

The Healing Corner- by Mary Dew, LCPC Art Therapy Experiential: “Shedding Our Leaves”

Icebreaker: Introductions and favorite things to do or about fall.

Read:

Trees grow up through their branches and down through their roots into the earth. They also grow wider with each passing year. As they do, they shed the leaves and bark that served to protect them but now is no longer big enough to contain them. In the same way, we create boundaries and develop defenses to protect ourselves and then, at a certain point, we outgrow them. If we don't allow ourselves to shed our protective layer, we can't expand to our full potential.



Trees need their leaves and protective bark to enable the delicate process of growth and renewal to unfold without threat. Likewise, we need our boundaries and defenses so that the more vulnerable parts of ourselves can safely heal and unfold. But our growth also depends upon our ability to soften, loosen, and shed boundaries and defenses we no longer need. It is often the case in life that structures we put in place to help us grow eventually become constricting.

Unlike a tree, we must consciously decide when it's time to shed our leaves and bark and expand our boundaries, so we can move into our next ring of growth. Many spiritual teachers have suggested that our egos don't disappear so much as they become large enough to hold more than just our small sense of self—the boundary of self widens to contain people and beings other than just "me." Each time we shed a layer of defensiveness or ease up on a boundary that we no longer need, we metaphorically become bigger people. With this in mind, it is important that we take time to question our boundaries and defenses. While it is essential to set and honor the protective barriers we have put in place, it is equally important that we soften and release them when the time comes. In doing so, we create the space for our next phase of growth.

Taken from:

<http://xrayoursoul1.wetpaint.com/page/Peeling+Away+The+Layers+%7E+Trees+Shedding+Their+Bark>

Show: “So You Think You Can Dance”- Layers Dance.

<http://sytycdfans.com/news.php?articleID=221>

Artmaking: Fall leaf collage/montage.

Supplies: tracing paper, drawing paper, leaf rubbings, leaves, bark, branches, crayons, watercolor pencils, paint, paper towels, yarn,

Processing Questions:

1. What layers do you need to keep for protection?
2. Metaphorically, what leaves or bark do you need to shed in your life?
3. How might shedding these layers allow your self to grow?
4. How might your artwork reflect your transformative process?