AN IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK FOR THE USE OF CREATIVE ARTS IN COLLECTIVE HEALING

DEFINING THE ENABLING FACTORS IN PRODUCTIVE AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICE

AUTHORS

DR ANGELA KENNEDY
DARREN ABRAHAMS
TINA ELLEN LEE

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"Mental health and wellbeing is significantly influenced by our environment: our social, relational, biological and earthly context. We are intricately entwined with the adversities and benefits that impinge on us from outside of our brains. Being 'Trauma Informed' is so much more than being aware of a few things in childhood that created fear reactions. It is a philosophy that puts research, evidence and words to wisdom about mental health. It involves acknowledging that whilst our species is flawed, causing deep pain and destruction to ourselves and our contexts, that it also has a remarkable ability to evolve, grow and heal through collective action, much of this through that aspect of us which uniquely identifies our species: our creativity. Creativity harnesses those compassionate and integrative areas of our brain that engenders wellbeing. Doing this collectively scales up its impact, because as social animals, we have the gift to co- regulate each other's neurobiology and ultimately co-create lives worth living" .

DR. ANGELA KENNEDY

ASSEMBLING THE PARTICIPANTS

BROUGHT TOGETHER BY A SHARED PURPOSE

On 28 September 2023 a group of 15 arts practitioners / academic researchers, were gathered together at King's College London to discuss:

models of collective healing, their principles and enablers
the drivers for this approach in society now
the increasing mental health challenges faced by our young people
the kinds of leaders that shape positive cultures and how to encourage them.

The participants were curated and facilitated by:
Dr Angela Kennedy, Director of Innovating for Welling
Tina Ellen Lee, Artistic Director of Opera Circus
Darren Abrahams, Co-founder of The Human Hive

Participants were chosen based on their experience as creative arts practitioners working within the context of collective healing and were selected to give a broad, multi-disciplinary data set to draw on for our research. The invited outcome was to produce a written statement that communicates how creativity supports individual and collective mental health, leading to a brief resource list that could be shared widely in written, visual, audio and video forms.

A TRAUMA-INFORMED APPROACH

Our research was focused on projects that took a trauma-informed approach to addressing adversity.

Trauma-informed approaches "are based on a recognition and comprehensive understanding of the widespread prevalence and effects of trauma. This leads to a fundamental paradigm shift from thinking
"What is wrong with you?" to considering "What happened to you?"
Rather than being a specific service or set of rules, trauma-informed approaches are a process of organisational change aiming to create environments and relationships that promote and prevent re-traumatisation."

Relationships in trauma-informed mental health services by Angela Sweeney, Beth Filson, Angela Kennedy, Lucie Collinson & Steve Gillard BJPsych Advances (2018), vol. 24, 319-333 doi: 10.1192/bja.2018.29

METHODOLOGY

The method chosen to delineate the enabling factors from the good practice of participants was 'Open Narrative Enquiry' (ONE). This is a tested way of coproducing a thematic analysis from real practice examples very rapidly summet_document_Feb_2021.pdf (opennarrativesystem.co.uk). It was developed in 2019 by Petia Sice, Associate Professor (Specialising in Wellbeing Informatics), and Angela Kennedy, Clinical Director, Psychologist and Creative Producer, for use at a national trauma summit hosted by the Northern England Clinical Network and the Academic Health Sciences Network. Starting with a large number of constructive real world examples, small groups extract salient points and pass around their thinking to other groups until a consensus on themes is reached by voting. This process takes up to one day in vivo.

It draws together ideas from "world cafes", "socratic cafes", "appreciative enquiry" and "qualitative research methodology" and as such its theory base has emerged from the following:

- Thematic analysis is a way of finding patterns of meaning in qualitative information that is expressed in language. It is actively reflexive until the themes capture all the main data points and uses the subjective lens of the researcher as a valued tool. Terry, G., Hayfield, N., Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2017). Thematic analysis. The SAGE handbook of qualitative research in psychology, 2, 17-37.

- Co-production is a way of working together towards a shared goal where the end result balances up the contributions of all participants to reach an agreed consensus. Beier, P., Hansen, L. J., Helbrecht, L., & Behar, D. (2017). A how-to guide for coproduction of actionable science. Conservation Letters, 10(3), 288-296.

- Appreciative Inquiry is a technique used to learn from what actually works so we can do more of that. It is strengths based. It generates and motivates towards new social realities. It also pulls our attention into a hopeful, positive and constructive state of mind. Whitney, D., & Cooperrider, D. (2011). Appreciative inquiry: A positive revolution in change. ReadHowYouWant. com.

- Specific episodic memories can be described more clearly/ concretely/ behaviourally than schemas and generalised learning that may be subject to bias. As such they can be rich sources of data. Mahr, J., & Csibra, G. (2018). Why do we remember? The communicative function of episodic memory. Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 41, E1. doi:10.1017/S0140525X17000012

- Mindful awareness through posture and breath will be used to ground participants and help them think clearly about an example. This links directly to body based wisdom and integrative capacity. Geller, S. M. (2017). Deepening the experience of therapeutic presence: Grounding, immersion, expansion, and compassion exercises. In S. M. Geller, A practical guide to cultivating therapeutic presence (pp. 172–196). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/0000025-011

- Lived experience rather than academic or theoretical examples will keep the learning focused on real world examples that resonate with personal values so much that they are lodged in memory. Dieumegard, G., Nogry, S., Ollagnier-Beldame, M., & Perrin, N. (2021). Lived experience as a unit of analysis for the study of learning. Learning, Culture and Social Interaction, 31, 100345.

- Socratic dialogue is a method for pursuing truth and deconstructing rhetoric. This way of approaching the examples will be encouraged. Stenning, K., Schmoelz, A.,Wren, H., Stouraitis, E., Scaltsas, T., Alexopoulos, K., & Aichhorn, A. (2016). Socratic dialogue as a teaching and research method for co-creativity?. Digital Culture & Education, 8(2).

- Power, prestige and extraversion can influence direction of discussions and analysis. Having all participants present an example and then NOT analyse their own, gives them all equal status and mitigates against power disruption. Dambe, M., & Moorad, F. (2008). From power to empowerment: A paradigm shift in leadership. South African journal of higher education, 22(3), 575-587.

- 'World Cafés' create informal conversations within groups and can produce consensus when information is moved between groups. Löhr, K., Weinhardt, M., & Sieber, S. (2020). The "World Café" as a participatory method for collecting qualitative data. International journal of qualitative methods, 19, 1609406920916976.

- A reflecting team is a technique useful in systemic practice for holding a kind mirror to a process and ensuring a group is on task towards their goal.

2. THE PROCESS

Agreed Ground Rules

To be concise, collegial and team spirited.

To place our attention on the challenge of being human in a changing world and harness our wisdom towards imagining effective outcomes for collective healing.

To be aware of gaps.

To find ways to sustain ourselves and others to do the task.

To bring our experience into the day.

To look out for others at the event.

To share our motivations for change.

To speak up when needed and step back when required so all have space to contribute.

To listen with intention, curiosity and openness.

Goals and Expectations

To consider a specific example from personal professional practice.

To work within a facilitated structure on the day to produce quality material for the desired outcomes.

To focus on interventions that work so we can build on them (rather than solely focusing on problems)

Defining the nature of healing and wellbeing
(as applied to this area of work)

The group defined their work as - the enabling of the integration of self and community in order to support functioning.

They defined wellbeing as - the interaction between the internal state of the individual and the context outside of them.

As such they implicitly held a trauma informed lens to the process where the health of communities is interdependent and co-created by those in it and those who interface with it.

Table 1: describing the application of the ONE method to produce this framework

Steps in the ONE process	Rationale
Soothing rhythm breathing	To focus attention and quieten the mind
Recall and share memory from one's life that illustrates what got them into this area of interest	To connect people with their own and others values and motivations
Recall a memory of a specific recent positive example where the arts has enabled positive change in people's state of mind, body, feelings or spirit. Spend some time writing the following factors in silence. • What did you see the 'artist' do? • What was in place for the artist to do that? • How did people respond? • What was the outcome?	To connect participants with something that they can describe in behavioural terms to facilitate the thematic analysis more effectively
Present example to the group	To bring written examples alive in the minds of others
Three groups of 5 people will discuss a handful of examples (but not their own)	To identify the core aspects that ensured success in the work and determine how success is judged.
The example "themes" will be handed to the next table	To see if there are more overarching themes of consensus that can be perceived
Vote on the combined lists	To determine which are most important

THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE ENABLING FACTORS

The following framework of enabling factors emerged from the group work. Five core domains coalesced from the discussions in the room. These domains provide a context for understanding the larger scale catalysts required for making something transformative happen through the arts.
The ingredients for collective healing perhaps...

CONNECTIVITY

PROCESS

SAFENESS

TRANSFORMATION

LEARNING

RESOURCES
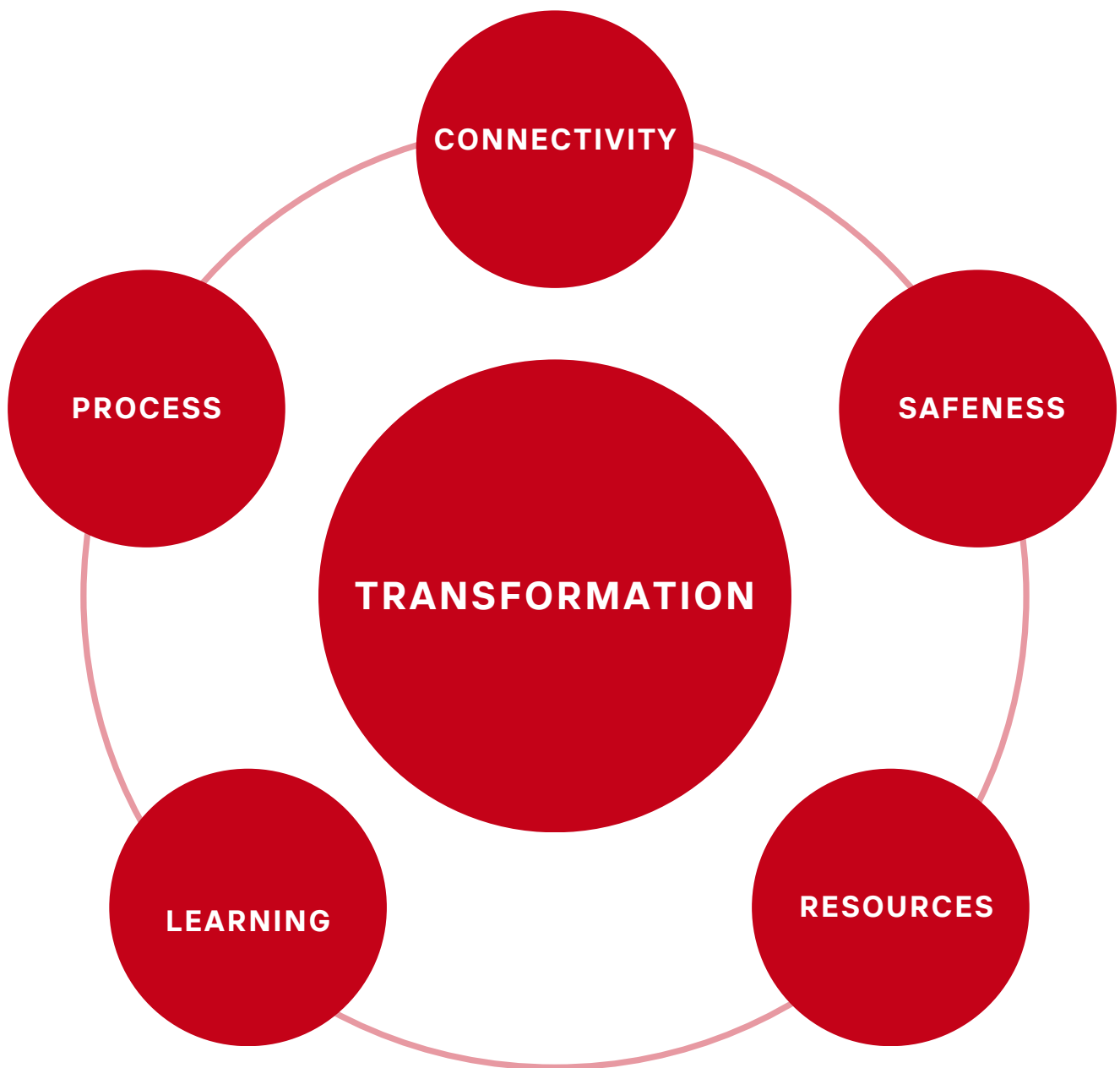
A QUALITY PROCESS:
WHAT "GOOD" LOOKS LIKE

Using the arts towards collective healing curates a different agenda where we can reimagine what a healthy society can look like. The group defined creativity as a defining aspect of human nature, characterised by:

Need for expression
Playful engagement with imaginative, improvised or intangible concepts
A willing suspension of disbelief
An openness to participate

'Good' was defined by the nature of the process rather than the perceived quality of the artistic output as defined by any cultural norms. Such a process needs freedom to take risks and be experimental. It stands in solidarity with people different from us. For many, there was a blurred distinction between life and work. This was more than just bringing possible lived experience or motivation to make the world better but it also characterised the dedication involved in the process. Words such as 'magic' and 'sublime' were used. Some talked about joy and celebration, whilst others talked about a need to represent and bear witness to the dark side of human nature and experience. Everyone agreed that the work needed to 'matter'.

"It attends to the artist in the person and the person in the artist"

Quote from participant

The process 'made real' something of life's experience in creative ways, but was never about superficial decoration, commerce or product. Sometimes this focused on healing, growth or reconciliation. Sometimes on supporting healthier connections with others, creating a safe space, facilitating moments of artistic flow or meaningful participation. Some people saw the creative process as cathartic whilst others wanted it to bear truth and rehumanise dehumanised groups of people. Change was not always the expected outcome. Sometimes respite was enough. Sometimes creative collective healing may pay more attention to the systemic and political factors creating disadvantage and trauma.

PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

EXAMPLE ONE

The warm, encouraging presence of the musicians and dancers was as important as what they did during a residency at the Vidya Sagar Centre for the Differently-Abled in Chennai, India aiming to embed arts as a medium for education with young people with special needs. This was enabled by collective attention and non judgemental support by the artists trained to a high level in their craft, and resulted in surprising moments of magical connection with hard to reach individuals.

EXAMPLE TWO

In a space for young artists, time and space is allowed to share personal issues because 'life and work are not in separate compartments'. The long term nature of the relationships means that staff know when things raised need to be given attention and when to encourage the person back to the task. This supports the young person to manage the impact of their life and keeps their work from becoming derailed by those issues.

EXAMPLE THREE

Forum Theatre with Cardboard Citizens was a way of engaging people experiencing homelessness in problem solving, by changing the story of a play about relevant issues delivered by actors with experience of homelessness themselves. The participants could test out ideas through the play and see hopeful outcomes. They also built relationships with the actors who then supported them to access vital services. The shared experiences of the actors and the participants creates a unique bond and the method opens up the possibility of change for people feeling hopeless and stuck.

CO-CREATING CONNECTIONS: THE RELATIONAL ASPECT OF THE JOURNEY

The relationships between people were seen as vital for this most essential of human endeavours. Such connections would ensure choice and facilitate equity and equality of participation. Good working partnerships, boundaries, transparent expectations all worked towards the outcomes. Often the outcomes were not a product but rather an experience of engagement that opened up the possibility that the art might represent, distract or transform something inside that person and, very importantly, connect them with others, even momentarily, in a way that they felt part of something bigger than themselves. Integrity of the value base was critical, ie, truth, trustworthiness, humility, authenticity. This 'presence' turns 'them' into 'us'. Bravery seemed to capture the tone well.

There were some interesting relational dialectics that emerged along which much collective healing can be described:

It was acknowledged that healing, growth or reconciliation can emerge from individual practice, groups or wider systems. Managing any barriers to the flow of the process (such as stigma or withdrawal or criticism) was important, whether this was one person's effort to use their art in this way or an international effort across borders. (Examples One and Two)

Having time and funds opened up more possibilities. The limited financial resources of many of the projects used as examples was testament to the ingenuity and motivation of the project leads. However, having some backing did enable more things to happen. It also created a legitimacy to the work that was appreciated. Often intermediaries were seen as helpful brokers of trust between artists, funders and communities.

Building in longevity was seen as vital because of the relational nature of the work. However, this was often challenging given the nature of grant funding. Funding determines how things are framed and what is of value. The challenge of maintaining integrity whilst gaining resources was significant for the group. (Example Three)

PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

EXAMPLE ONE

Training and support was given for musicians to take their technical expertise to connect with severely ill children in hospital. By surrounding the child with different textures, rhythms and pace of sound, they were able to follow the child's lead after seeing what they responded to in positive ways. The instruments were those suitable to be used safely, trust from the clinical team and consent was critical to making this happen.

EXAMPLE TWO

An enactment of being huddled together in a boat, cold and hungry was used as an example of 'fictive reality' supporting empathy from a community who were accommodating new comers to the UK who had arrived via channel crossings.

EXAMPLE THREE

Izazov! (Provocation in Bosnian) was a project that combined filmmaking with youth activism. The project aimed to support young Bosnian people to increase their visibility and engage with youth civil society networks. In the Bosnian context where there are few opportunities for engaged young activists to amplify their voices, Izazov built the documentary film making skills of 6 young people to extend their networks, communicate their concerns and in the long term to build solidarity with other young regional change makers. Izazov! was a P2 Changing the Story project. Changing the Story was a four year international multi disciplinary project which supported the building of inclusive societies with and for young people in post conflict settings.

SAFENESS OF CONTEXT: THE PHYSICALITY AND CULTURE UNDERPINNING THE PROCESS

Most projects described the co-construction of spaces where people felt physically and psychologically safe enough to be alongside other people, open themselves up to something they may not have taken part in before and allow themselves to connect or be moved in some way by that context. (Example One)

The idea of 'safeness' seems to best represent the solidarity that people described: noticing suffering and acting towards its mitigation represents compassion within a group context. It relates not to the absence of danger (some projects thrived in life threatening contexts) but to the motivation towards addressing issues of power, a humanising of the people in the group and a powerful creative vision towards a goal. Safeness is a term that reflects a sense of belonging or connection to a wider group too. It is similar to attachment security but in a group context. It emerged from the evidence base that the most effective emotion system for moderating threat and stress is one that is not just the absence of danger or a defence, but one that creates the sense of calm and connectedness from being held respectfully in mind. That mindset can be co-created as we interact with each other. We regulate each other's neurobiology. It has perhaps evolved from us as conscious social animals and represents the experience of the ethics of the intention behind human connection.

The physical space can go some way to contributing to this safeness. Some projects decorated rooms in ways that people would feel more comfortable in. (Examples Two and Three)

Holding each other with positive regard and recognising the capability of people who may not yet have had an opportunity to engage with or produce artistic work, requires an awareness of the impact of trauma and adversity on people's lives and the skill to manage triggers through human to human co-regulation. This needs to be held alongside a clear focus on the strengths and creative potential of all.

PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

EXAMPLE ONE
A 'pop up' art gallery presented a beautiful, immersive exhibition of art expressing 'the unsayable' about childhood sexual abuse in words and pictures. The exhibition made visible something hidden and was created by and for the community. Security guards were needed to preserve the safety of the space and counsellors were on hand for the team and their guest artists.

EXAMPLE TWO
'The zen den' is a physical space designed for calm reflection for staff and young people. It has soft lighting, blankets, music, cards and is a place to change pace and retreat to so that energy is restored and disclosures can happen in a space that feels nurturing. It also allows for 'movement for the mind' such as yoga. The space externally represents the internal conscious practice of holding space for connection with self and others.

EXAMPLE THREE
Greater community involvement, health and wellbeing was fostered through storytelling from local people to inform town planning in the 'places of sanctuary' project. Workshops for the council asking people how their town could create positive mental health and wellbeing for all, used stories to create an animation about their home. This informed the town's masterplan

SPECIALIST RESOURCES: PRACTICALITIES NEEDED FOR THE TASK

Without some basic resources, it was more difficult to make good things happen and sustain them. People needed safe materials / instruments suitable for that context. They required access to some physical space (even non conventional space such as in an airport). People needed to set up agreements around confidentiality or consent. Sometimes people involved needed training for this context. (Example One)

Artistic skill and ability was significant but it was recognised that using artistic skill in a context of healing required an additional set of facilitation skills. Clarity or purpose and action made for more effective projects because resources necessary to make something good happen could be collected, co-ordinated and managed more effectively towards that purpose. Defining the problem (even if informally) and respecting the context was key. Participants talked about having a specific focus of attention for their 'intervention'. Freedom (or permission) to get on with and be trusted to deliver an idea was of great significance.

Many factors relating to leadership were mentioned. Good things happen "when someone maverick enough is conventional enough to meet a system which is open enough" (quote from participant). The good leader is often the person with lots of connections who can build a team and motivate people to work together on an idea. Preparation and research was important to avoid replication or assumptions and to avoid inadvertently causing harm.

Whilst all creative healing practices discussed involved working with lived experience of shared adversity, not all were led by people with that experience, although the value of an inside out / bottom up approach was significant. Art professionals or artisans often play an essential role in facilitation and delivery, in creating a supportive context and sharing high quality artistic practice. Collective, consensus based direction could be contrasted with other projects led by a clear vision of a single motivated artistic leader. (Examples Two and Three)

Setting up safe space to conduct the work was almost universal, although some projects used online platforms to do this rather than a physical place. "Every human has joy, creativity, magic within. Art can bring that potential into being by creating the conditions for it to emerge". Safe space was more often created by the attitude of the facilitators - inclusive, non-judgemental, welcoming - than by the attributes of the physical location itself. (Example Four)

PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

EXAMPLE ONE

'Refuge in Film' researched issues of identity in young artists across the UK from all walks of life. It organised a touring film festival and workshops around issues of social justice. The short film clips captured the young people's experiences in ways that could be shared on a very limited budget.

EXAMPLE TWO

The Sounds project used composition with young people in Albania that allowed freedom of experimentation but had good funding and a research framework. It combined the expertise of many disciplines (anthropology, music, criminology) and formal change theories to empower young people through their own musical language via 'soundscapes'.

EXAMPLE THREE

Integrated Dance is for differently abled people to move together, including through touch and physical contact. It unearths creative movement that seemed unimaginable previously. However to make it happen, the artist needed to be paid, a suitably equipped space provided from a public source, a willingness to embrace something unusual, enough time for the process to build and outcomes to emerge.

EXAMPLE FOUR

Health and care staff during the covid 19 pandemic were offered the chance to share a story of their experience of work together online via zoom during a lockdown. Playback actors listened and then reenacted back what they heard. The group watched this reflection together. All the stories were then crafted into a final film which toured community venues. The aim was to allow keyworkers space to process their experiences and prevent burnout in the longer run. It also aimed to capture what it was like for them as part of a legacy of appreciation.

DEVELOPMENTAL LEARNING:
THE REFLEXIVE AND EMERGENT NATURE
OF CREATIVE HEALING

Curiosity based reflective mindsets were valued to continually adjust to need and context in order to continue to make things happen in valued ways. Part of the process required the co-creation of a shared language between all stakeholders that enabled engagement and collaboration. Sometimes that 'language' involved the use of the creative medium too. That is, working out the ways a group would be able to engage with a given medium at that point in time. Participant's voices needed to be heard. There was a continual process of attunement and adaptation. There was an understanding that such facilitation requires a high level of skill and experience, beyond the purely artistic. (Example One)

An evidence base was seen as important. All participants could describe the impact of the work on themselves and those who took part, either through describing the deep internal impact it had or on witnessing shifts in people taking part in the projects. "Sometimes what is good can't be formulated in words. We value the sensory." (quote from participant). (Examples Two and Three)

The importance of allowing works that challenge cultural norms was important. It was noted that sometimes impact cannot be evaluated at the time. An example given was Toni Morrison's 'The Bluest Eye', which went on to win a Nobel Prize after being poorly received at the time of publication. Whilst the group felt that art of the 'highest' quality was something to be aimed for, who defines that quality was debated.

PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS

EXAMPLE ONE
An initial invitation to produce a performance with children in post war Lithuanian orphanages, showed the artist the power of the outreach work that they were once resistant to doing. Yearly invitations to return provided opportunities to build on successes and to co-create bigger performances each year. It also created bonds of attachment and taught the artist the importance of long term personal commitment and humility for the building of enough trust and acceptance to reach shared artistic and community goals.

EXAMPLE TWO
A conference on breaking the silence around child sexual abuse created a zine as an output to share their perspectives. They brought together a range of creative, academic, clinical and survivor voices and brought in a design team to produce it quickly and circulate it as widely as possible.

EXAMPLE THREE
A community sharing event brought together local people with asylum seekers from the African community into whole group percussion workshops. The cultural 'knowledge' carries back into community relationships and partnerships that build and evolve over time.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

1. VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

Whilst many projects were collectives, most were created by individual people passionate about this area. We didn't have any examples of people who were simply employed to do a job. It was clear from the exercise illustrating motivation, that people in the room were very committed personally and professionally to using art towards healing. They were good at motivating others and they were good networkers. The role of holding steadfast towards a vision often required people of great moral courage who would find a way of making something happen with very little actual funding. They also worked hard in co-creating the safe contexts necessary for the work to actually happen. Such compassionate and transformational leadership style is at the core of any trauma informed approach.

2. EXPANDING THE EVIDENCE BASE

Not all projects had evaluated or researched their outcomes. This was in part due to the practitioner focus of attention, partly the iterative, systemic and intangible nature of the artistic process and outcomes and partly making best use of funds. Building in impact and outcomes into the capacity resourcing of the project could be vital in an emerging evidence base. Whilst sometimes sustainability may be in the enduring nature of the project, it might also be captured in overt learning for others. It was especially worthwhile if the legacy could somehow be held on to by participants in projects. If the experience was felt as worthwhile by them over time. A clearer framework for researching the cultural value of creative healing endeavours may be useful. The enablers uncovered in this Enquiry may be a start but a playbook for practice and research would be a way of bringing the ideas back to something more usable for practitioners.

3. FUNDING AND SUPPORT

The importance of taking risks with skilled and motivated individuals seems the best way of making effective creative healing happen. This involves listening to the voices of creatives and people with lived experience to determine the nature of the task and the outcomes. Too closely limiting creative freedom was never discussed as an enabling factor, despite a noted trend towards specified outcomes in the requirements of funding. Creativity is needed for more than just community wellbeing. It is needed too to bring people together, particularly across 'borders'. It is needed to represent traumatic and marginalised experience. It is through all of those routes that 'healing and reconciliation' happen. What was clear is that short term funds can significantly disrupt the work and can break up productive networks in unhelpful ways.

4. KEEPING HOLD OF INTEGRITY

There has been a surge of interest in the use of the arts for community mental health. Whilst this brings new and welcome opportunities, what was clear from these examples of good practice was the importance of acknowledging that creativity is a basic human need and there may be some unintended consequences if the process is hijacked solely for particular health outcomes. We need to be cautious not to define wellness as something only inside individuals. The arts also have a role in bearing witness to suffering and political change and not just sealing over issues so individuals feel better.

DOCUMENTING THE PROCESS

An integral part of the documentation of this event, was the audio/visual capturing of the experience in film and photography. For this we were fortunate to have the expertise of documentary film-maker and photographer Robert Golden, who will also produce a short film of the discussion to sit alongside this report.

The film will be available from March 2024 and can be accessed by emailing **admin@operacircus.co.uk**

> *Film-makers have a series of questions to be answered, to be revealed in film language. This requires willingness to admit the existence of ideas contrary to their own, but none the less, rational responses to the subject's conditions. As the film-maker records events they must be willing to change their understanding of the conditions being examined and also the framing of the film.*
>
> *It means careful observation and listening. It also means holding within myself contradictory ideas contending to be accepted as truthful. The film's use of sound, picture and editing, it's length, and its overall tone, must be appropriate to the films intentions as education, entertainment, etc.*
>
> **ROBERT GOLDEN**
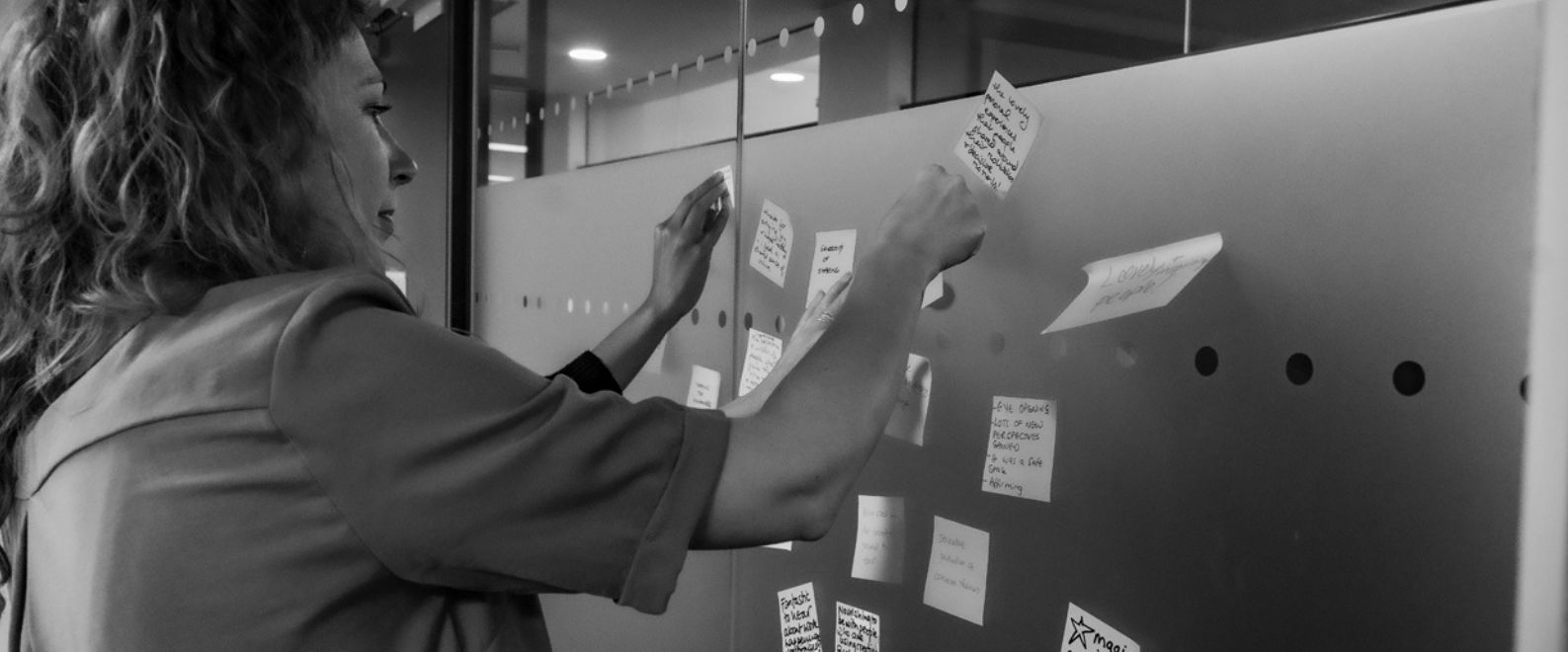
SOME COMMENTS FROM PARTICIPANTS

*"Eye opening, lots of new perspectives gained,
it was a safe space, affirming"*

*"How much us humans ARE our stories;
how fundamental to us they are"*

*"Someone who is maverick enough but conventional enough to
meet a system that is open enough."*

"Good to be in a room with people who 'get it'"

*"Opportunities like this remind us of the bigger pictures and that
we are part of a movement for social change."*

NEXT STEPS

This research event and report was always imagined as a first stage in a longer process of discovery and exploration with arts practitioners and academics. We recognise that the data gathered, although significant and diverse, only captures a snapshot of work being done across the country, through the lens of people with whom we already have personal and professional connections. We imagine several next steps to expand the scope and impact of the research and to ensure that what we are discovering can reach as many artists, practitioners, organisations, institutions and funders as possible. Our aim is to make a case for the expansion of creative approaches to collective healing into the mainstream and to empower those who either already are doing, or aspire to do, this work long term.

1. REGIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Following on from the London presentation of our research at the RSA on 31 January 2023, more opportunities to share our findings in different regional centres across the country and internationally.

2. CONTINUED RESEARCH

More opportunities to learn from the experience and wisdom of diverse arts practitioners, both in the UK and internationally, either repeating this process or exploring other modes of exchange.

3. TRAVELING ROADSHOW

A touring forum for experiencing and discussing creative arts for collective healing, centred around live arts activities that demonstrate the work in practise. We imagine the combination of immersive co-creation experiences and open forum style conferencing to present best practice and discuss potential, taken into the heart of communities across the country and further afield.

4. PRACTITIONER PLAYBOOK

The development of a practical, step by step guide for artists, practitioners, organisations, institutions and funders sharing HOW to create the conditions to do this work effectively and to sustain it over the long term.

5. TRAINING PROGRAMME

A practitioner training programme to accompany the playbook, to up skill and empower the practitioners of the future.

ABOUT
THE FACILITATORS/ AUTHORS

DR. ANGELA KENNEDY

Dr. Angela Kennedy Consultant Clinical Psychologist, Lead and instigator for the Trauma Informed Community of Action, Trustee of the Young Women's Film Academy, and Director of Innovating for Wellbeing. Former NHS Mental Health Lead/ Clinical Director, she remains passionate about compassionate leadership development, systems thinking and bringing lived experience voices of hope to the fore. Creative producer, small time poet and visual artist.

innovatingforwellbeing.co.uk

TINA ELLEN LEE FRSA

Artistic Director and co founder of Opera Circus, originally a singer/ actress with the company, consultant and mentor, lead in international arts youth programmes in the UK and wider Europe, commissions and produces music theatre and chamber opera, partnered with Professor Nigel Osborne as composer and animateur for 20 years, awarded the European Citizen's Prize for her work with young people across borders, a Winston Churchill/Finzi Fellow and a Salzburg Global Fellow.

operacircusuk.com

DARREN ABRAHAMS FRSA

Darren is a singer, trauma therapist, High Performance Coach, trainer and project leader working internationally to support change making leaders navigate crisis while prioritising wellbeing. He is co-founder of The Human Hive, trainer and Wellbeing Adviser for Musicians Without Borders and cofounder of The One World Orchestra. Darren is an expert at helping people feel safe while bringing communities together to heal.

darrenabrahams.com

ROBERT GOLDEN

began his photojournalist career in New York and then in London. Afterwards he became a successful food photographer. From 1999 to 2005 he created two successful television series. He has since made 20 documentaries about the arts and about youth. His research about food led him to make THIS GOOD EARTH, now with global distribution via Random Media. His new film, BELONGING – BECOMING concentrates on the concerns and hopes of young people in the shadows of corruption, war and climate change. His latest book about photography is available and he continues to publish an essay a week on Substack.

robertgoldenpictures.com

ABOUT THE PARTICIPANTS

VICKI BALAAM
Founder of Stop Gap Dance Company, Exec Director One World Orchestra

A passionate social justice activist, Vicki Balaam founded StopGAP Dance Company, nurturing a revolutionary approach to dance. Over 2 decades, StopGAP grew from its community roots into an internationally touring professional dance company, employing world class dancers. with and without disabilities. With a long track record of changemaking within the arts, she produces work that is informed by lived experiences, and considers artist, management and audience safety. She continues on the board of StopGAP Dance Company and is chair of Viv Gordon Company – a Child Sex Abuse survivor led arts and activism company. She is Executive Producer for choreographer and Queer rights activist, Stuart Waters, and is Executive Director of One World Orchestra, a collective of 17 musicians from 12 different countries seeking how to integrate sonically to inspire community cohesion.

https://www.stopgapdance.com/biographies/vicki-balaam/

DR. REJOICE CHIPURIRO
PhD: Post-Doctoral Researcher | Faculty of Health & Social Sciences, Bournemouth University

Dr Rejoice Chipuriro is a social worker and post-doctoral researcher at Bournemouth University. She is currently engaged in a study commissioned by the NIHR on community led organisations' contribution to people's health and wellbeing across the UK. She works with community based creative arts organizations supporting integration, mental health and well-being amongst refugees and asylum seekers in Bournemouth.

https://staffprofiles.bournemouth.ac.uk/display/rchipuriro

DR. ZOË GOODMAN
Department of Global Health & Social Medicine, King's College London

Dr Zoë Goodman is an anthropologist and educator with 15 years of experience at top universities, non-profit organizations and the UN. She has led independent collaborative research projects in the UK, East and, West Africa and Central Asia, investigating issues that range from migration and racism to health and food systems.Her work studies aspects of everyday life, such as rumours, deep fried snacks and nostalgia, in order to understand how power functions in society. Most recently this has involved asking what Covid vaccine rumours on the Kenyan coast tell us about discriminatory and globalised forms of policing.

https://www.kcl.ac.uk/people/zoe-goodman

ATHOL HALLE
CEO Trust For Developing Communities

Athol Hallé is the Chief Executive of the Trust for Developing Communities who run a broad range of community-led initiatives that tackle inequality in Brighton & Hove. This includes: the award-winningBrighton Streets – a citywide detached youth work programme addressing violence affecting young people; MESH – a multicultural employability support programme; and CHIP – tackling health inequalities through a community development approach.
https://www.trustdevcom.org.uk

CEDOUX KADIMA
Artist and Youth Worker

Cedoux is a freelance artist, mentor and consultant specialising in art therapy, participatory film-making and painting. Cedoux co-founded HeArts and Dreams UK (A Creative workshop and training exploring migration, refuge and well-being for youth groups, professionals, schools, students and individuals). Cedoux has extensive experience producing commissioned work, exhibitions and events, and designing and facilitating creative workshops for communities and schools.
https://heartsanddreams.wixsite.com/artsdreams

LOUISE KATEREGA
Head of Professional Development, People Dancing: the Foundation for Community Dance

LOUISE KATEREGA describes herself as a woman of mixed Ugandan and English heritage and has been a versatile contributor to the UK dance scene for almost three decades. She is especially acknowledged for her national and international development work in dance by, for and with disabled people. Based in Leicester, she has enjoyed a broad portfolio career onstage, in education and consultancy. Louise trained at London Contemporary Dance School, Coventry University (Performing Arts) holds a first-class degree in Film and Literature from the University of Warwick and trained as a life coach. She is trustee of ArtReach NeSSIE and Phoenix, Dance Theatre.
https://www.communitydance.org.uk/about-people-dancing/people

LISA OSBORN
Youth Service Manager Drop in Youth Centre Portland

Lisa Osborn is the Manager of The Drop In; a thriving Youth Service on the Island of Portland. She has worked in the Charity sector for the last 15 years and is dedicated to the inclusion of all young people in accessing a quality youth provision. Lisa specialises in running bespoke projects centred around peer support. Her most notable projects have been The Push Up Project, Broken Rainbows and the introduction of The Zen Den where young people access dedicated mental health support. She has received high recognition for the work she does with young people and believes passionately in supporting young people to realise their full potential
http://www.thedropinportland.com/

JIM PINCHEN
Co-Founder The One World Orchestra

Jim Pinchen is a composer, project manager, trainer and TEDx speaker. He is a trainer with Musicians Without Borders, co-founder of One World Orchestra and the Inclusion Manager at Surrey Music Education Hub. He has a proven track record in delivering local and international projects that harness the unique power of music to educate and transform lives. His award-winning projects have been cited to highlight 'Best Practice' by the Department for Education (DfE) and have been showcased at The Royal Albert Hall, The Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and the ISME 32nd World Global Conference.
https://www.jimpinchen.com

DR. JULIA PUEBLA FORTIER
Research Associate, Arts and Health South West National Centre for Creative Health

Dr Julia Puebla Fortier is the research and professional learning lead for Arts & Health South West (UK). She conducts participatory action research on a variety of creative health topics including young people and wellbeing, end-of-life support and cross-sectoral collaboration. She leads practitioner training and development work on core competencies for arts and health, especially in the context of social prescribing. Her doctoral research at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine looked at the emotional labour of creative facilitators working with people with complex health and psychosocial conditions. She has a long history of working to improve access to healthcare for migrants and refugees.
https://www.linkedin.com/in/juliapueblafortier

DR HENRY REDWOOD
Lecturer in War Studies, Department of War Studies, King's College London

Dr Henry Redwood's research explores how communities are formed through, and as a result, of war. Empirically, theoretically and methodologically this has drawn on law, archives and aesthetic politics as important sites and processes of community production and governance. Whilst he has explored a number of different conflicts, most of his research has focused on the Western Balkans and Rwanda.
https://www.kcl.ac.uk/people/dr-henry-redwood

DR KHADJ ROUF
Consultant Clinical Psychologist, CPsychol, HCPC registered

Dr Khadj Rouf works is a Consultant clinical psychologist working in the NHS. She works in adult mental health with a special interest in psychological trauma. She has written professionally regarding mental health issues, both for clinicians and the public. She is a survivor-practitioner with a longstanding passion for the power of creativity in healing. She has an MA in Creative Writing and is a published poet and writer, appearing in works such as, These are The Hands, edited by Deborah Alma and Dr Katie Amiel.
https://thefridaypoem.com/khadija-rouf/

DR STEPHANIE SCHWANDENER-SIEVERS
Anthropology Co-Director Centre for Seldom Heard Voices Bournemouth University

Dr Stephanie Schwandener-Sievers, Professor of Applied Anthropology and Co-Director of the Centre for Seldom Heard Voices at Bournemouth University, has a long trajectory of ethnographic research and publications in the fields of post-socialist, post-colonialist, conflict and post-conflict, translocal (migration), and international development studies. She contrasts representations (e.g. media imageries of 'Albanian crime') and social lives, local knowledge, memories, and experiences, to better understand the often-unexpected outcomes of existing policies and interventions. Her recent research projects, e.g. ACT (Kosovo) and SOUNDS (Albania), explore participatory-arts-based methods and a change theory for cognitive and social transformations based on more equitable international development collaborations.
https://staffprofiles.bournemouth.ac.uk/display/sssievers

DR TANISHA SPRATT

Senior Lecturer in Racism & Health, Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, King's College London

Dr Tanisha Spratt is a Senior Lecturer in Racism and Health. Tanisha obtained her PhD in Sociology from the University of Cambridge in 2019, before completing postdoctoral research in the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences, University of Oxford (2019-2021). Tanisha joined the University of Greenwich as a Lecturer in Sociology (2021-2023). In 2023, she was a Visiting Research Scholar in the Center for Health and Wellbeing (CHW), Princeton University.Building on her sociology background and working across literary and cultural studies, Tanisha's research centres on racial inequalities in health outcomes in the UK and the US. Specifically, her research focuses on the role of neoliberalism in promoting and sustaining understandings of personal responsibility, deservedness and grievability when it comes to illness, death and dying.
https://www.kcl.ac.uk/people/tanisha-spratt

DR RACHEL TURNBULL

Health Innovation North East and North Cumbria (HI HENC)

Rachel works in healthcare innovation leading regional projects in the North East of England. Originally qualified as a clinician with a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology Rachel has developed more than 12 years' experience in project management and service improvement roles and has recently completed a degree in urban planning and architecture. Her interests lie in the connections between wellbeing and urban design, how to support the creation of healthy, happy, fun places where communities can thrive. Rachel is a co-creator of the programme, Healthy Happy Places, focussing specifically on how we can create positive mental health through the built environment by sharing expertise and knowledge between the NHS, public health, regeneration and planning, architecture, the arts and citizens. This is currently being tested and applied in practice to projects in the North East.
https://healthinnovationnenc.org.uk/team/rachel-turnbull/

JO WHITE

CEO Wishing Well Music for Health

Jo is Founder and CEO of Wishing Well Music for Health, a grass roots charity bringing live music to the heart of healthcare. A lifelong and mostly self taught musician, Jo is passionate about using music to turn clinical spaces into cultural places where people can connect and express themselves. She primarily plays accordion and works with a variety of organisations using music as a tool for social connection and change. Jo is Southeast Arts Champion for the Culture Health and Wellbeing Alliance.
https://wishingwellmusic.org.uk/our-team/

RESOURCES

Developing real world system capability in trauma informed care: learning from good practice summet_document_Feb_2021.pdf (opennarrativesystem.co.uk)

roots_framework.pdf opennarrativesystem.co.uk

Practical Guide for Implementing a Trauma-Informed Approach | SAMHSA
https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/ebp/practical-guide-implementing-trauma-informed-approach

The trauma treatment handbook: Protocols across the spectrum.
https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2010-18744-000

Mindsight and Mindfulness: Dr Daniel Siegel
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326635421_Daniel_Siegel

Truth and Repair: How Trauma Survivors Envision Justice
https://www.harvard.com/book/truth_and_repair/

Honing Theory: A Complex Systems Framework for Creativity
https://arxiv.org/abs/1610.02484

Creative Health Toolkit
https://www.creativehealthtoolkit.org.uk/

Four+Big+Ways+to+Improve+Health+through+the+Arts.pdf (squarespace.com)

ACE_CreativeHealthWellbeing_FINAL[2117].pdf
https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/developing-creativity-and-culture/health-and-wellbeing/creative-health-wellbeing

Here's how your mental health depends on collective wellbeing | World Economic Forum (weforum.org)

The Healing Power of Art | Magazine | MoMA
https://www.moma.org/magazine/articles/629

Tears of the collective: healing historical trauma. 6. Rakena (maydaygroup.org)

Bad Faith Evaluation - by Aden Date (substack.com)

Trauma-informed approaches to supporting people experiencing multiple disadvantage (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Bringing Organizational Well-Being to Life (ssir.org)

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