



## **Creative Writing with the Mentally Ill**

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### **Abstract**

This conference paper reports the education of clients with mental illness. According to UN Resolution from 1991 [1] "All persons have the right to the best available mental health care, which shall be part of the health and social care system... The environment and living conditions in mental health facilities in particular shall include: facilities for recreational and leisure activities and facilities for education..." Creative writing can be included in such facilities. There is a large research evidence that creative writing enhances the well-being. In particular it leads to the development of empathy, self-esteem and self-knowledge, problem solving and assertiveness [2, 3]. Creative writing is also very relaxing and joyful leisure time activity. Yet the education of groups consisting of mentally ill can be challenging. Wide variation in developmental levels, overactive and underactive participation, short attention span or disrespect for the leader are factors that must be considered.

At first the paper will focus on the models describing relationships between creative writing and psychological well-being. Then I will present findings from the creative writing workshop for mentally ill clients which I lead in the Motivation centre of League for Mental Health in Bratislava, Slovakia. For evaluation of this group (which is a part of my PhD. research) methods of observation, interview and questionnaire will be used.