

The Talking Quilt

materials

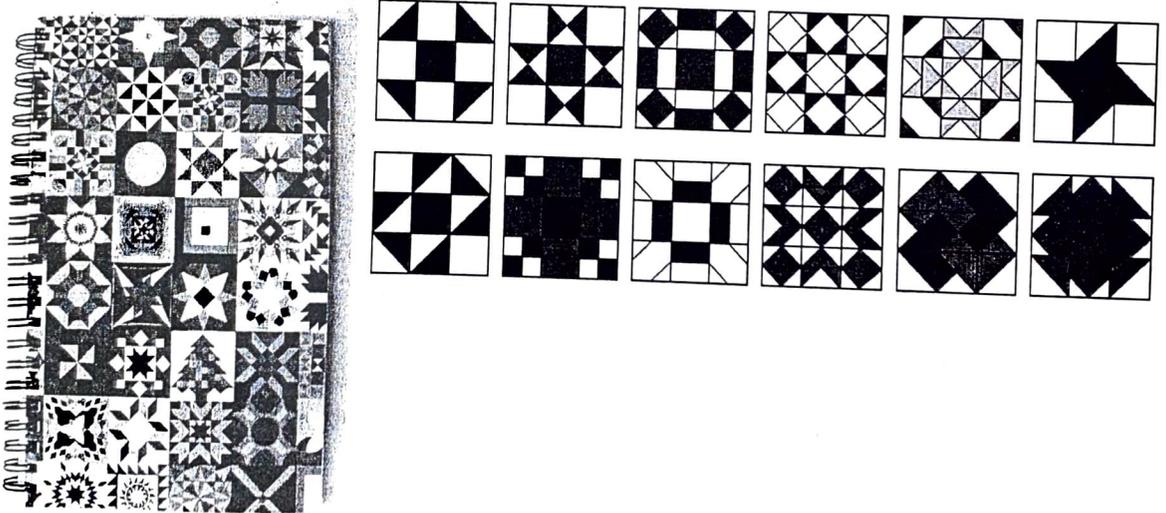
large poster board with the grid
coloring pencils, markers, crayons
small ruler or straight edge
best done on table with chairs

concept

Either an individual or group project that can be used during rapport-building, or with clients who are resistive to engaging in therapy. Can be used with more than one client, or continued with the same client/group over time. The perseveration of the coloring squares can help reduce anxiety, as well as introduce art into the therapy session in a non-threatening (non-interpretive) manner. Continuing the project with one client over time can be used as a visual reminder of progress made. It can also be used as a containment intervention with impulsive clients, or those with poor boundary skills in a group setting. The simple act of focusing on the coloring can help words and thoughts flow.

instructions

For those who are not familiar, you may need to explain the concept of a quilt [squares sewn together to make a larger image, can be patterned or random]. Invite the client to color one square of the poster board (usually around 1 to 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inch grids) as if it were a square on a quilt. When one square is complete, move to another square. Squares can be as minimal or detailed, but should be completely colored before moving to the next square. (Instruct coloring white areas white to maintain the repetitive movement of filling in the spaces.) If the squares are too big, they will not be as effective; if too small, they can be frustrating if trying to add details. The finished product can be used to make other therapy items, such as a journal cover.



Library books on quilt blocks can help inspire, and this website [www.graphpaper.us] is a free graph paper generator that you can print.