

Tip #40

The Healing Value of Art

Art is a kind of magic-it takes us out of ourselves, allows us to express ourselves and our feelings, lets creativity flow through us like a fresh wind that carries away some of our pain.

And life CAN be painful-expressing that pain rather than suppressing it, ignoring it, or refusing to acknowledge it, lets us respect our own lives. We can rise above the pain, and find a way to deal with it, in our art.

Whether that pain is physical or emotional, facing it through our creative self is transforming. It transforms US- and it can transform the pain, or what is causing it.

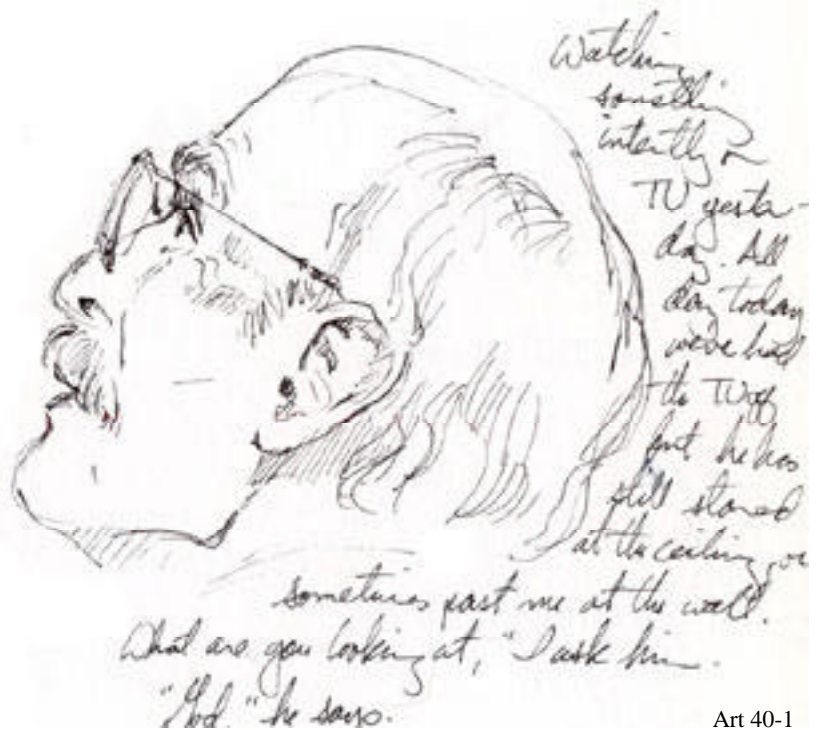
My recent article in Watercolor Magic called "Painting Through The Pain" covered this in more detail, but I think it is important enough to share here, as well.

Art 40-1

When my late husband was in the hospital, one of the ways I coped with the fear and exhaustion was by sketching. That allowed me to remain ME, not to get swamped by the situation. It also left me a precious record that's meant a lot to me since.



Art 40-2



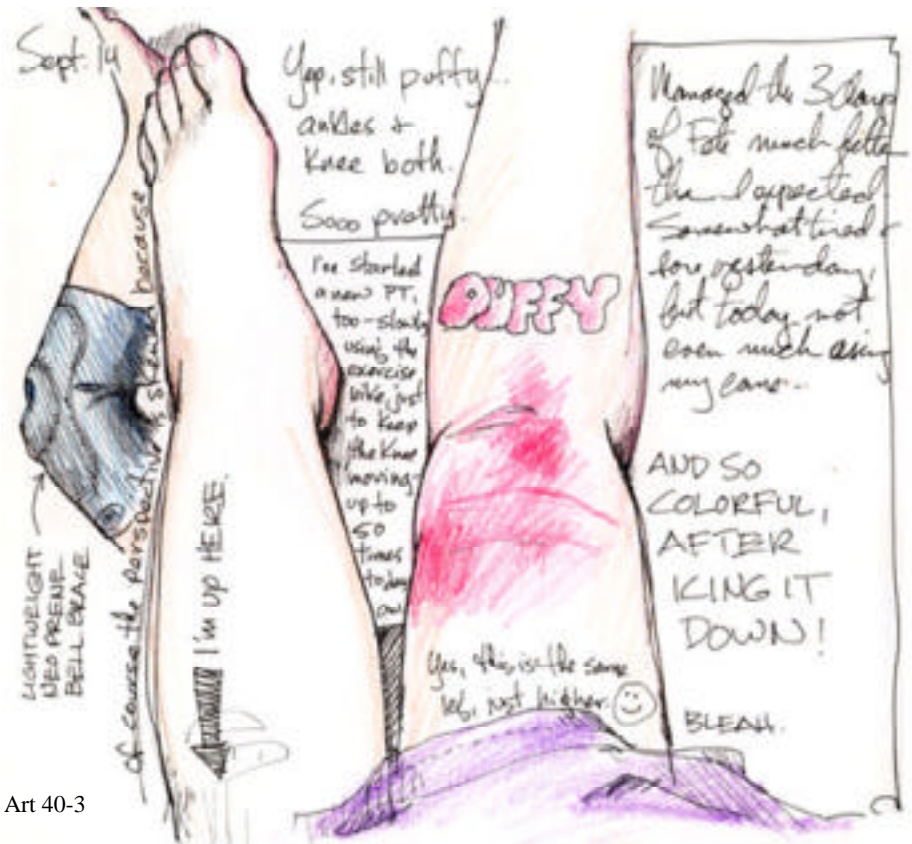
Art 40-1

Art 40-2 "Man and Boy"

And later, for his memorial, I found it very healing to do this progression, of Harris as man and boy...

Art 40-3 "Ouch!"

Of course sometimes it's physical pain we're dealing with-keeping a sense of humor about ourselves and our rebellious bodies is ESSENTIAL to maintaining a good attitude! These are sketches in my journal, done shortly after I re-injured my knee a couple of years ago.



Art 40-3

Art 40-4

Sometimes it's simply the act of making art that heals us. We need to get away, both physically and mentally, and painting can be a wonderful way of doing that. We lose ourselves, and our day to day concerns, in Nature's beauty, in the infinite complexity of leaf and stem. We participate, actively, in the beauty we see. What could be more healing?

(See more on this in Watercolor Magic, April 2006 issue.)

There's much more on this subjects like this little flower painting in my online watercolor classes - sign up at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/watercolor_online/.

You'll find my artwork on new products in my Cafepress store at http://www.cafepress.com/cathy_johnson and original fine art auctions on eBay at <http://members.ebay.com/aboutme/cathyjohnsonart>.



Art 40-4