructions:

1. Artwork/Infographics:

Infographics are useful tools to explain difficult concepts or break down complex information to make it easier to understand (Easy WebContent, Inc. (DBA Visme). 2021). You can find various infographic templates via google search and places such as Canva.

For this assignment, students will prepare a professional, self-descriptive and informative infographic related to negative human emotions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. See below a sample of infographics showing depression and COVID-19 exposure. This sample is provided as a basic example of an art focused infographic.

Each student will be asked to reflect on their connection to the material of focus and explore and apply their inspiration and profound creativity. Each student will use their insight to create a visual work of art that reflects negative emotions (anxiety, depression, isolation etc.) caused by COVID-19 exposure. Ultimately this work will be displayed on the course’s website gallery.

2. Documentary/Video:

This assignment challenges students to take time to think about material provided and discussions had. You will use your insight to create a 3-minute video/film that reflects negative human emotions caused by pandemic COVID-19. Ultimately, this work will be displayed on the website gallery.

The video shall include a brief narrative about the following entities:

- History of COVID-19
- Mental health impacts of COVID-19
- Use of various artistic expression to treat mental health disorders caused by pandemic COVID-19

3. Poem

This assignment will challenge you to take time to think about your connection to the materials of focus. You will use your insight to create a poem (entitled “Darkness in the Light Side of Life” that reflects expression of negative human emotions through poem to explain deep states of mind, spirit and emotions associated with the pandemic. The poem will be presented in written form or short podcast/video presentation. Please notice that you may write in language of origin and provide a translated version or write in English. Ultimately, this work will be displayed on the website gallery.

4. Music

This assignment challenges you to take time to think about your connection to the materials of focus (pandemic COVID-19 and human negative emotion). You may create music in any format. Ultimately, this work will be presented on the website gallery.

Format Requirements:

Write a 2-page substantive reflection following all assignment expectations.

- An upper right-hand header (only)
- 1-inch margins
- 12 -point font
- Double-spaced
- Calibri or Times New Roman font style
- Work Cited page if needed

Your Works Cited page should be a page of its own with the upper right-hand header. The citation will look like this:

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