

Helpful hints to use when painting with others:

- Watercolor is easy to use and blend for new color combinations, plus easy to clean up. Watercolor pencils are especially convenient to work with.
- Wet the paper with a brush so the colors will run when the paper is held upright. Watch!
- A good paper is fun. Any kind will work but one with bumps, creases, and crevices will permit more variety with the colors and thereby more interpretation.
- Create a special mood to paint. Make the space joyful and special with your attitude of openness and smiles. Allow the painter to say no for that day.
- If weakness or immobility is an obstacle, you can be the arms and hands, following their directions.
- Help the painter feel like a kid again. Painting is an expression of an experience or feeling. Perfection is not the goal; sharing is.
- Where art is practiced, hospitality and healing follow. The emotions that flow from a shared experience reveal our connectedness and spiritual depth.
- Painting is by far not the only means of expression! Movement, music, journaling and other art forms can be healing as well.



Grandma
finger-painting

Helpful questions and words to encourage the painter to share a story:

- What is on your mind right now?
- Do you have worries today?
- What have you been thinking about lately?
- Tell me about your childhood.
- What things make you happy?
- Tell me about your family.



Jo Myers-Walker, a nationally known artist and teacher, has recently developed a new class and ministry: painting with people of all ages facing life's challenges. She has found this transforming for the painter and rewarding for herself, in ways you won't understand until you risk trying it.

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Painting for the Journey

You can learn to be a healing presence using watercolor to help bring forth memories and feelings.



Watercolor by Josephine, age 93



Joy Follows Fear,
by a survivor

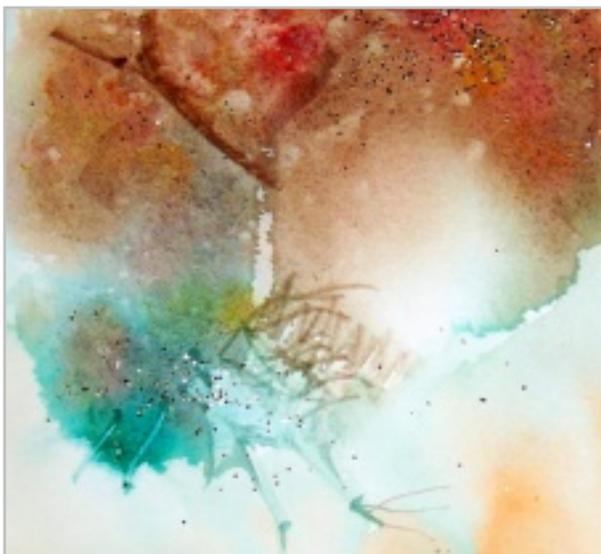
Each of us is a traveler on the journey of life. As companions on this life-trip, especially for people dealing with illness, loss, or a challenging transition, we can help celebrate, remember and share life's deepest moments. We can do this through watercolor. Yes, watercolor!



The watercolor above was created by a cancer patient painting herself as a five-year-old child and remembering someone she had lost.

Most of the paintings will be abstract and easy to do. You might actually have to help start the painting. When the painter takes over, your thoughtful questions will encourage more painting and stories. Realism is not the point. A memory is.

Painting can help a person continue the work of transformation. Each person's life story is filled with highs and lows and many complicated happenings.



This painting is by a grandmother who remembered her fear of chickens as a child. (Can you see the chicken with its fearsome legs?)

As physical and mental challenges come about, the person may be encouraged to put his/her feelings into colorful swashes and layers of paint. Some may wish to paint the old family farmhouse or a special tree or an important incident in their lives—and then you have the opportunity to bring forth the story.

Our culture is often in denial regarding grief. How sad that the spirituality of change and transformation is not truly accepted and honored by so many.

I have witnessed dear ones painting through their pain, resurrecting strength and decision-making to put paint to paper. Then the story begins to come—and the laughter and the tears. I have seen the sense of pride and accomplishment on their faces as they sign their painting and see their process valued.

As the guide, you will be immersed in the depth of sharing and the tenderness that washes over you as a beautiful gift. Yes, it takes patience, but the results are memorable keepsakes. No matter what happens on the paper, it will be personal for the painter. Celebrate these moments. You both will be transformed.



The watercolor above was painted by my mother. She saw water and the reflection of the trees. We called it Faithfulness.