



# **Art Therapy With PWS**

Tovi Florsheim

**So, what is  
art therapy?**

Many things!

Working with materials, using  
our hands and eyes.

# **Materials**

Every material has its own qualities and addresses a psychological need. The same material can address different psychological issues and different people can have different reasons for choosing it.

# Beads

- A gathering activity. Many pieces join together to be one.
- Repetitive activity which can give a relaxation effect.
- A satisfying experience for patients with OCD. Utilizing OCD abilities for creating. It can help to adapt healthier patterns to manage OCD.



# Mandalas

- Mandala – circle. It comes from Eastern Asia and is used for meditation.
- A symmetric shape divided in a symmetrical way that creates a sense of balance.
- Different theorists describe the work on a mandala as self re-organization.
- A whole round form that symbolizes the self, the outside represent the outside world, and the line between them.
- Mandala coloring is often used for relaxation.



# Gouache

- Gouache is a material that has a life of its own and is sometimes hard to control.
- Can bring out a wide range of feelings, such as happiness, joy, flow and relaxation. On the other hand, anxiety, fear, discomfort, disgust, lose control, and can be overwhelming.
- In our PWS therapy groups, only low functioning patients agree to work with gouache whilst high functioning patients absolutely refuse.

# Mosaic

- A mosaic is an ancient art technique made of small pieces put together, creating a new pattern or image.
- Connecting separate pieces in a concrete manner allows influence on other connections including self-connection.
- Symbolizing internal work of joining pieces into oneness with the self.
- Repetitive activity that offers endless possibilities.



# Glue

- Glue connects and join objects together.
- Working with glue can express an emotional need to connect, repair, and to process difficult issues involving relationship crises.
- Working with glue can also be overwhelming.



**A 36-year-old man  
part of the PWS  
therapy group  
that works with  
glue**





# Clay

- Clay is a material involving intense and powerful tactile experience.
- Representing early life stages of communication through oral, touch and skin contact between infants and caregivers.
- Clay work has the potential to bring up premature disclosure and traumatic issues.
- Clay has the capacity to be done and undone multiple times, providing the opportunity to smash down or remake a clay-sculpture. This ability allows to process trauma in a nonverbal way.

**A 51-year-old  
women part of the  
PWS therapy group  
working with clay**



# Textile

- Fabric is many strings connected and attached, creating a sheet.
- A material that is a part of our day-to-day life, therefore we have close and intimate relationships with it.
- Working with fabric usually involves creation of useful products.
- Soft and comforting qualities. It can also be frustrating.



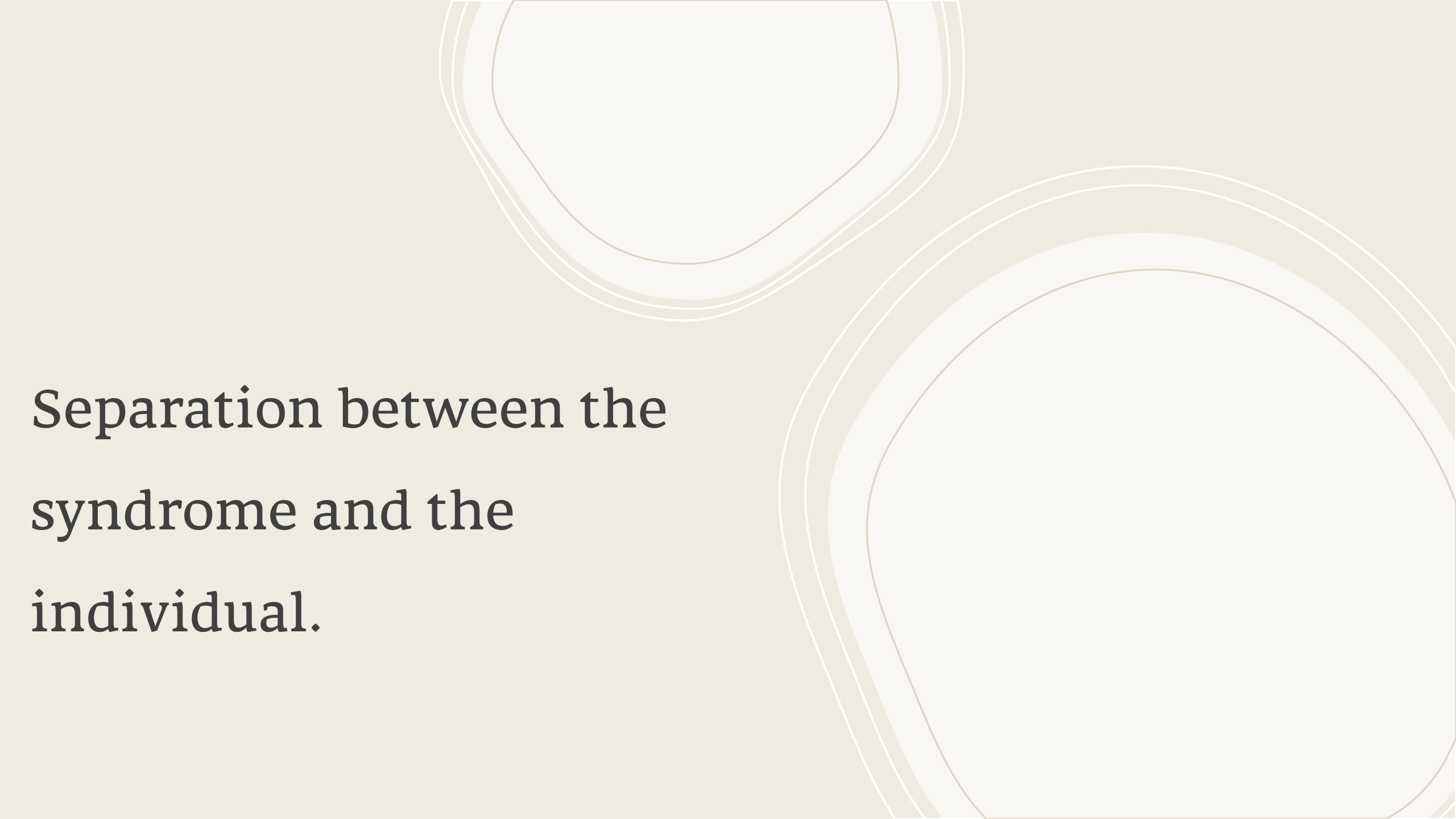
# Why is contacting materials therapeutic?

- Nonverbal therapy - bypasses censoring and defense mechanisms.
- Connects to healthy creative powers.
- Mirroring patterns and different emotional issues.
- The need for self expression.
- Processing trauma and difficult events.
- Dealing with emotions and giving them a safe outlet.

## **Why is Art therapy affective for patients with PWS?**

- High visual abilities.
- Some have limited intellectual / auditory / verbal abilities that limits verbal therapy.
- When emotions are not expressed, they can be acted out in an unhealthy way.
- It can address the need to be glorified or to glorify something together.
- It can address the need to be in control.

- OCD
- Hoarding
- The need to give and make gifts.



Separation between the  
syndrome and the  
individual.



**Thank You😊**