Online Arts Groups for Wellbeing

Structuring freedom to reinvent ourselves together.

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Title: Online Arts Groups for Wellbeing – Structuring freedom to reinvent ourselves together.

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Abstract:

This research directly responded to the COVID-19 pandemic's negative impact by exploring how in-person arts groups for wellbeing can be created as an online shared experience for participants. The project tried to overcome the social distancing of the pandemic that suppressed wellbeing and mental health through isolation and its effects. It took a participatory action research approach, which involved working with various participants and practitioners. Participants took part in a series of Workshops developed as a prototype of an online arts group, used to garner insights. After analysis, preliminary findings were presented to expert practitioners to evaluate. I iterated the findings once more during the second round of analysis. By exploring the setting together, we aimed to develop a holistic understanding of the online arts group and co-define practices in the online arts group that can support wellbeing with participants and practitioners.

Thematic analysis of the workshop discussions formed two themes that answer, what are experiences of supported wellbeing like in the online arts group. These themes are structured freedom, an overarching quality of online arts groups that give participants cohesion yet individual liberties, and; reinventing ourselves together, which described the process of an individual's positive change within the online arts group. To answer, what practices and resources could support the delivery of an online arts group for wellbeing? We created the ways of being with participants and practitioners. They describe the subjective practices used to support wellbeing in this context.

The research's value is within its exploration. The findings offer guidance to practitioners within the complex context of online arts groups, not rules that apply to all contexts and participants, as the research provides just one set of possible findings.

Preface:

My ties to the project reflect aspects of my lived experience. I was born in 1996 into a newly post-apartheid South Africa and a working-class British family. I spent my early childhood in the shadow of South African apartheid. By experiencing its social tumult and then later migrating to Scotland to a different disadvantaged environment within a council estate, I was made aware of the multifaceted socio-cultural, economic, and psychological factors surrounding health.

While growing up in Scotland, as a way to process my experiences, I would create imaginary worlds through artworks. This creativity enriched my life by giving me confidence and an expressive outlet. Deciding to build on my passion further, I enrolled in the Glasgow School of Art (GSA) to study painting and printmaking at the age of eighteen. Here I saw an exciting, different, and fantastical world that was out of touch with the reality that I knew. My peers from my home, who I would bring to showcases, regularly found it difficult to understand or relate to the showcased artworks. In my experience, when asked about my creative practice, people often address it with admiration, yet usually follow their respect for creativity with an adamant proclamation that they themselves “are not creative”. Situations like these made apparent the alienation that exists for many regarding the arts and creativity. Furthering my studies within GSA’s Innovation school doing Service Design, I acquired practical skills that I hoped to be used in tackling such alienation.

I believe that everyone can be creative and that this alienation towards art and creativity is enforced through socio-cultural factors that give rise to damaging expectations within our

society and its individuals around what counts as art and who is allowed to be creative. These expectations negatively affect disadvantaged people and communities more than others, making art and creativity seem exclusive and unobtainable, a leisure activity for the privileged, never a career. This state of things prohibits many from reaping the benefits of creative play.

Hence, I feel a democratisation of creativity is needed to give diverse peoples a voice in the arts and help them express their emotions and reflect on hardships in a contained and safe manner while destroying notions of who can and cannot be creative. This democratisation could support well-being and mental health and motivated me to pursue this project.

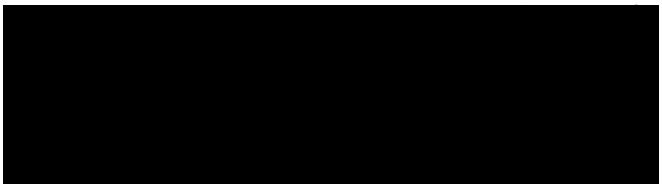
Acknowledgements:

Understanding the art of research has been a life-changing experience. I have never learned so much in such a short time; even the discipline I had to cultivate to write this document and the technical and social skills gained during fieldwork will undoubtedly be exceedingly helpful for my future. Most importantly, I now feel capable of creating critical nuanced arguments based on valid evidence. I want to thank GSA for hosting me for another two years. Particularly I thank my department, the Innovation School. Their Design Innovation and Research programmes have given me a renewed hope towards meaningful change in the world through affirmative, pragmatic action. I would also like to thank the School of Fine Art for hosting my undergraduate education, without which I might not have possessed the skills needed to conduct the project.

I want to thank my parents, John and Lynn, my siblings Brianna and Zak and my partner Bethany for helping me throughout the research, all of whom I love dearly. I also thank those who helped me with the study itself, from my co-facilitator and friend Mark, to my supervisors: Dr Mafalda Moreira, who showed considerable care and attention to even my early babbling; Dr Marianne McAra, whose efforts and patience got me through barriers from application to submission; and Dr Jessica Argo, who provided valuable, practical ideas throughout. I thank the Digital Health and Care Institute for funding this research. I would also like to thank all GSA staff who facilitated the programme, from all the seasonal schools to the book club. Finally, I sincerely thank all my participants for sharing their valuable understandings. This research has been a humbling experience that I will continue to cherish.

Declaration:

I declare that this full-thesis 20,000-word (plus or minus ten percent) submission has been completed by myself Skyler J. E. Ridewood and meets the regulations as stated within the course handbook in partial fulfilment for the degree of Master of Research (MRes) and that this work has not been submitted for any other academic award.



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Reading the Thesis

In this thesis, certain stylistic choices have been made to signify its different aspects. Firstly, many of the larger figures within the thesis span two pages, so please adjust your view to a two-page spread. To do this using a PDF, please select ‘view’ and then ‘two pages’. There are *hyperlinks* throughout that link sections of the thesis and the appendices together these are italicised. Research questions, aims and objectives are shown in a *medium italic font*. The findings titles such as themes and ways of being will appear in medium font. The same is true for each theme and way’s name, for example, structured freedom or devise rich social interactions. These stylistic choices distinguish the findings and questions from the main body of text.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Context and Challenge

Mental health is a rising concern in the United Kingdom (UK) (Office for National Statistics 2016). Evidence suggests that one in every six adults lives with mental health challenges (McManus et al., 2016, p.6). In the UK, poor mental health is estimated to cost the economy 25 billion pounds per year (Oxford Economics, 2016, p.7). This financial and psychological challenge disproportionately affects those least able to cope (WHO and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 2014), compounding their problems further (Amit et al. 2020)). Mental health does not only affect financial health; it also strikes at our physical health (Ohrnberger et al., 2017). It is estimated that 36 per cent of patients receiving medical treatment have a comorbidity of both physical and mental illness (Daré et al., 2019), meaning that many physical conditions and even deaths may stem from mental illness. Poor mental health takes lives at its extremes, with reportedly 6,507 individuals in the UK taking their own lives during 2019 (Samaritans, 2019).

Meanwhile, the National Health Service has been experiencing the crippling impact of austerity measures over the last decade, under which spending on health and social care has been repeatedly cut (Maynard, 2017). The austerity measures felt within healthcare have caused NHS waiting times to increase exponentially, with 34 per cent of patients waiting anywhere from three to six months for an appointment to address their mental healthcare needs (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2021).

This research takes place in Glasgow, a city that comprises some of the most deprived areas in Scotland (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, 2021) and claims a higher prevalence of mental illness among its populace than in other parts of the UK (Office for National Statistics, 2019; Shipton and Whyte, 2011). One approach advocated by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (2004a) and the Scottish Government (2010) is taking a preventative strategy regarding mental illness by supporting individual's wellbeing, which is understood in this work as a state of balance between an individual's resources and challenges (Dodge et al., 2012). This approach is corroborated by work done within positive psychology which considers balanced wellbeing as protective of mental health and preventative of mental illness (Ryff, 2013; Slade, 2010; Keyes, 2005).

These factors suggest that other practices for supporting wellbeing need to be nurtured and developed. In this thesis, I stress the necessity for individuals within their communities and the third sector to fill this gap within mental healthcare, as do other researchers (Bull et al., 2014; Tait and Shah, 2007). Now more than ever, we need to find alternative ways of connecting to support each other under the severe restrictions that have come to characterise the COVID-19 pandemic.

In this chapter, I discuss the context of my research; how the Covid-19 pandemic reoriented the project towards online platforms; how my practice informed the research; present my research questions, aims and objectives, potential ways in which wellbeing might be supported as well as position two professional practices drawn on that informed the research inquiry.

1.2 Pandemic and Re-Orientation

This research took place during the Covid-19 pandemic. In Glasgow, to prevent the spread of the virus, lockdown measures were repeatedly taken between 2020 and 2021. These lockdown measures included social distancing restrictions used to slow the spread of the virus and prevent the UK's already strained health service from crashing (Lewnard and Lo, 2020).

During this time, many people found themselves unable to connect to their support networks (WHO, 2020). These individuals were essentially alone during this challenging time, which negatively impacted their wellbeing (Stieger et al., 2021) and their mental health (Ryff, 2013; Slade, 2010; Keyes, 2005). I initially began this inquiry expecting to investigate how arts in a live, in-person group setting might be used to support wellbeing. Instead, I found that world events were shaping my research for me.

Adapting to the situation, rather than undertaking a more theoretical inquiry, I chose to chart unknown terrain by harnessing my creative practices within a new context to live by my original desire as a Participatory Artist of engaging with people using art (Bishop, 2012). On March 23rd 2020, when the lockdown was announced (Press and Journal, 2021), I decided to prototype an online arts group to investigate emerging approaches in supporting wellbeing within this newly distributed, unpredictable and complex context.

1.3 Role of Practice

My interdisciplinary Arts and Design practice informed this practice-based research project, with both fields having a rich research community (Koskinen et al., 2012; Sullivan, 2005). I have always had an affinity for creative practices, which inspired me to share my passion by volunteering as a facilitator for creative projects within schools and third sector organisations. As a result, I have been able to share my practice while supporting others in developing their own practices.

Being initially trained in Painting and Printmaking as a fine artist at The Glasgow School of Art, I have an array of practical artmaking skills. Throughout my undergraduate degree, I had longed to engage with the world in transformative ways, which led to me taking up a taught masters in Innovation Design, specialising in Service Design. These skills informed my chosen methodology summarised in Chapter 3 and how I carried out the fieldwork outlined in Chapter 4.

1.4 Research Questions, Aims and Objectives

Responding to increasing mental illness, underfunded NHS treatment and lockdown measures, below are the research questions, aims and objectives underpinning this inquiry. Please note that the primary research question is operational as it aligns with the Pragmatist stance used in this research (*see Section 3.2*), meaning it is instrumentalised to producing useful knowledge for practitioners within this vital context:

Primary Research Question

How can an in-person arts group for wellbeing be created as an online shared experience for participants?

Research Sub-Questions

1. What are experiences of supported wellbeing like in the online arts group?

2. What practices and resources could support the delivery of an online arts group for wellbeing?

Research Aims

1. To develop a holistic understanding of the online arts group for wellbeing.

2. To co-define practices in the online arts group that support wellbeing with participants and practitioners.

Research Objectives

1. Prototype an online arts group workshop series for supporting wellbeing.

2. Harness digital technologies to explore approaches in facilitating collaborative arts-based activities with the participants.

3. Validate findings with experts in online arts groups for wellbeing.

1.5 Ways of Supporting Wellbeing

There are many ways to support wellbeing, including Mindfulness Meditation, a practice that encourages participants to stand back from their thoughts, live in the present, and deal with their challenges (Bränström et al., 2011); Cognitive Behavioural Therapy, whereby therapists offer techniques that focus on breaking the connection between negative thinking, emotions, and behaviours (Beck, 1976); and the Healing Arts that use many aspects of creativity in a clinical setting to support recovery (Scott et al., 2019).

This project will explore Participatory Arts, particularly arts in the community (Bishop, 2012), given my background as an arts practitioner (see *Section 1.3*), as well as draw on Art Therapy's established strategies in supporting wellbeing and mental health using the arts (Malchiodi, 2003). Though I do not claim to be trained as an art therapist or intend to use a clinical practice, I repeatedly draw from aspects of Art Therapy's literature, adopting its strategies where appropriate to inform the design of the fieldwork intervention- such ideas are explored in Chapter 2.

1.6 Navigating the Thesis

This thesis comprises seven chapters, including this one. Chapter 2 sets out relevant literature. Chapter 3 outlines the methodological approach and the methods in the research design. Chapter 4 summarises the fieldwork and presents central research data. Chapter 5 analyses this data to construct findings then discusses them regarding the literature within Chapter 2. Finally, Chapter 6 concludes the research.

1.7 Chapter Summary

This research explored the new context of online arts groups for wellbeing as the research questions, aims and objectives suggest. To address the challenge of increasing mental illness across the UK, which an underfunded NHS is strained in addressing, all of which has been exacerbated further by the lockdowns. This was achieved using my interdisciplinary background with guidance from Participatory Arts and Art Therapy practices. The following literature review explores the key concepts and practices for supporting wellbeing within Participatory Arts and Art Therapy practices.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 The Chapter

In this literature review, I consider definitions of mental health and wellbeing. Then I explore Participatory Arts and Art Therapy practices while highlighting valuable theory and practice. Finally, I synthesise and summarise these understandings, which inform my methodological decisions detailed in the next chapter.

2.2 What is Mental Health and Wellbeing?

Below an understanding of mental health and wellbeing is given to understand how I might support them within the project.

2.21 Mental Health

Traditional psychological approaches understood mental health negatively as the absence of mental illness (Galderisi et al., 2015 p.231; Manderscheid et al., 2010 p.3). Contemporary conceptions attempting to understand what is present and common within and between the lived experiences of mentally healthy persons are used within the field of Positive Psychology (Ryff, 2013; Slade, 2010). Such conceptions consider mental health positively as an aggregate of multiple aspects of wellbeing in life (Keyes 2005; 2002). This research adopts such a perspective because of its holistic nature.

Keyes, a renowned figure within positive psychology, considers mental illness and mental health separate yet causally linked (Westerhof and Keyes 2010; Keyes 2005). This research suggests that not only is it possible for persons experiencing mental illness to live a healthy functional life, but also that poor mental health and wellbeing can be as debilitating as mental illness and may even cause it (Keyes 2005 p.547). A definition commonly cited in the literature (Manwell et al., 2015; Leighton and Dogra, 2009) that corroborates Positive Psychology's understanding of mental health as the aggregate of multiple aspects of wellbeing is provided by the World Health Organisation (WHO), which describes mental health as 'a state of wellbeing in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community' (WHO 2004 b, p.12).

Within Manwell et al.'s study (2015), 50 mental health experts considered and explored an array of popular mental health definitions, including the WHO's above (Manwell et al., 2015, p.3; WHO 2004 b). No consensus was reached on one popular definition, an uncertainty that is corroborated in the literature (Fusar-Poli et al., 2020, p.35; Galderisi et al., 2015, p.231). Manwell et al.'s (2015) study then explored what mental health meant to its experts and concluded that mental health is defined in multiple ways by different people (ibid, 2015). Nevertheless, vital characteristics of mental health were agreed upon, such as autonomy, adaptation, stability, meaningful social participation, dignity, hope, enjoyment and reflection (ibid, p.6), which can also pertain to aspects of wellbeing outlined below. Whilst definitions of mental health remain contested (Galderisi et al., 2015), it seems that it is far more than the absence of mental illness and that wellbeing is key to supporting it.

2.22 Wellbeing

Wellbeing is challenging to define because of its partially subjective nature (Diener, 2009; Diener et al., 1999). What one person needs to be fulfilled can be entirely different for another (Lomas 2016; Rees et al., 2010; Stratham and Chase, 2010), yet some aspects of wellbeing are shared (Western and Tomaszewski 2016; Teuton 2015). A model that accounts for both the common shared and individual natures of wellbeing is the 'See-saw Model' offered by Dodge et al. (2012). This commonly used model (Perkins et al. 2021; Golsteyn and Ostafichuk, 2020) considers wellbeing as a balance between an individual's resources and the challenges they face within psychological, social and physical aspects of life, creating a see-saw effect (Dodge et al., 2012 p.230) (see Figure 2.1).

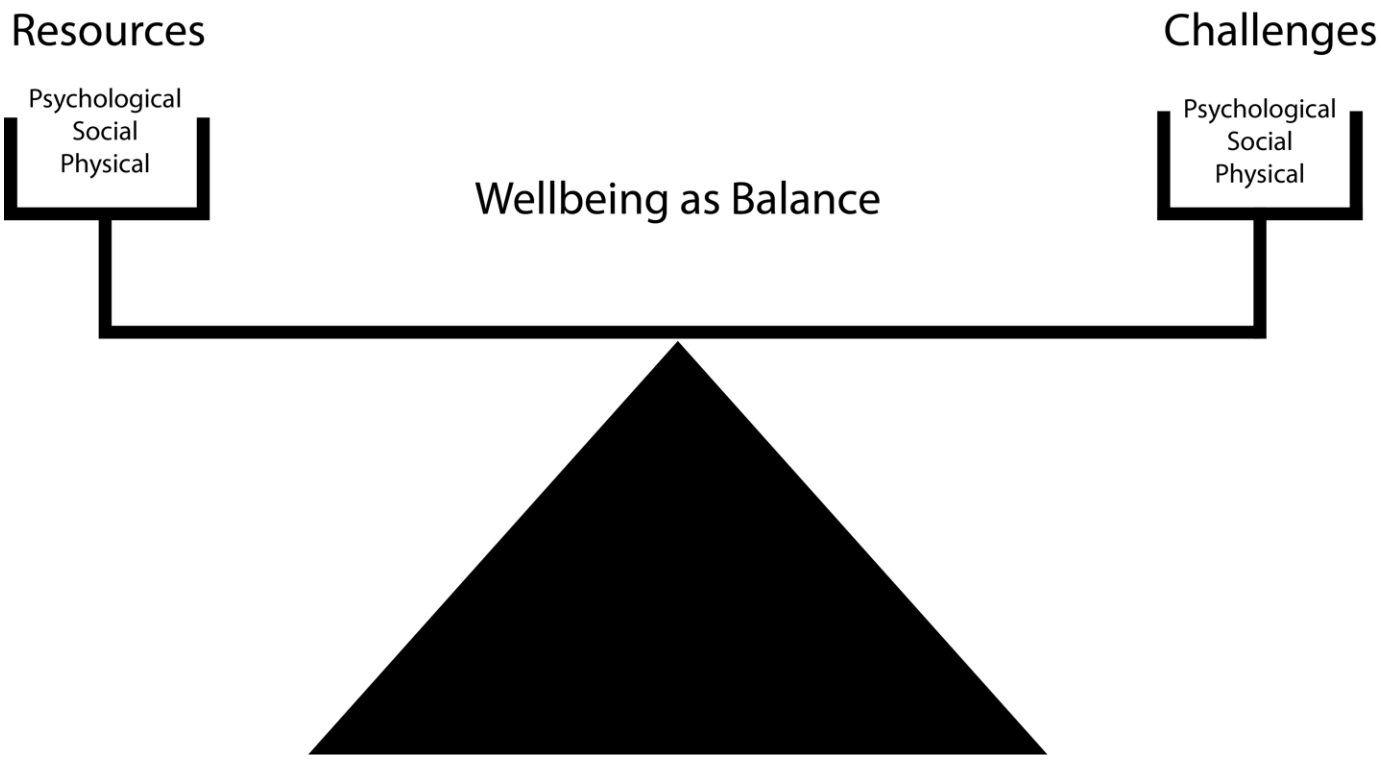

Figure 2.1 Balance as Wellbeing, based on Dodge et al., (2012). Created by Skyler Ridewood

Here Dodge et al. suggest that individuals avoid having no challenges or taking-up challenges that they do not have the resources to manage, as either scenario might cause their wellbeing to destabilise (Dodge et al., 2012 p.229; Hendry and Kloep's 2002). Challenges on the right side of the see-saw often occur throughout life, although many can be initiated by choice (see Figure 1), such as learning a new skill, having a child, starting a new job and many more. Resources on the left side of the see-saw are gained throughout life, often using various forms of self-care such as social interaction (Umberson and Montez, 2010), physical activity (Harris, 2018), and relaxation (Forbes, Fichera, Rogers, and Sutton, 2017; Dickerson, 2020).

The generalisability of the Seesaw model's social, physical and psychological aspects is one of its strengths. Because of this, personal needs within these aspects of wellbeing can be accounted for. Suppose individuals find that any one aspect of their wellbeing lacks challenges or resources. In that case, challenges can be resigned from, or resources sought out, meaning tailored strategies for supporting these shared aspects of life and wellbeing are needed for different people. As Shin and Johnson (1978, p. 478) state, wellbeing is 'a global assessment of a person's quality of life according to his own chosen criteria'.

The Seesaw model's affirmation of both subjective and shared aspects of wellbeing is corroborated by other holistic conceptions such as Western and Tomaszewski (2016) and Barysheva and Alatartseva (2015). Underlying these understandings is the process of personal reflection on one's wellbeing, followed by an informed choice of what challenges to or not to take up within what aspects of life and wellbeing. In simple terms, Dodge et al. (2012) suggest that individuals must balance their challenges against their available

resources to support their wellbeing through their choices within several aspects of their life. This understanding is the one I take to this research as it gives me direction in supporting wellbeing yet accounts for individuality.

However, the uniqueness of each individual has not impeded researchers attempts to measure wellbeing. A quantitative model often used in the UK is the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (Stewart-Brown et al., 2011). While there is value in this measure when observing change within wellbeing, quantitatively measuring the impact on wellbeing was out of this study's sample scope and my skills as a researcher. Nonetheless, there are limitations in quantitative analysis when dealing with wellbeing's subjective, unquantifiable qualities. This research is primarily concerned with supporting wellbeing to nurture mental health. The study will qualitatively explore individual subjective wellbeing within the arts group using a small sample size.

Returning to the context of this inquiry, during the unpredictable pandemic with its social distancing restrictions and a series of national lockdowns, a lack of challenge was an issue for many (Lewnard and Lo, 2020) who were away from work (Francis-Devine and Ferguson, 2021) possibly contributing to a decline in wellbeing (Stieger et al., 2021). In choosing to participate within an online arts group, participants were offered an opportunity to take up creative challenges they considered meaningful (Arslan et al., 2020) to support their wellbeing's social, psychological, and physical aspects.

2.3 Participatory Arts in the Community

Participatory Arts encapsulate a wide variety of practices, from drama and music to the visual arts. Contemporary examples include the work of Monster Chetwynd, who creates collaborative performances with the people she meets on her travels (Sadie Coles, 2021) or Tania Bruguera, who using art, pedestaled her fellow Cubans to use free speech (a right denied to many Cubans) (Guggenheim Museum, 2021). Whilst diverse in practice, what ties this field together is its participant centredness, this often manifests politically as Art Historian Claire Bishop (2012) states:

> This desire to activate the audience in participatory art is at the same time a drive to emancipate it from a state of alienation induced by the dominant ideological order ... Beginning from this premise, participatory art aims to restore and realise a communal, collective space of shared social engagement.
>
> (Bishop, 2012, p.275)

Embodying this drive towards inclusive empowerment for the marginalised to engage socially and creatively, Bishop calls on the 'community arts movement' (2012, p.177-179). This sect of Participatory Arts emerged in the 1970s in the UK and lives on today. It's primarily concerned with supporting communities by empowering them through artmaking and creatively addressing their challenges.

This research aligns with the Participatory Arts approach of creatively addressing together with participants and practitioners *how can an in-person arts group for wellbeing be created*

as an online shared experience for participants (Primary Research Question). Within the context of the pandemic and its lockdowns, mental health and wellbeing services and their participants need to shift online; responding, this research together with practitioners and participants hopes *to develop a holistic understanding of the online arts group for wellbeing* (Aim 1). Although this research will not sway the tide of mental illness, it hopes *to co-define practices in the online arts group that support wellbeing with participants and practitioners* (Aim 2) and empower this community in facilitating arts groups for wellbeing online.

2.31 Supporting Wellbeing in Participatory Arts

Multiple entwined factors are considered to support wellbeing within arts groups (Sayers and Stickley, 2018; Fancourt et al., 2016; Carrasco et al., 2015; Secker et al., 2011) with no consensus being reached. Given the multifaceted subjective nature of wellbeing (Proctor, 2014; Dodge et al., 2012; Lucas and Diener, 1999), perhaps many understandings are valid and required to meet the multiple needs of individuals in arts groups. Regardless this lack of clarity prompts my research sub-question; *what are experiences of supported wellbeing like in the online arts group?* (Sub-Question 1).

It is argued that group dynamics contribute toward wellbeing in parallel to activities practised in the arts group (Thomson, 2020; Sayers and Stickley, 2018; Secker et al., 2011). Social prescribing takes this understanding and uses it as medicine (Teuton 2015). Hence groups outside of the "arts" practising activities such as cooking, reading, sports, and many more may also support wellbeing (Andersen et al., 2019). As stated in *Section 1.3*, my practice/skills are most suited to creating an online visual arts group. This choice is not to

assert that this is the only or best approach in supporting wellbeing. Instead, it is an approach that I have the means to provide that is backed by evidence (All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing 2017; Hacking et al., 2008; 2006).

Despite the referred complexity, social inclusion (Tough et al., 2017; Perkins and Repper, 2003) and empowerment (Browne 2015; Nyatanga and Dann, 2002) appear to be common factors within the literature in terms of supporting wellbeing. These factors are also prominent aspects of two regarded wellbeing measures (Leamy et al., 2011; Stewart-Brown et al., 2011), supporting my focus further. Following the Seesaw model (Dodge et al., 2012), activities that provide challenges while building resources relating to the physical, psychological and social categories of wellbeing are the developing of skills during artmaking (Marshall-Tierney, 2021), the emotional expression of created artworks (Chilton et al., 2015; Forzoni et al., 2010), and social activity involving meeting and collaborating with new people (Billington et al., 2012). These activities can contribute to balanced wellbeing if navigated and facilitated successfully by participant and facilitator (Algoe and Stanton, 2012; Algoe et al., 2011; Taylor, 2010; Taylor and Hallam, 2008).

Above are ways in which participatory arts might support wellbeing. They are not definitive and cannot capture nuances but can justify this research's interest in social inclusion and empowerment, which nurture the activities that support wellbeing shared above (Carrasco et al., 2015; Swan, 2013). Next, I explore two studies that consider social inclusion and empowerment's relationship with wellbeing within in-person Participatory Arts contexts. Later, their understandings supported me to *prototype an online arts group workshop series for supporting wellbeing* (Objective 1).

2.32 Qualities of Participatory Arts Groups

As wellbeing literature points towards social inclusion and empowerment, it is essential to understand how these factors might be nurtured. Van Lith, Fenner and Schofield (2010, p.653) investigated participants' perspectives recovering from mental illness using an arts group. Their work considered a wellbeing approach in addressing mental illness by supporting 'wellness' and 'empowerment'. Van-Lith et al. describe integral aspects for supporting wellbeing through what they call 'qualities conducive to the art-making context', which are characterised as:

- Quality 1: Feelings of belonging, security and encouragement are provided by the setting.
- Quality 2: The facilitator guides yet provides freedom and support to assist in expanding one's potential.
- Quality 3: The group creates a sense of connectedness by providing acceptance, encouragement and socialisation.

(Van-Lith et al., 2010, p.655)

Unpacking these, *Quality 1* assures inclusivity for all while empowering participants to be themselves. *Quality 2* describes how participants should be empowered to steer the project, but service providers must be flexible to aid various participants bespoke needs –making the service more inclusive. Finally, *Quality 3* highlights the social aspects of the workshops with the word's 'acceptance' and 'encouragement', emphasising social inclusion and empowerment. It should also be noted that *Quality 2* highlights aspects of positive change for participants with 'expanding one's potential'. Van-Lith et al.'s work emphasises the

experience of participants in an arts group. Though simple, these ideas might be overlooked when creating workshops due to the workshop's unpredictability, particularly within the online setting, and the sheer variety of approaches available (All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing, 2017). These qualities provide insight into aspects of online arts groups that require nurturing to better support wellbeing.

Turner-Halliday (2013) interviewed participants attending participatory arts for mental health. She found that her participants considered two main themes to be meaningful in this context. The first is '*Freedom from expectation*' (encompassing aspects of empowerment and inclusivity), and the second is '*Personal growth*' (associated with positive change). Turner-Halliday (2013) embodies the concepts of empowerment and inclusivity within her idea of '*Freedom from expectation*', which she considers a central quality for facilitating participatory arts for wellbeing. '*Freedom from expectation*' can be understood itself as being comprised of two parts: the '*Freedom to do*' (related to empowerment) and the '*Freedom to be*' (concerned with inclusivity). These attributes could inform how a service might be planned, from workshop design choices to beliefs and principles within an arts group.

> '*Freedom from expectation*' can ultimately be understood by its extremes as:
>
> Perceptions of being free from the expectations of others in this study went as far as examples of an 'ultimate freedom;' that is, feeling no pressure to socially or verbally interact (an example of an ultimate freedom to be) or engage in any art activity (an example of an ultimate freedom to do). They are interpreted as examples of an 'ultimate freedom' given that both social interaction and engaging in art can be seen as the two main, assumed, features of taking part in community arts.
>
> (Turner-Halliday, 2013, p.128)

As set out by Turner-Halliday, these freedoms point to transferable qualities for designing and facilitating participatory arts groups conducive to wellbeing. For example, within the category '*Freedom to do*' is '*a culture free from pressure and constraint'* (Turner-Halliday 2013 p.51). This freedom stresses the importance of creating an empowering yet inclusive culture, emphasising the acceptance of participants' choices and abilities. On the other hand, within the category '*Freedom to be*' is '*a culture of being accepted*' (Turner-Halliday, 2013 p.51), explaining the importance of making participants feel welcome, regardless of individual differences. These freedoms might be understood as encompassing the concepts of empowerment and social inclusion while acknowledging their interrelatedness. Turner-Halliday believes that if these freedoms are ensured, her second theme of '*Personal growth*' might be better achieved for participants, thus directly supporting their wellbeing.

Van-Lith et al. and Turner-Halliday (2013) delve into the participant's experiences of the arts group. However, they pay little attention to practitioners who prepare and evaluate before and after the group and how this alters its efficacy in supporting wellbeing. Swindells et al.

(2016) also highlight this lack of practitioner engagement in research. In this research, however, I explored the views of both practitioners in parallel to gain a holistic understanding of the context, from those who create and facilitate the service and from those who use it. Next, I examine an article that explores online arts practices from practitioners' perspectives.

2.33 Online Arts Groups Challenges and Strategies

Burghes, Elliott, and Thornton (2020) explore and address the challenges associated with delivering an arts group online during the pandemic using the experiences of practitioners working within participatory theatre. The challenges were split into several categories: digital inclusion, online workshop activities, and online safeguarding.

'Digital Inclusion' describes the various issues associated with using digital means to connect, including technological poverty and literacy, one household's competing needs for internet access, the inclusion of the sensory disabled and the formality of the online space (ibid, 2020 p.11).

Burghes et al. (2020 p.12) offer suggestions, such as a 'digital audit' of participants and facilitator's equipment to understand what 'hardware, software, skills and connectivity' are available, and collaboration with libraries and tech companies to hire out equipment. New pastoral guidelines were considered, encouraging participants to switch their camera and microphone off to take a break when needed and then resume the call when ready. Another was 'utilising accessibility functions', which meant supporting those who are sensory disabled by using multiple software's for them to interact with (ibid, 2020, p.12). Lastly, a

mix of digital and analogue activities was suggested, so participants created artworks using familiar and unfamiliar methods (ibid, 2020, p.12).

'Workshop Activities Online' came with challenges, such as communication barriers through which visual and audio cues from participants might be missed during a call. Some participants also found it challenging to participate in their home environment either from the presence of family members or a reluctance to have their personal space visible on camera. Another issue was that practitioners often had to respond in an ad-hoc fashion as the new context made planning difficult. Screen fatigue was also a problem, given much of everyday work had already been outsourced to digital platforms (ibid, 2020, p.15; Wang et al., 2020).

In addressing these problems, Burghes et al. (2020, p.16) suggest using a 'technical facilitator in addition to a lead facilitator', so while the 'lead facilitator' directs the activities, the 'technical facilitator' checks on participants for visual and audio cues while managing technical aspects of the workshop. Where appropriate, it might be advisable to ask family members to participate in workshops to limit distractions and increase understanding to support the participant. Showing participants Zoom's background function to hide their home can be helpful for participants with privacy concerns. Practitioners in Burghes et al.'s study suggest that sessions should be made shorter to support attention spans and fight screen fatigue (2020, p.16).

‘Safeguarding Online’ was concerned with the new safety risks that online platforms present. Online applications can be insecure and risk intrusion by outside parties hacking into the group, although these applications have taken measures to improve their security (Zoom, 2021). Concerns about what participants might be accessing and sharing online, particularly with young participants, was a new safety issue (Burghes et al., 2020, p.27). Lastly, the discipline and structure needed to successfully run an online arts workshop can severely limit communication between participants and facilitators, meaning personal emotional care is restricted (Shaw, 2020; Zubala and Hacket, 2020). Often this pastoral care took place during the facilitator’s own time outside of the workshop, presenting challenges for these facilitator’s wellbeing (Burghes et al., 2020, p.27).

Burghes et al. (2020) offer no solutions to these more complex problems when safeguarding online, suggesting that addressing them will take time and further exploration. Hence, this project will explore safeguarding ideas while following the aforementioned practical advice. This uncertainty of practice within the new online context inspires my research sub-question: *what practices and resources support the delivery of an online arts group for wellbeing?* (Sub-Question 2).

2.34 Participatory Arts Summary

Participatory arts groups support wellbeing using empowerment and social inclusion. Although they take different perspectives, both Turner-Halidy (2013) and Van-lith et al. (2010) investigate the in-person setting. Turner-Haliday’s macro view illustrates how social

inclusion and empowerment are not separate but depend on the freedom an individual has within the arts group, whilst Van-lith et al.'s micro perspective alleges that ensuring guidance 'connectedness', 'freedom' and 'feelings of belonging' supports social inclusion and empowerment for wellbeing. Burghes et al. address problems when moving arts group practice online like 'digital inclusion', 'workshop activities online' and 'safeguarding online' (2020) by sharing a range of practical guidance for the context. These understandings and practices were used in planning and facilitating the online arts group. Next, I explore the field of art therapy and consider its strategies for supporting wellbeing.

2.4 Art Therapy

Art Therapy's knowledge might complement Participatory Arts, although they have differences. Participatory Arts are not instrumentalised towards treating mental illness, and facilitators are not always qualified therapists (Case and Dalley, 2014). Both fields, however, share similar goals of supporting wellbeing using artmaking. This project does not claim to be doing art therapy but instead seeks to learn from its methods of supporting wellbeing and integrate them into aspects of its understanding and practice.

Art therapy combines the fields of art and psychology (Case and Dalley, 2014, p.1; Vick 2003, p.5) to support the wellbeing and mental health of its participants (Malchiodi 2003, p.1) by helping them 'uncover strengths, coping mechanisms, and qualities of resilience' (Councill 2012, p.225). Art therapy is less concerned with the aesthetic of an artwork than the expressive, emotional and therapeutic journey of artmaking and interpretation (Case and Dalley, 2014 p.1; Malchiodi, 2003 p.1). Art therapy can support diverse populations

within various contexts and be used in both group and one on one sessions (Case and Dalley 2014, p.8,10; Vick 2003, p.6). There is evidence for the efficacy of art therapy in supporting wellbeing and mental health (Regev and Cohen-Yatziv, 2018).

2.41 Artistic Expression for Assessment and Treatment

Art therapy holds that artmaking is a form of communication (Kinney and Mueller, 2018, p.23; Arnett and Malchiodi, 2013) and can be used for both assessment (Kaplan, 2003, p.28) and treatment (Malchiodi, 2003, p.22). During assessment art therapists support patients to uncover meaning within their creative expressions; meanings that due to physical or emotional barriers they could not express verbally (Case and Dalley, 2014, p.4; Malchiodi, 2003, p.20-21). A caveat is that participants should always interpret their creations before their therapists to give accurate assessments while empowering participants, (Case and Dalley, 2014, p.97; Vick, 2003, p.8; Kaplan, 2003). Participant's interpretations are said to allude to aspects of their inner-lives (Case and Dalley, 2014, p.105-107; Siegal, 1999) which therapists discuss (Kaplan, 2003, p.28) to suggest positive understandings or coping strategies (Malchiodi and Rozum, 2012). Hence, by considering art as personal communication in the online arts group insights might be gleaned regarding participants wellbeing but participants own interpretation of their artworks must be foregrounded.

Art therapy treats participants using artmaking (Marshall-Tierney, 2021; Malchiodi, 2003, p.8-9; Adamson, 1990). Through the artmaking process, participants gain a sense of freedom and control (Case and Dalley, 2014, p.108; Malchiodi, 2013 p.5; Borgmann, 2002, p.251) but like Turner-Halliday (2013) in Participatory Arts, this control should extend to

participant's ability to not adhere to therapist's instructions (Kinney and Mueller, 2018, p.83-84). Such control empowers participants to create their own self-narrative (Malchiodi, 2013, p.9; Kinney and Mueller, 2018, p.28; Case and Dalley, 2014, p. 88); this allows them to embark on a 'journey of self-exploration and self-discovery' using creative expression (Landreth and Sweeney, 1999, p.39). This understanding resonates with Van Lith et al.'s *'expanding ones potential'* and Turner-Haliday's '*Personal growth*' and emphasises the need for empowerment in the arts group.

2.42 Art Therapy Two Paths

Art Therapists debate if emphasis should be placed on the participant/therapist or the participant/artwork relationship (Case and Dalley, 2014, p.2-3). Classical psychoanalytic approaches (Malchiodi, 2003, p.41-56) envisioned by Jung (1963;1973) and Naumburg (1953;1966) concentrate on the participant/therapist relationship. They are scaffolded by theories of mind that posit predictable pathologies sometimes stemming from unconscious trauma accompanied by prescribed treatments (Vick, 2003, p.7). This approach seeks diagnosis using artwork assessment while treating mental illness using the therapist's psychoanalytical strategies.

Alternatively, Humanistic approaches focus on the participant/artwork relationship by the therapists taking the role of facilitator (Malchiodi, 2003, p.61-63). Using active, empathetic listening and acceptance, these therapists empower participants towards self-led growth and meaning-making using the artmaking process (ibid, 2003, p.58-70; Rogers, 1961; 1969).

The Humanistic approach seeks to support participants' growth rather than diagnose and treat illness. This comes from an understanding that each individual's wellbeing needs bespoke care. This approach aligns with understandings of Participatory Arts, concerned with empowering participants in a socially inclusive way. Hence, I will support participants to take control of their online arts group using active, empathetic listening and acceptance to alter the arts group to suit participants' needs.

2.43 Art Therapy Online

Following social distancing, much of Art Therapy has shifted online (Zubala and Hacket, 2020), however this shift has created various problems, leaving many therapists looking to organisations for guidance (ibid, 2020, p.170). Some concerns surround using technology and providing safety while managing risks (ibid, 2020, p.163-168). This was equally a concern in the Participatory Arts context, as highlighted by Burghes et al. (2020). Next Art Therapy explores the online context.

Art therapist Lucy Shaw engaged with a group of adolescents suffering from anorexia nervosa during lockdown by prototyping an online arts group using Microsoft teams (a collaborative video call platform) (Microsoft.com., 2021; Shaw, 2020). The workshops consisted of an artmaking period followed by a sharing and discussion period where participants interacted using their artworks (Shaw, 2020, p.213). Her reflections and analysis focused on participants' level of control over sharing their artworks but also their own image on camera (ibid, 2020, p.215-216), which was a source of trouble in this group. This example explored technology use, communication online, and safety issues, all of which I used to inform my practice.

Shaw's prototype could have considered the implications of the group setting and technological choice of video call software. Participants with anorexia nervosa often struggle with body image (Stice and Whitenton 2002), as Shaw acknowledges (2020 p.213). In her group, participants felt pressure to share themselves (ibid, p.216) but were also constantly made aware of their image by their screens which each contained multiple observers (ibid, p.215). Had a messaging platform been selected as other groups had used (Tribe, 64 Million Artists, 2018), this specific group might have been more comfortable.

However, these choices may have been purposive (Shaw, 2020, p.215-216). Shaw's psychoanalytic approach (2020, p.212) relies on the participant/therapist relationship, not a more humanistic participant/artwork relationship like within Participatory Arts. This participant/therapist relationship was obscured by the remote technology used, mainly when participants turned their cameras off or chose not to share artworks (ibid, 2020, p.215). Shaw describes the emotional communication loss using remote technology, which might have been worse using a messaging platform (Kelly and Miller-Ott, 2018).

Shaw's work (2020, p.211-212) illuminates a distinction between Participatory Arts and Art Therapy by seeking to treat illness based on previous diagnoses. During psychological treatment, wellbeing might be compromised, in Shaw's case, by pushing participants to share aspects of self like their image and artwork as difficult issues are uncovered (Sharma and Sharma, 2010; Rozental et al., 2016). Although sharing trauma in the online arts group might be positive in the long run within Art Therapy settings, it is not the goal of this work. This paper shows the careful, holistic consideration needed when choosing participants, activities, and technology.

2.44 Art Therapy Online Guidelines

The British Association of Art Therapists (BAAT) published an online preliminary report detailing best practices for Art Therapists during lockdown by Huet, Benoit and Nash (2020). This article briefly explores challenges faced online such as technology, privacy and safety and offers; relevant practices for addressing such issues, paraphrased as follows:

- Use a screening procedure to take on only appropriate participants.
- Consider participants capability to access online arts groups.
- Include safe use of technologies within an information pack.
- Confirm a reconnection method for if the internet disconnects and a backup strategy using email, or phone.
- Ensure participants have access to outside support in case of an emergency.
- Explore new technologies to develop your own capabilities.
- Learn practice with and from peers.

Huet, Benoit and Nash, (2020)

Many of these concerns are mirrored in Burghes et al. (2020). Huet et al. (2020) were mainly concerned with mitigating the risks of the new online setting. This was done by screening out unsuitable potential participants from online groups, such as participants without digital capabilities or participants who the technological setting is distressing like in Shaw (2020). Nonetheless, participants should be helped to navigate the setting. This is why practitioners should explore and learn to use available technologies while sharing their knowledge. With

new unpredictable contingent factors like technology, particularly internet connection, plans should be made for when they fail, to re-establish the group. The safety limitations of the arts group should also be recognised by signposting participants to external support. These practical understandings will all be adopted within my own practise to ensure participants safety and the functioning of the arts group.

2.45 Art Therapy Summary

Art Therapy focuses on healing using artmaking and interpretation; this can support new narratives of self to be created. Hence in the prototyped arts group, the reflection will be an individual endeavour first. After we will collectively reflect on artworks to see the effect of the group in interpretation while giving the participant authorial privilege over their artwork narrative to empower them. During the lockdown, many art therapists were the first to engage arts groups remotely and detail their practical insights. Some involved careful choice of participants, activities and technology, whilst others were concerned with procedures to ensure safety. Art Therapy has many insights to share with Participatory Arts, both these theoretical and practical understandings will inform my practice.

2.5 Literature Review Summary

This chapter defines wellbeing as a partially shared yet subjective balance between participants challenges and resources within physical, psychological and social aspects of life. It also explored how Participatory Arts and Art Therapy might support wellbeing. It found that supporting, empowering and including all participants in creative tasks equally allows them to be free, creative and socialise, which all play key roles in supporting wellbeing. Facilitators can design the arts group to support these experiences. Practically

creating the online setting comes with several problems and resultant mitigations around safety, accessibility, facilitation and planning. The theoretical understandings and practical guidance regarding supporting wellbeing set out above also informed the design of the prototyped online arts group. This is all elaborated on in Chapter 3, where I set out how this inquiry has been methodologically framed.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.1 The Chapter

This chapter shares this research's epistemological and theoretical perspectives alongside its methodological approach. I also describe the research design and methods used. After I set out the analytical procedures, ethical considerations, and measures used in the research. In Table 3.1, an overview of some of these considerations is offered.

Epistemology	Pragmatism
Theory	Community of Practice
Methodology	Participatory Action Research
Methods	Workshops and Focus Group

Table 3.1 Methodological Concerns

3.2 Epistemology- Pragmatism

A pragmatist understanding (Dixon 2020; Kaushik and Walsh, 2019; Dewey 1991;1981) was adopted within this research. According to William James, a proponent and founder of pragmatism, useful knowledge is truthful knowledge, where:

> Ideas … become true just in so far as they help us to get into satisfactory relation with other parts of our experience.
>
> (James, 1907, p.34)

Pragmatism considers knowledge as theoretical tools crafted or conceptualised by humans to address the problems they encounter throughout life (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019, p.4). Each tool's usefulness or efficacy at directing our experiences towards more desirable ones is akin to its truthfulness (James, 1907). For pragmatism, reality and thought are in constant flux, changing just as we who perceive it and construct knowledge around it do (Kaushik and Walsh, 2019, p.3). Meaning knowledge is always contextually situated by its historical, cultural and situational context while being told through the perspective of its creators. This understanding is held throughout contemporary thought (Nietzsche, Ansell-Pearson, Diethe, 1994; Foucault, 1970).

Altogether this means that when creating knowledge to address problems within online arts groups for wellbeing, I must make sure said knowledge has a use-value for practitioners and participants in creating online arts groups during and after the Covid-19 pandemic. Ultimately this research and the knowledge it generates is shared through my perspective as the project facilitator, researcher of the problem and author of this thesis. Nonetheless, through my interaction with participants and their experiences, we together can generate nuanced, contextualised and most importantly, useful knowledge for communities using online arts groups for wellbeing.

Taking a pragmatist approach in this research meant focusing on practices that addressed contextual problems that inevitably emerged through interaction in the online arts group, addressing these problems practically while acknowledging and documenting them and how they might be tackled provided insights for all involved (Dixon, 2020; Dalsgaard, 2014; Dewey, 1991;1981; Schön 1983). Hence, useful knowledge with a level of contextual truth value might be created from my unique experiences as the facilitator, participants' experiences of said facilitation, and other experts' experiences of facilitating online arts groups for well-being.

3.3 Theory- Community of Practice

This research used Lave and Wenger's social learning theory, the Community of Practice (COP) (1991), to understand the social context of the online arts group. COP's are described as:

> Groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis.
>
> (Wenger, McDermott and Snyder, 2002, p.4)

There are three conditions a group must meet to qualify as a COP. Below they are described and situated within this research's context:

- A domain of interest – transferring arts groups for wellbeing online.
- A community – participants and practitioners gather to discuss their practice and setting.
- A practice -shared ways of facilitating online arts groups for wellbeing.

(Wenger, McDermott, Snyder, 2002, p.27-40).

Considering participants as members within a COP was necessary *to develop a holistic understanding of the online arts group for wellbeing* (Aim 1)*,* despite their practice not being the focus of the investigation*.* Given participants play a vital role within the context, it was paramount that their voices were included within the research sample *(see Section 3.51).* This inclusion is justified by taking the approaches advocated by Participatory Arts and Art Therapy (see *Sections 2.3 and 2.4*) that empower participants to help themselves.

There are two types of meaning-making in a COP: participation, where the COP acts and discusses, and reification, where the COP embodies meaning within artefacts. These interactions allow for: a shared practice of common baseline knowledge to emerge, participants to identify themselves as members within the COP, and learning to produce new knowledge in the COP (Wenger, 2010, p.2-5).

The multiple COPs within society, when considered holistically, create a partitioned map. In the landscape of COPs, boundaries are created to gatekeep membership by ensuring members have a level of competence (Wenger 2010 p.5-6). Research can occur within the depths, at the borders, or within intersections between multiple COP's (ibid, 2010, p.5-6). Practitioners and researchers define who they are by deciding which combination of COP's

they belong to and use each COP's strategies to navigate the problems they face (ibid, 2010, p.14).

Within this research's COP- the online arts group, artmaking tasks allowed for reification by embodying artworks with individual and collective learning. Doing this allowed for discussion and action, which pushed the COP's learning forward into the depths of this new online context.

3.4 Methodology- Participatory Action Research

Participatory Action Research (PAR) informed my methodological approach. Hence in this section, PAR is described to situate my choices within the research (McIntyre, 2008). PAR takes inspiration from Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1972) by empowering communities to face their challenges using inquiry and learning (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2001, p. 266), much like Participatory Arts do with creativity (Bishop, 2012).

Using PAR empowered participants to become co-researchers who addressed the research questions (McIntyre 2008, p.6) and to inform meaningful action and transformation within the research context. Using PAR acknowledged and diminished researcher/participant power hierarchies within knowledge production (McIntyre 2008, p.5). Achieving this meant empowering participants to create and communicate knowledge using their own modes of communication (McIntyre 2008, p.20). In this context, this communication was through artmaking, like the process of 'reification' in COPs (Wenger 2010). Hence within this social

context, participants' artworks and discussions were treated as a primary source of data just as within Art Therapy (see *Section 2.4*).

3.41 PAR in this Research

Alice McIntyre describes four ‘underlying tenets’ for using PAR (McIntyre 2008, p.1), paraphrased they are:

- Collective engagement towards addressing shared problems.
- Individual and collective reflections regarding shared problems and tackling them.
- Shared decision making when taking individual and collective actions for achieving meaningful change that benefits those involved.
- Making participants co-researchers through involvement within the research process.

Following PAR’s tenets meant building alliances between an arts organisation and facilitator, inviting participants to become co-researchers by sharing the research aims, questions, and objectives. Then collectively engaging in reflection around supporting wellbeing in this context. Following PAR allowed me to *prototype an online arts group workshop series for supporting wellbeing* (Objective 1). This was so we together could *develop a holistic understanding of the online arts group for wellbeing* (Aim 1).

We used reflective cycles typical of PAR (Baum, MacDougall, Smith, 2006; McIntyre 2008, p.6) (see Figure 3.1). These cycles ran over four iterations of planning, creating the Workshops, action, facilitating the Workshops and reflection, considering the Workshops, with each cycle refining the Workshops further.

During planning, I co-created the Workshops with an arts facilitator. In the action stage, I facilitated the Workshops. During reflection, I considered with the participants how the Workshops could be improved and individually reflected on my facilitation. Insights from these collective and individual reflections informed the planning stage of each subsequent PAR cycle (see *Appendix 2, p.245*).

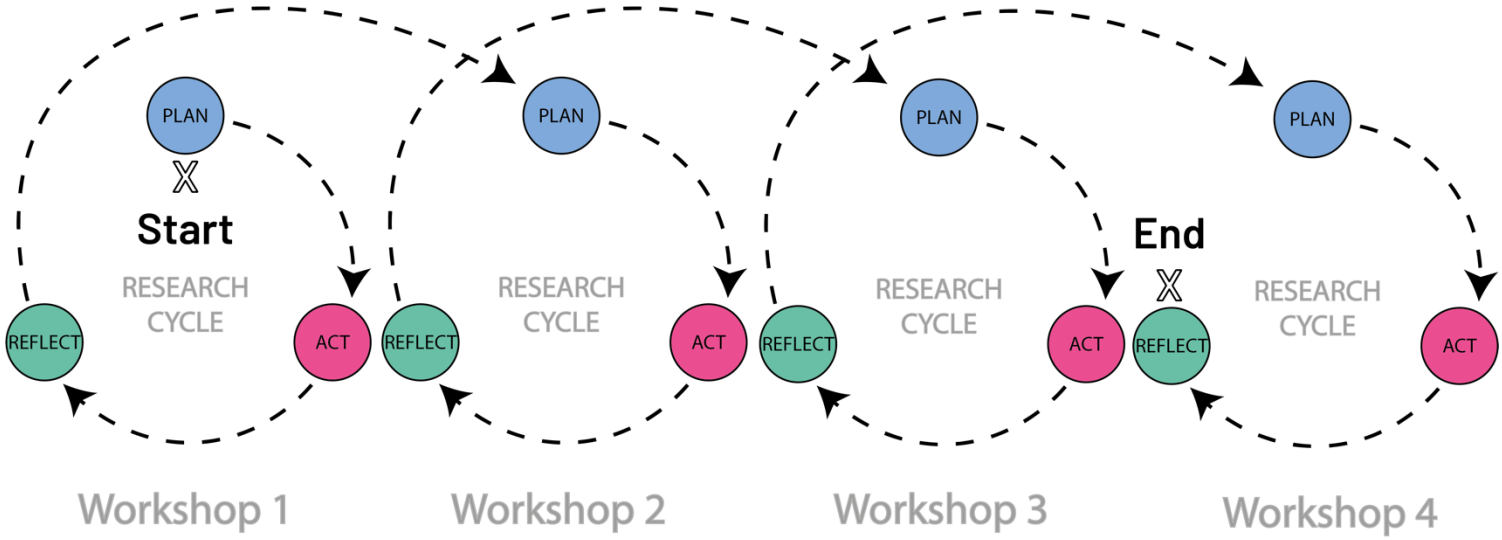

Figure 3.1 PAR Reflective cycle based on Baum, MacDougall, Smith (2006) created by Skyler Ridewood

Due to the scope and limited period of the project, I learned my methodology in action as I conducted the research – this meant that the research questions were not initially co-defined with the participants. While I acknowledge this would have followed a PAR approach more faithfully by further empowering participants, this was impossible given the research time-scale and fieldwork time limit. However, the global repercussions of the pandemic on online arts groups, as understood through the context and literature shared

within Chapters 1 and 2, justify the aims, objectives and research questions, which each went through a series of iterations and refinement throughout the research process.

3.5 Research Design

Although four phases scaffolded it (see Figure 3.2), the research followed an emergent design that attempted to answer the research questions:

1. Initial four Workshops- that prototyped the online arts group with a set of nine participants.
2. A round of analysis- yielding preliminary findings from the Workshops.
3. An expert focus group- evaluating the Workshop's findings with five practitioners.
4. A final round of analysis-interpreting and synthesising the focus group data to iterate the preliminary findings.

The first phase was used *to develop a holistic understanding of the online arts group for wellbeing* (Aim 1) throughout four Workshops. Then using these collective understandings *to co-define practices in the online arts group that support wellbeing with participants* (Aim 2).

The second phase was used to sharpen further and clarify these *co-defined practices* and make sense of the data gathered throughout the Workshops. Thematic analysis was employed on the Workshop discussions transcript to explore *what the experience of supported wellbeing is like in the online arts group?* (Sub-Question 1).

The third phase is used *to co-define practices in the online arts group that support wellbeing with practitioners* (Aim 2) and *validate findings with experts in online arts groups for wellbeing.* (Objective 3).

The fourth phase involved interpreting key comments and recorded discussion from the focus group then integrating them into the preliminary findings to answer both my research sub-questions:

1. *What are experiences of supported wellbeing like in the online arts group?*

2. *What practices and resources could support the delivery of an online arts group for wellbeing?*

By following this research design, using my own practice and its documentation, I will have answered my Primary Research Question. *How can an in-person arts group for wellbeing be created as an online shared experience for participants?* Resultant findings will be inextricably linked to the context, but their value will be within their exploration.

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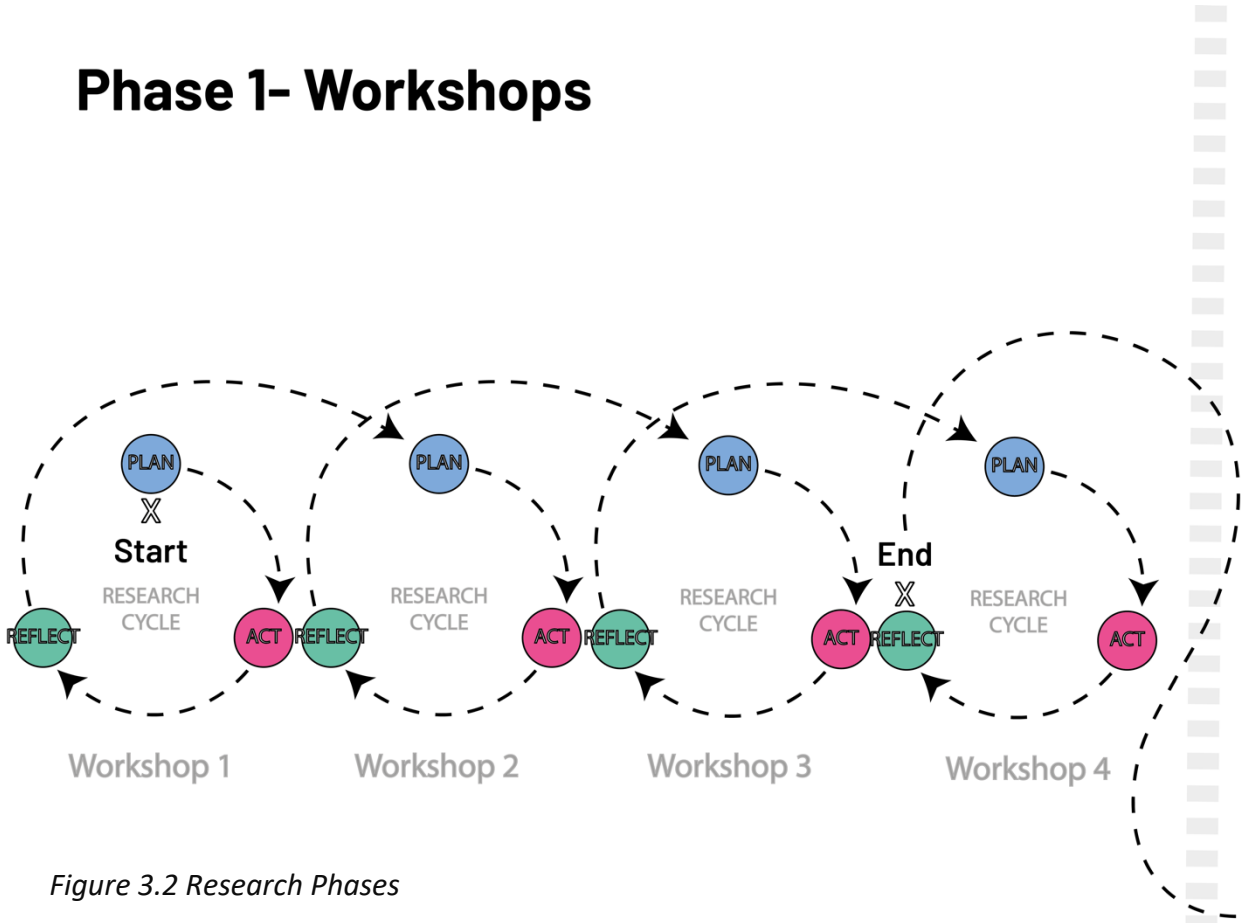
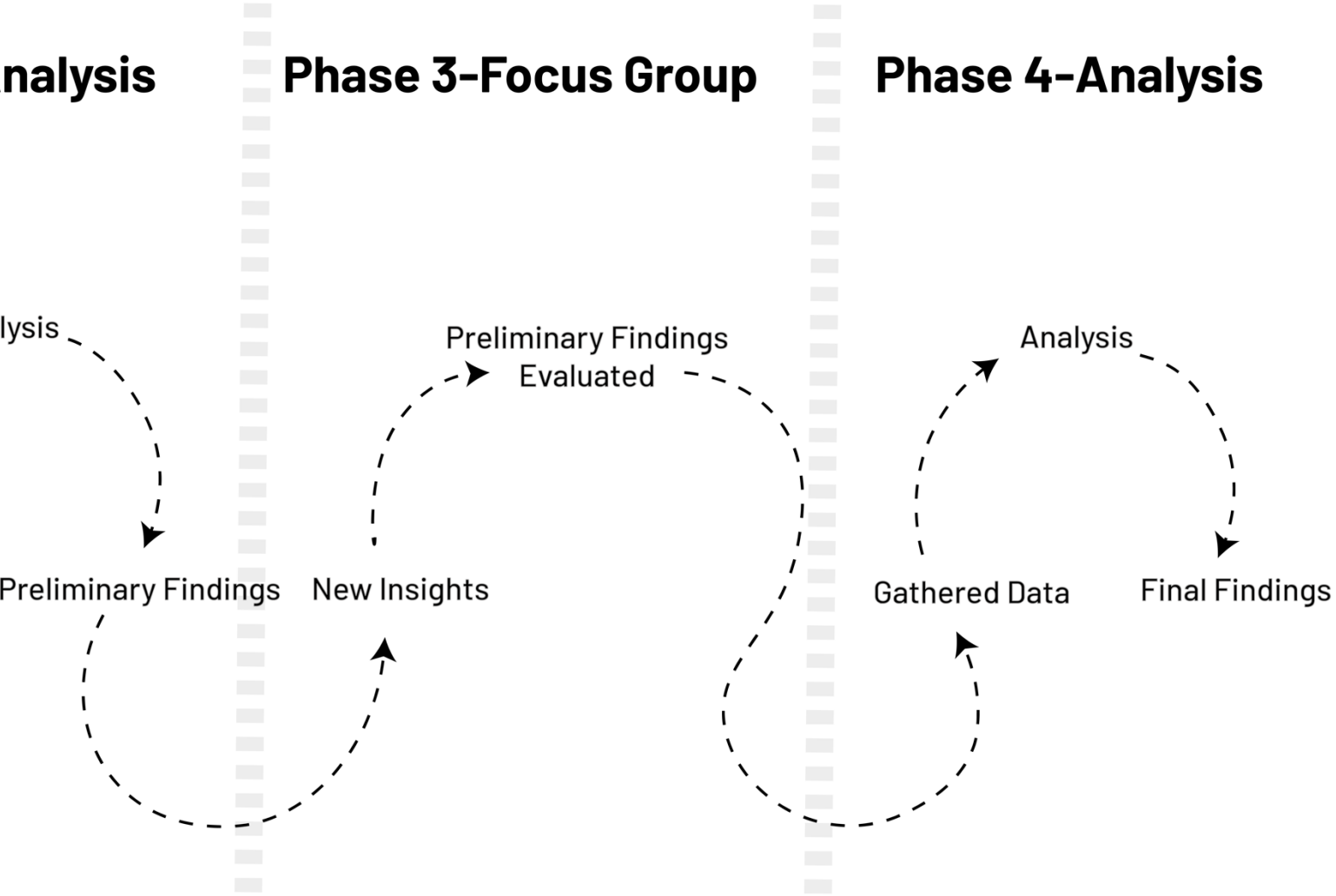


Figure 3.2 Research Phases


nalysis
Phase 3-Focus Group
Phase 4-Analysis
lysis
Preliminary Findings
Preliminary Findings
Evaluated
New Insights
Analysis
Gathered Data
Final Findings

3.51 Sampling

My co-facilitator, Mark, took part in this PAR project; he was convenience sampled from an unnamed arts organisation in Scotland (anonymity used for ethical reasons). This meant that he was recruited from an organisation with which I already had a relationship (Gray, 2009, p.220, 223). I did this because it allowed for quick recruitment of a co-facilitator with experience in Participatory Arts, all within my project's limited time frame.

With this organisation's help, participants for the workshops were selected using purposeful random sampling. To do this, the organisation advertised the project as an online arts group for wellbeing and research through their recruitment channels such as social media and Creative Scotland (2021). After many responses, we numbered each potential participant, then selected eight numbers and participants using a random number generator. I attempted to support a varied participant sample (Gray 2009, p.220) using this recruitment strategy. I did this because this was an explorative study within an emergent context; so, I valued gaining multiple perspectives. Although maximum variation sampling (Gray 2009, p.218- ie gaining participants from a range of predefined pertinent demographics) might have ensured a higher sample variance. However, I was aware that my own biases may have influenced the selected demographics of the sample if this approach was taken.

We inadvertently recruited three other arts group facilitators; who had their roles reversed by taking participants' place. I saw this as an opportunity for me to learn from other facilitators and for them to learn from their experience of being a participant. Hence the group of ten had five participants with expertise in facilitating arts groups and five with

other professions such as an artist, admin worker, carer and yoga instructor. For ethical reasons, the workshop sample had inclusion criteria (see *Section 3.51*).

I criterion sampled practitioners for the focus group (Gray 2009, p.221). The only criterion was that the experts must have had facilitated an online arts group. I recruited using social media channels such as LinkedIn (2021), BAAT's database (Baat.org., 2021) and my existing professional network (community arts). This yielded five participants who were a mix of qualified Art Therapists and Participatory Arts facilitators, all at different stages in their careers.

3.52 Technological Choices

To *harness digital technologies to explore approaches in facilitating collaborative arts-based activities with the participants* (Objective 2), participants required specific hardware, including a computer system, a microphone, a webcam, and a camera or phone.

Two leading software platforms, Zoom (2020), a video calling software, and Miro (2020), a virtual collaborative visual workspace, were used throughout the fieldwork. Zoom helped participants and practitioners communicate verbally, while Miro provided a virtual space to share our artworks and allowed me to create helpful sequential visual plans for each Workshop. Zoom became widely used during the pandemic, possibly due to its ease of use. I used this software's widespread literacy to my advantage to make possible diverse participation with minimal effort in software learning (attributes that other software options like Microsoft teams (2020) did not possess). In addition to receiving training on Miro, its visual nature lent itself effectively as a platform for digital exhibition. Both Zoom

and Miro were used for the same purposes in the focus group. In Workshop 2, participants were also encouraged to experiment with Pixlr (2020) (a free online photo-editing software) to widen their skill-set and build confidence.

3.6 Methods

Under the four-phased PAR approach, I used two distinct methods: Workshops and a Focus Group. Within these methods, several activities were employed. These included co-defining practices for wellbeing, various creative briefs with artwork discussions, reflection on wellbeing, collective and individual reflection on workshops, experts sharing practices and experts evaluating existing findings. This resulted in a range of complementary data, described below: Participant's Practices, Artwork Discussions, Wellbeing Indicators, Researcher Reflections, Participant Feedback, Experts Discussions, Expert Practices and Expert's Feedback on Findings. Each data set collected from either method is styled in bold below.

3.61 Workshops

The series of four Workshops constructed a COP of individuals *to develop a holistic understanding of the online arts group for wellbeing* (Aim 1). Workshops were considered a valuable way to achieve this aim as they allowed participants with multiple perspectives informed by their experiences of the context to share and debate ideas. Hence, together we created holistic yet nuanced findings informed by the Workshop context.

The Workshops shared a similar base structure- they were held weekly and were split into morning and afternoon sessions by a break. Embodying PAR in Workshops meant asking

participants to take up the research alongside me as co-researchers by sharing their own aims for the project, this acknowledged the subjectivity of their wellbeing (Diener, 2009) while embodying a humanistic approach by using active, empathetic listening and acceptance to support participant-led growth (Malchiodi, 2003, p.58-70; Rogers, 1961; 1969). Workshops were designed to help participants get to know each other, given the social domain of balanced wellbeing (Dodge et al., 2012). In empowering participants, Workshops also incorporated the learning of specialised software (Pixlr, 2020). Following understandings from Art Therapy and Participatory Arts, Workshops also tried to support the expression of emotion artistically (Arnett and Malchiodi, 2013; Kinney and Mueller, 2018, p.23).

To co-define practices in the online arts group that support wellbeing with participants (Aim 2). Workshops delved into what could be, using creative tasks to imagine ways arts groups might support wellbeing, similar to Wadsworth's use of PAR in arts groups (1998, p.6). This primed the negotiation and co-definition of practices for supporting wellbeing in the context. The Workshops culminated in a set of **Participant's Practices** for supporting wellbeing in the online arts group (see *Section 4.5*).

Every Workshop included artmaking and discussion that explored and embodied participants' knowledge of and experiences in the context (Wenger 2010). These Video recordings made up the **Artwork Discussions** data set that was later manually transcribed. This data resembled unstructured group interview transcripts but with the added detail and talking points of participants artworks.

In Workshops, 2-4 participants shared their reflections on their state of wellbeing using the **Wellbeing Indicators** (see Figure 3.3). Establishing and understanding the link between the Workshops and participants' reflections on wellbeing was considered useful in understanding the efficacy of the workshop design. Whilst the Indicator used is subject to uncertainty partially due to wellbeing's subjective nature and external influences (see *Section 2.22*), it facilitated reflection on wellbeing both before and after each Workshop and holistically within the project period. Hence the Wellbeing Indicators attempted to gauge insights around the effects Workshop engagement might have had for the participants and their wellbeing. The Indicator used before and after workshops incorporated Wilson and Long's 'Blob Tree' (1980), a visual tool often used by the NHS (NHS Foundation Trust, 2021; NHS.co.uk, 2021) to help people express their feelings without words. In this context, it was directed towards easing the process of participants reflecting and understanding their personal sense of wellbeing collectively at that moment in time. The Indicator worked by participants circling a character they empathise with presently on the blob tree and then elaborating within the comment box that I added.

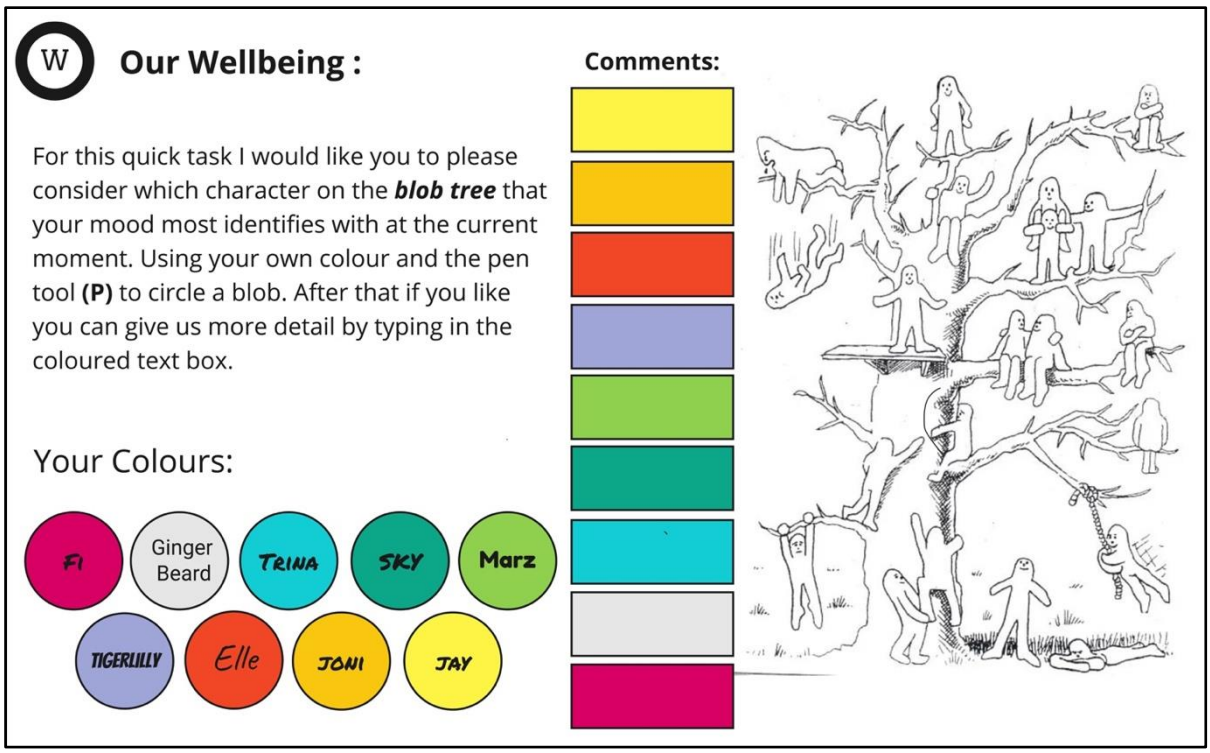


Figure 3.3 Wellbeing Indicator

Collective and individual reflection marked the end of each Workshop and cycle of PAR, where insights improved the planning of the next Workshop. This culminated in two data sets- my **Researcher Reflections** (see *Section 3.7*) and **Participant Feedback**, which involved completing a reflective survey on the Workshop on ways to enhance it.

3.62 Expert Online Focus Group

In the third phase of the research, I recruited five experts to interrogate, expand upon and validate the preliminary findings in a Focus Group (Gray, 2009, p.467-484). During this final part of fieldwork, I aimed to negotiate practical knowledge for this new context of online arts groups for wellbeing with experts. The Focus Group method provided a forum for exploring and debating with a group of experienced practitioners. More individualistic interviews might have tended towards more subjective un-negotiated insights, whereas the Focus Group allowed for consensus to often emerge through discussion.

Practitioners sent their **Expert Practices** using a pre-focus group task for supporting wellbeing to be later shared and discussed in the Focus Group. The Focus group discussion was recorded and then transcribed by a secure software platform, yielding the **Experts Discussions.** The preliminary findings were systematically shared so practitioners could expand on, clarify and evaluate them. They were recorded by practitioners typing into Miro their thoughts for each finding. This yielded **Expert's Feedback on Findings**.

3.7 Role of Reflection

Following PAR (McIntyre 2008, p.15), reflection in this context (a COP formed as an online arts group) is used to create new practices and knowledge. Adding to the COPs collective practices and knowledge involves harnessing the dynamic between individual participants' experiences and the COP's collective standards of competence. This involves personal reflection on practices that are brought to the COP for collective reflection from diverse perspectives using discussion and reification (Wenger, 2010). Below this research's individual and collective reflections are described.

My process of individual reflection draws on the work of Donald Schön (1983). Schön, inspired by pragmatism (Dewey 1991), understood knowing and doing as inseparable. His idea of 'reflection-in-action' (paraphrased as a live dialogue with the research situation and its problems) made me aware of the tacit knowledge that I could make apparent within my reflection-on-action (understood as an evaluative reflection). Hence to reinforce my understanding after each workshop, I wrote an evaluative reflection. I documented my

reflection-on-action using Gibbs reflective model (1988), a structured way to reflect on a research event involving describing the event, sharing feelings, analysing the event, evaluating, and concluding. This iterative process supported me to unpack my interpretations of the workshops and to identify ways to enhance the workshop design. These reflections make up the narrative of my fieldwork notes.

Participants reflected individually and collectively on how wellbeing could be and was supported in the online arts group through various artmaking tasks and discussions. Participants individually reflected on their wellbeing before and after workshops using the Wellbeing Indicator (described above). After Workshops, they were also asked to reflect on their experiences and give honest, constructive feedback to improve the next iteration. This feedback was then collectively discussed and reflected upon, and in cases would be implemented in subsequent Workshops.

After the original arts group's COP created a set of preliminary findings, they were reflected on by a focus group of expert practitioners. In their reflections, they considered their own online arts group facilitation experience to elaborate, critique and evaluate my preliminary findings. This was to validate the findings by making them adhere to a level of 'competence' within the larger arts facilitation community (Wenger 2010).

3.8 Process of Analysis

Using a PAR approach, the first parts of informal analysis took place with participants in Workshops 3 and 4, who discussed their co-defined practices and other insights, and iterated them. Analysis happened in phases 2 and 4 of the research design. In phase 2, the

Workshops data was interpreted. To do so, I holistically read all the datasets (see *Section 3.6*), learning from them in relation to the research questions.

I then undertook Thematic Analysis (TA) on the artwork discussions. I did not use TA on the other datasets as they all serve specific purposes within the arts group (see *Section 3.6*), so they were not as explorative as the artwork discussions.

I chose TA due to its flexible approach that fits the explorative nature of the artwork discussions transcript data. However, Conversational analysis (Sacks, Schegloff, Jefferson, 1974) and Narrative analysis (Bruner, 1985; 1990) were considered but were ultimately thought too restrictive and time-consuming. Braun and Clarke (2006, p.87) suggest a six-step process for doing TA, which I employed. This involved getting familiar with the data, creating initial codes, creating themes, reviewing them, defining and naming, and reporting.

Once I had completed the TA on the artwork discussions, I gained the interpreted themes. Themes would be incorporated into the rest of the insights gleaned from other datasets. This was how my preliminary findings were created.

After, these findings were presented to expert practitioners within the focus group. I again transcribed discussions and interpreted this data, this time without TA, as this data was used to enhance and validate the findings using expert knowledge. My interpretation involved abstracting and clarifying key insights from the data and integrating them within the existing findings.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Below I explain the ethical considerations and measures taken in conducting this research.

3.91 Inclusion

Given social distancing (Lewnard and Lo, 2020), the project had to be conducted remotely and required computer and internet access, potentially excluding many disadvantaged potential participants (NHS Digital, 2019). Unfortunately, this was a necessity given the context of this research. While the digital platform does exclude some participants, it also reaches new participants, particularly those with disabilities affecting their mobility.

I did not include participants experiencing diagnosed mental illness within the research sample to safeguard the research. This was due to a lack of facilitator expertise in catering to the specific needs of participants. The problem was magnified further by the remoteness of participants due to social distancing. See *Appendix 1 (p.215),* for the inclusion criteria of the Workshops. Given the low-risk practitioner experts sampling for the focus group, there were specific inclusion criteria met, namely having facilitated an online arts group.

3.92 Safety Precautions

To minimise risk to participants' wellbeing, a set of participation guidelines was established. This was to ensure safety and encourage respectful behaviour. Participants were also aware that if any individual strayed too far from these guidelines, they would be asked to leave the group. Though the topics investigated in Workshops consider how wellbeing could be supported, I was aware that this could potentially lead to ethically sensitive and personal

discussions, possibly causing participants to relive trauma, anxiety and other difficult experiences. To reduce the likelihood of such events occurring, I signposted participants towards support organisations and services in the research information sheets. I shared links to services in the Zoom chat at the end of Workshops. See *Appendix 1 (p.215)* for information sheets and the consent forms.

3.93 Informed Consent and Anonymity

Participants were given informed and continuous consent, meaning that what the research involved was explained to them. They could choose the level at which they participated throughout the project within any workshops or task. In protecting participants identities, they were asked to select a pseudonym throughout this research. I also took the precaution of deleting any unnecessary participant contact details from my personal computer. All personal data for the project was stored in a password protected hard drive. For the expert practitioners, I gave them the option to use a pseudonym or have their real names used in the research.

3.94 Dual Roles

As a member of the collaborating arts organisation, I acknowledge the potential for bias within this research. However, I consider these roles in two different capacities, which only intersect for the practical purposes of co-facilitating the Workshops. There has been no pressure from the arts organisation towards shaping my research. There was no pressure from me towards them to collaborate against their will. My research funded by the Digital Health and Care Institute (DHI) (2020) was not research created only for the collaborating

Participatory Arts organisation. I also acknowledge the role that Mark played in this research. Having known him for a substantial time, I realised that some of his insights might have been biased, given our relationship. This bias meant considering Mark's contribution to the dataset sceptically. Regardless many of Marks understandings were incredibly useful and are not entirely discounted.

3.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter outlines my chosen epistemological and theoretical perspectives of pragmatism and Communities of Practice. I have then shared chosen my methodological approach of Participatory Action Research and its implications for my research. I continued by describing the research design, the methods used and the types of data gathered. Finally, I describe the analytical procedure used and the ethical considerations taken in the research. In the next chapter, I set out the fieldwork.

Chapter 4 Fieldwork

4.1 The Chapter

This chapter summarises the fieldwork and its two parts, the Workshops and the Focus Group. The summaries are supported by relevant data addressing the research questions. This data includes quotations from group discussions alongside participants' artworks, end of Workshop feedback, participants self-reported wellbeing indicators, researcher reflections, practitioner's practices, comments and discussions. Note that quotations have been edited for clarity. The complete data set can be found within *Appendices 2* and *3 (p*.245, 323)

4.11 Workshop Planning

To prototype an online arts group workshop series for supporting wellbeing (Objective 1)*,* I worked with Mark (anonymised name), a practitioner from an arts organisation in Scotland. I used his expertise to support the design and facilitation of the Workshops. Mark's organisation secured a fund to pay for arts packs for participants to help mitigate material barriers to inclusion, that may have arisen due to the pandemic. The pack included a sketchbook, canvases, acrylic paints, a pen, some pencils, an eraser, an information sheet, the consent form and an envelope.

Before every Workshop, I met virtually with Mark to plan. We would share ideas back and forth regarding: the theme and structure of the workshops, what activities would be valuable, what we learned from the previous week and what could be changed. After this, I

created an initial sequential plan on paper. This was then further discussed with Mark, and finally, I iterated it visually onto Miro. What resulted was two sets of Miro boards mapping the course of the morning and afternoon sessions visually (see *Appendix 2, p.245*). Finally, we allocated facilitation responsibilities and clarified our plan. As the series of workshops unfolder mark and I would then meet to co-reflect on each workshop iteration so to optimise the workshop's design.

4.2 Workshop 1 Summary

In Workshop 1's morning session, I introduced the group and the project. We chose a pseudonym and colour through which to be identified. I began with a quick introduction, setting out the project guidelines, aims, and focus on wellbeing. I then asked participants to document their aims for the project to be returned later (see Figure 4.1). This initiated the Community of Practice (COP) for the project, where together we would tackle the problems of transferring arts groups for wellbeing online.

Figure 4.1 Participants Aims

Afterwards, we started two icebreaker tasks. The first was 'Two Truths and One Lie', which involved communication. For the second icebreaker task before the Workshop, I asked participants to send me their favourite artworks (not created by themselves), which I placed randomly on the Miro board (see Figure 4.2). In the task, the group asked each participant three questions to guess which artwork was theirs.

Following the icebreakers, I introduced the main activity involving creating a visual representation of our aims for the project. To support the participants, I led them through my own process, which started with a phase of ideation, then a pencil sketching and outlining process. The participants then created their artworks for the next 30 minutes. Louisa and Elle had to leave the call due to other commitments. We then shared the artworks (see Figure 4.3) which involved each participant taking a turn to explain their work

before engaging in a group discussion. Every artwork discussion followed this structure. At the end of the workshop, the participants were asked to share their key reflections and provide constructive feedback.

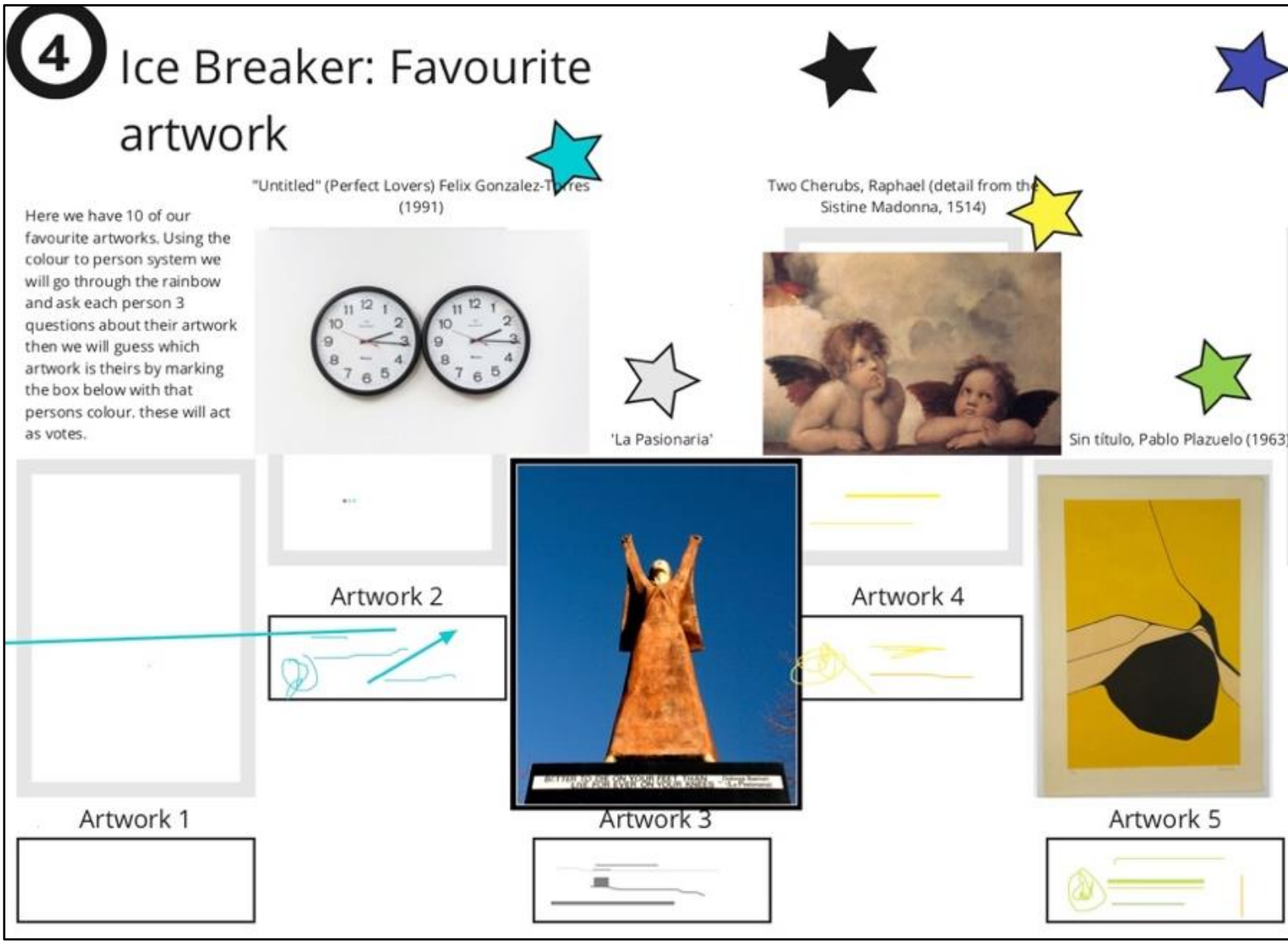


Figure 4.2 Artwork Icebreaker Task

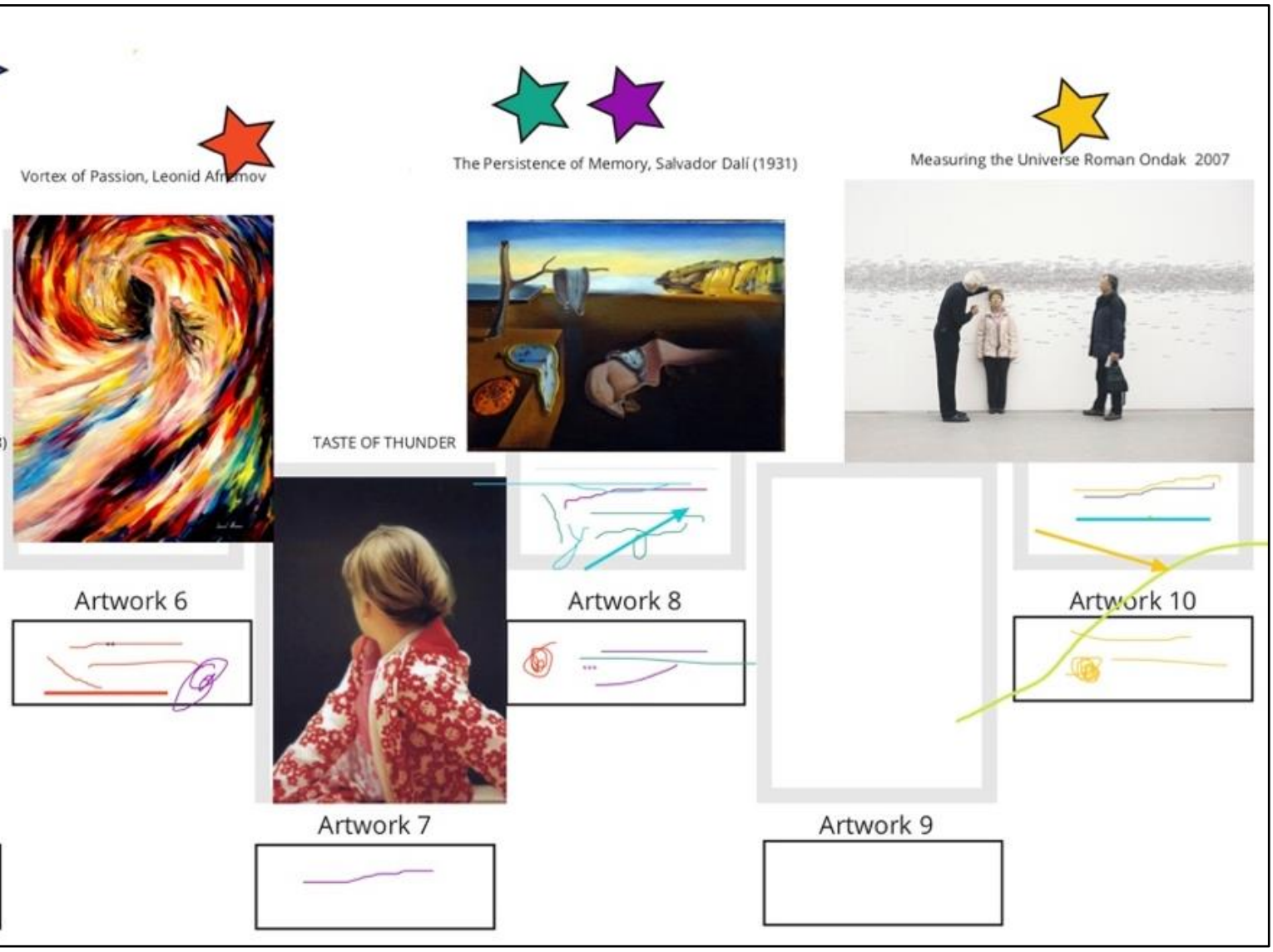

Vortex of Passion, Leonid Afremov
The Persistence of Memory, Salvador Dalí (1931)
Measuring the Universe Roman Ondak 2007
TASTE OF THUNDER
Artwork 6
Artwork 8
Artwork 10
Artwork 7
Artwork 9

Figure 4.3 Participants Aim Artworks

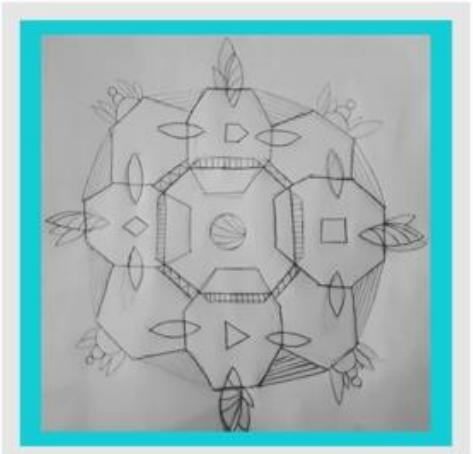
To have fun, understand practices and co create principles to help support wellbeing in the arts group context

Confidence to be creative.

A way to express myself creatively.

To have fun.

Explore a part of me untouched since I was a kid.



To have the opportunity and space to create and explore within a group. Even though my work centres around art, I very rarely do my own work.

4.21Workshop 1- Key Artworks and Discussion

Reflecting on Workshop 1, key insights emerged around the participants' aims and priorities, embodied in their artworks and unpacked through discussion. Joni, in particular, highlighted the need to 'Create, learn, meet new people (see Figure 4.4) explaining it she said:

> Joni: The middle point is the Workshop and then everything else coming out from that is all the opportunities that it can create... The abstract figures down here are supposed to be people joining together.
>
> (*Appendix 3,* p.325-328)

Joni's artwork sparked up a conversation with Marz around what was 'allowed':

> Marz: What did you draw with? Ink? Marker?
>
> Joni: Eh I've got a fine liner and a sharpie.
>
> Marz: Okay, I didn't know that was allowed.
>
> Joni: Ahh cheating hahah
>
> Marz: see that's what I wanted to do because I like black. I don't like pencils either, they freak me out.
>
> (*Appendix 3,* p.326-329)

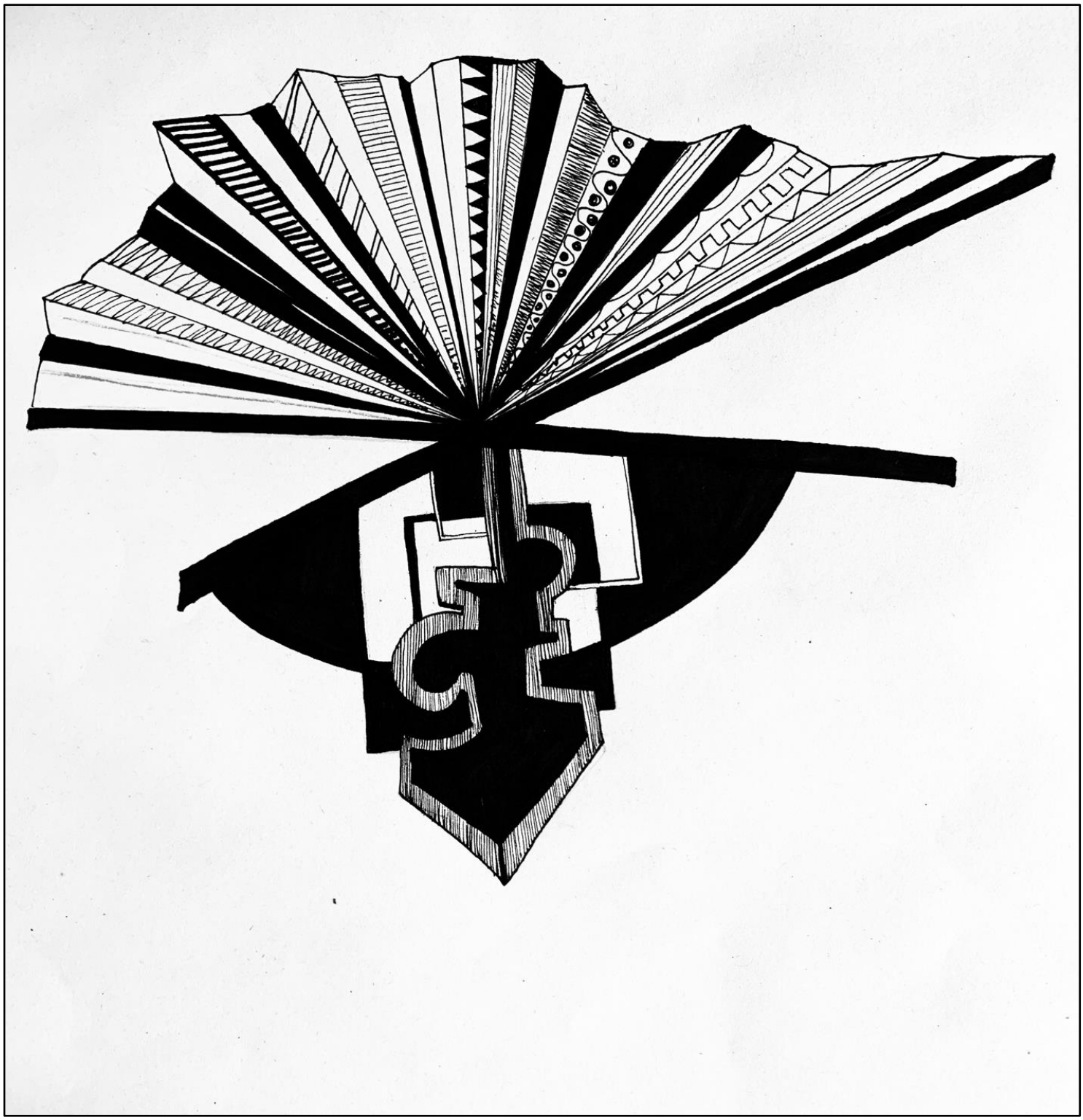


Figure 4.4 Joni's Aim Artwork

Later in our discussion, Trina spoke about her artwork (see Figure 4.5) based on her aim 'to have the opportunity and space to create and explore within a group', she says:

> Trina: I started in the centre because… any interaction like this… it has to be person centred so there is no one way of doing it. I wanted to think about each individual within their own little space. Slightly different slightly wonky but they all interconnect and those interconnections they make new things.
> (*Appendix 3,* p.335)

Joni and Trina saw the Workshops as an opportunity for social, collaborative creativity with unknown emergent outcomes. Marz highlighted the limitations of perceived task rules regarding freedom in the Workshop and her own individuality. Trina corroborated the presence of such individual bespoke needs by highlighting the need for Workshops to be person-centred.

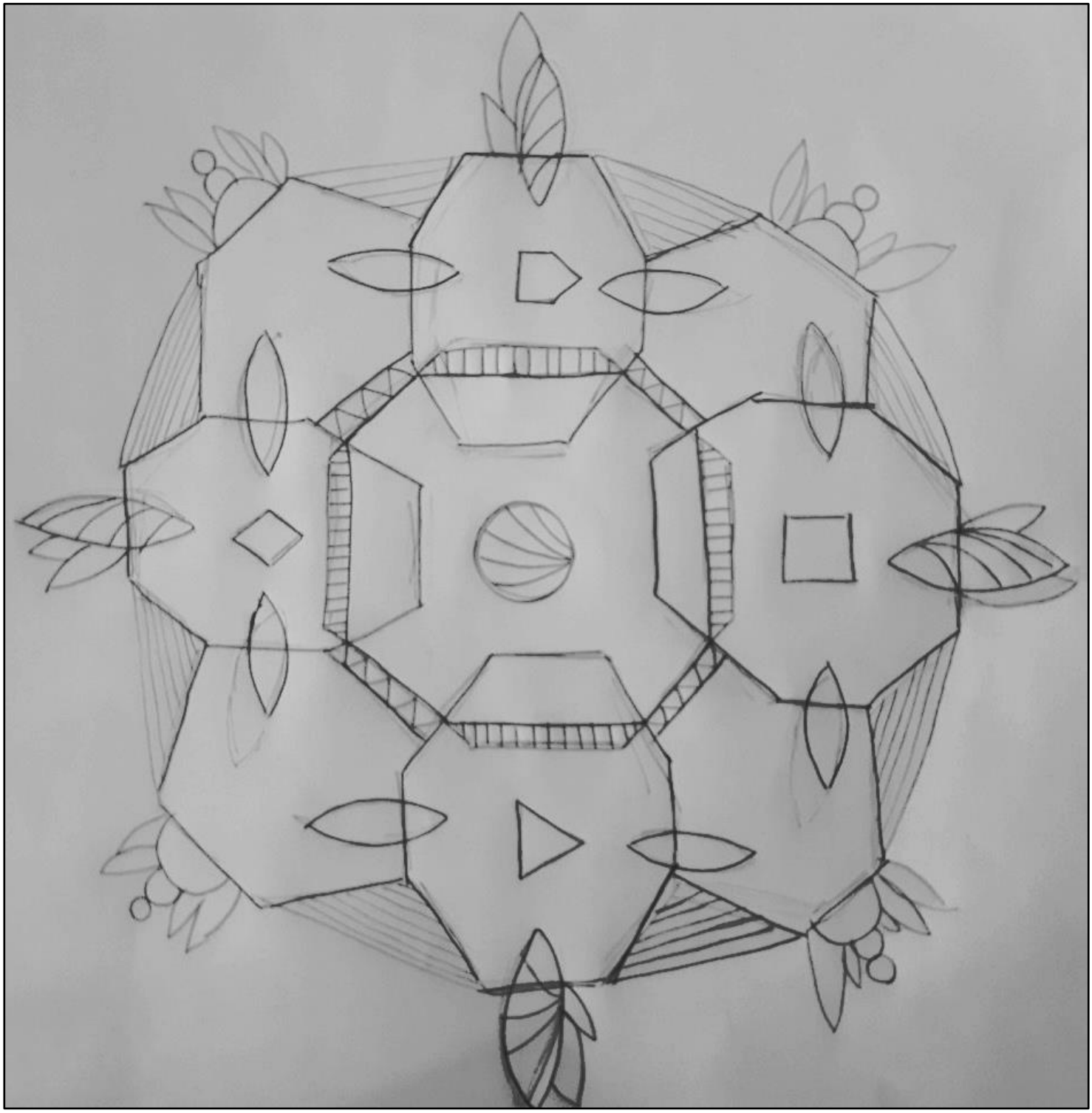


Figure 4.5 Trina's Aim Artwork

4.22 Participants Feedback

Below, participants' feedback for improving the group is shared. Joni advocated 'structure around the Workshop part'. Exploring this 'structure,' Trina suggested including 'some drawing warm-ups before larger exercise'. Marz reiterated that 'giving a choice of different media… could be even more fun'. Mark also expressed his enjoyment of the icebreakers. Participants asked for the lunch break to be shortened (see Figure 4.6).

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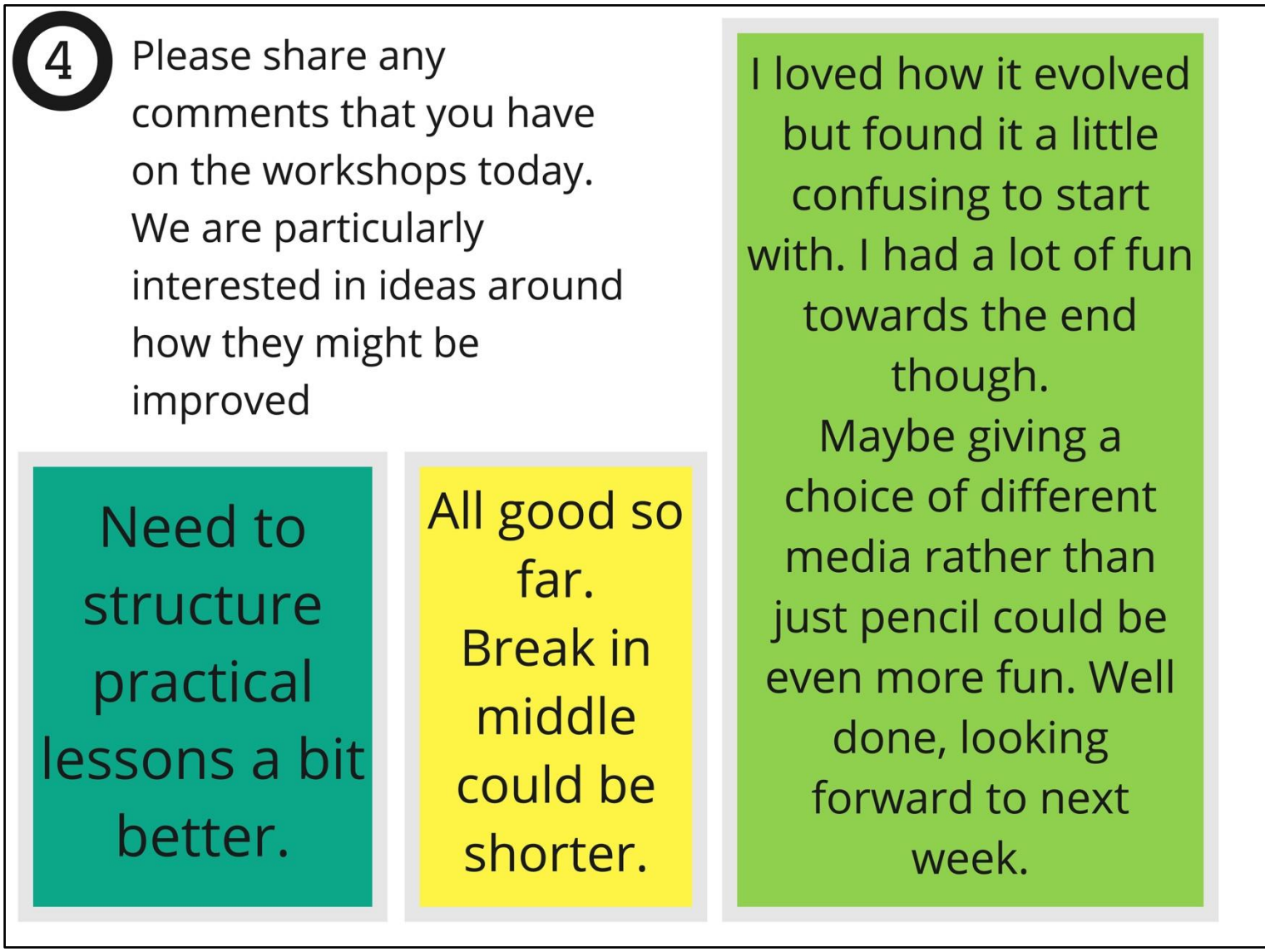


Figure 4.6 Participants Feedback-Workshop 1

Enjoyed todays session

A little more structure around the workshop part would be useful

Enjoyed the starting point with different outcomes.

Maybe some drawing warm ups before larger exercise, scaffolding towards final outcome.

Shorter lunch break

We can make the icebreakers more for next 1?

4.23 Researcher Reflections

The social, collaborative tasks were pleasurable, judging by the laughter and starting group guidelines safeguarded these interactions. Planning and practice helped to counteract nervousness while troubleshooting potential challenges. Participants comments said I should allow them the freedom, particularly within the material choice, to do as they like while providing structure to scaffold activities towards a final task (see *Appendix p.245*).

Informed by my reflections and participants feedback, I changed the Workshop design by shortening the lunch break and planning more details, particularly the activities and any tutorials I might facilitate. I did this by adding smaller tasks to the next Workshop, using my imagination to empathise with participants. Then I implemented these empathetic understandings back to the Workshop design.

4.3 Workshop 2 Summary

Workshop 2 aimed to explore emotional expression with participants, a common activity within Art Therapy and Participatory Arts. I welcomed the group, and we started by completing the wellbeing indicator (see *Section 3.61*). This was followed by smaller structured tasks designed to explore emotional expression. The first task involved interpreting and discussing the emotions of various famous and amateur artworks (see Figure 4.7). During this task, my audio failed, so no one could hear me. Thankfully, due to our team preparation, Mark took over briefly. I reset my audio and continued.

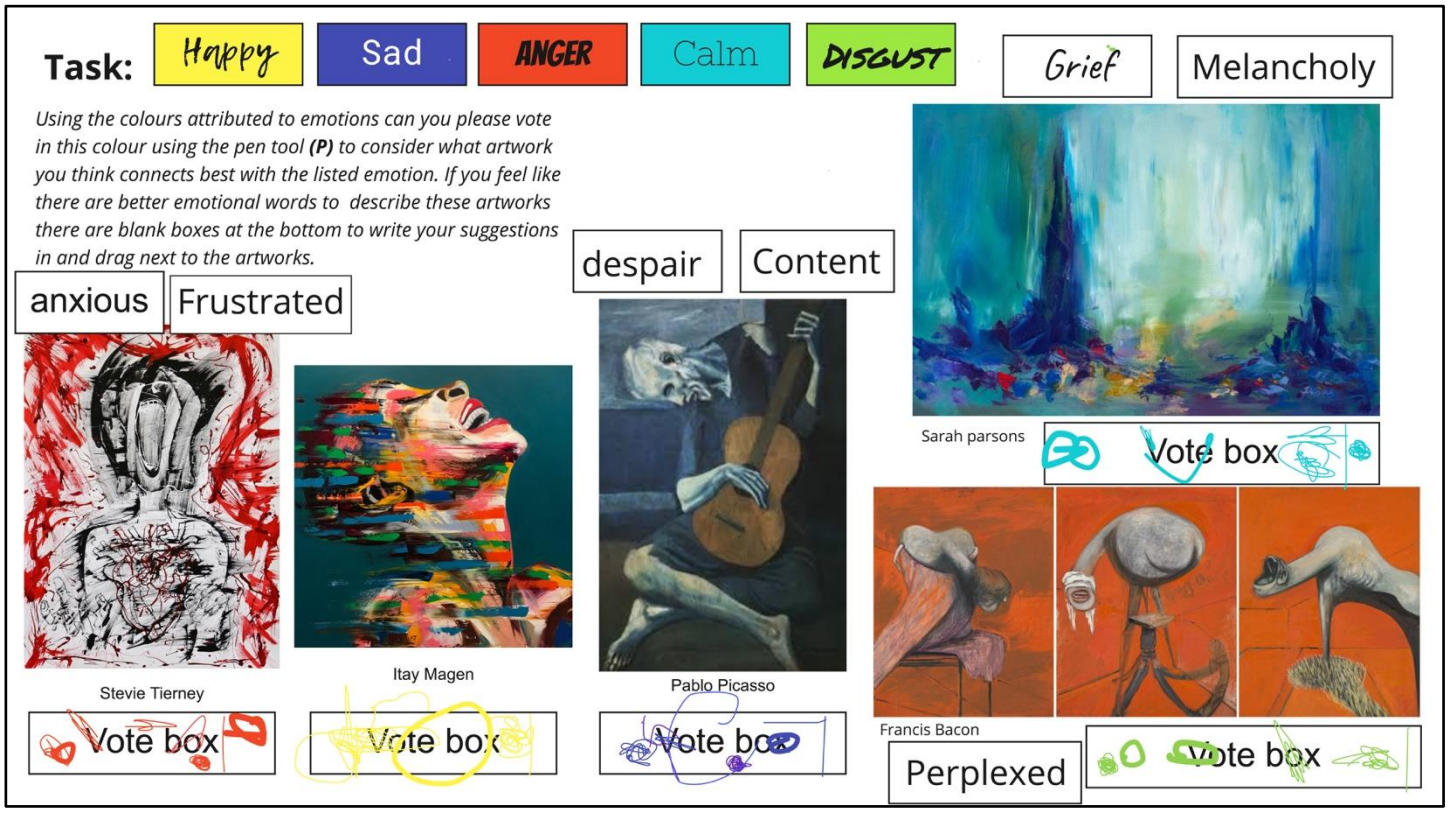


Figure 4.7 Emotion Warm-up Task

Afterwards, I showed participants a selection of emotive film scenes and asked them to empathise with the characters by drawing the feelings they thought the film characters felt (see Figure 4.8). This task was purposely short to structure the Workshop based on Trina and Joni's feedback from Workshop 1. We then shared and discussed the resultant artworks (see Figure 4.9).

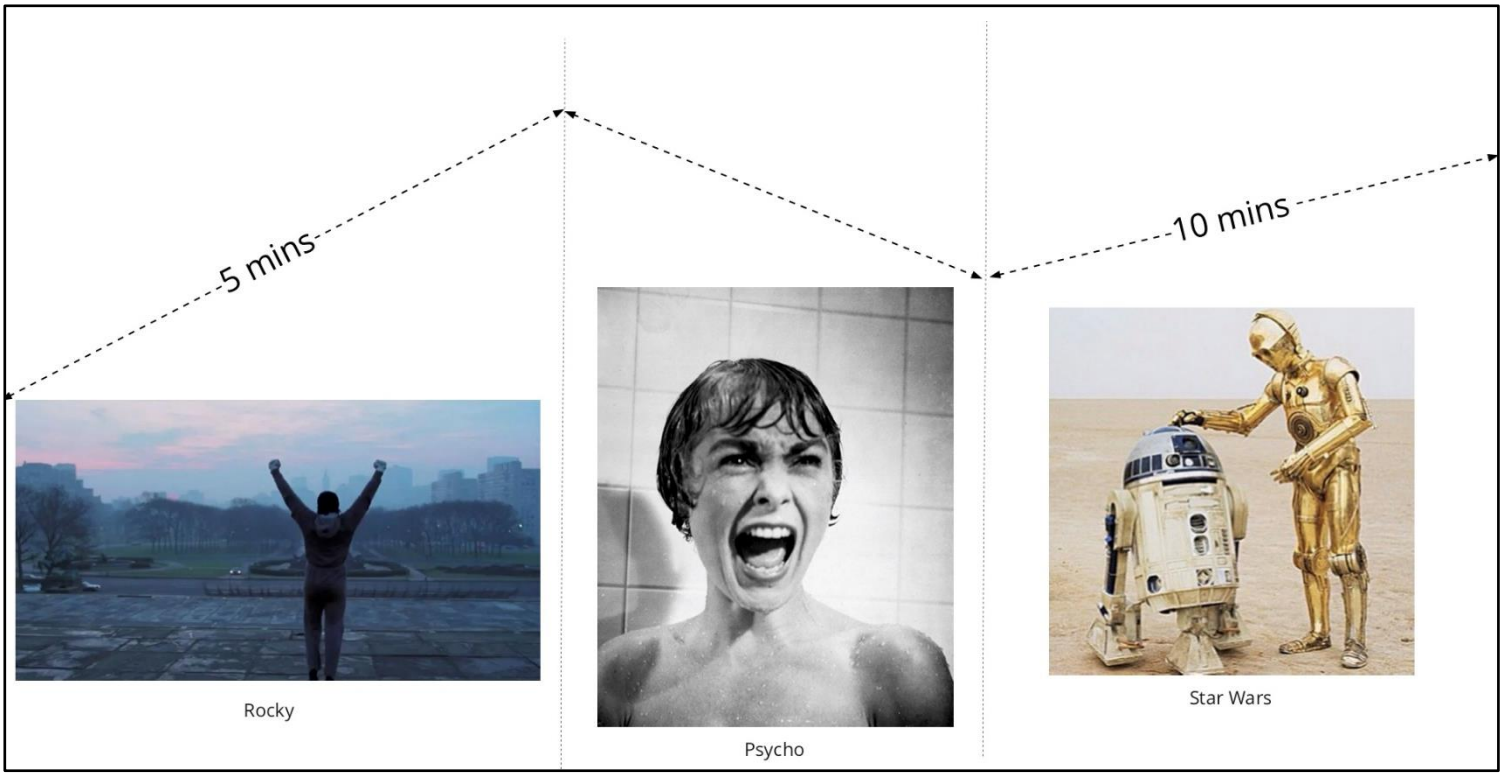


Figure 4.8 Film Empathy Task

With the two prior tasks supporting participants understandings of various methods of expressing emotions visually, for the final task that morning, each participant was to choose any emotion to express using any materials they liked (following Marz's feedback). Participants finished their artworks, and we went for lunch. Then we reconvened and discussed our artworks (see Figure 4.10).

Afterwards, I showed participants the basics of a free photo editing software known as Pixlr (2020). Building on the morning session, we edited our emotion artworks from earlier. Fi found she could not use the software due to an unknown malfunction. Mark and I attempted to help her, but given the distance and unknown nature of the problem, we could not assist. Jay and Elle's internet also disconnected, and both needed to re-enter the Zoom call.

After the malfunctions, we had to improvise in the artwork discussion. I asked Fi to share an earlier drawing instead that she had not previously shown so she could participate. We discussed the digital artworks. Participants then left feedback and used the wellbeing indicator. Finally, I described what next week would entail.

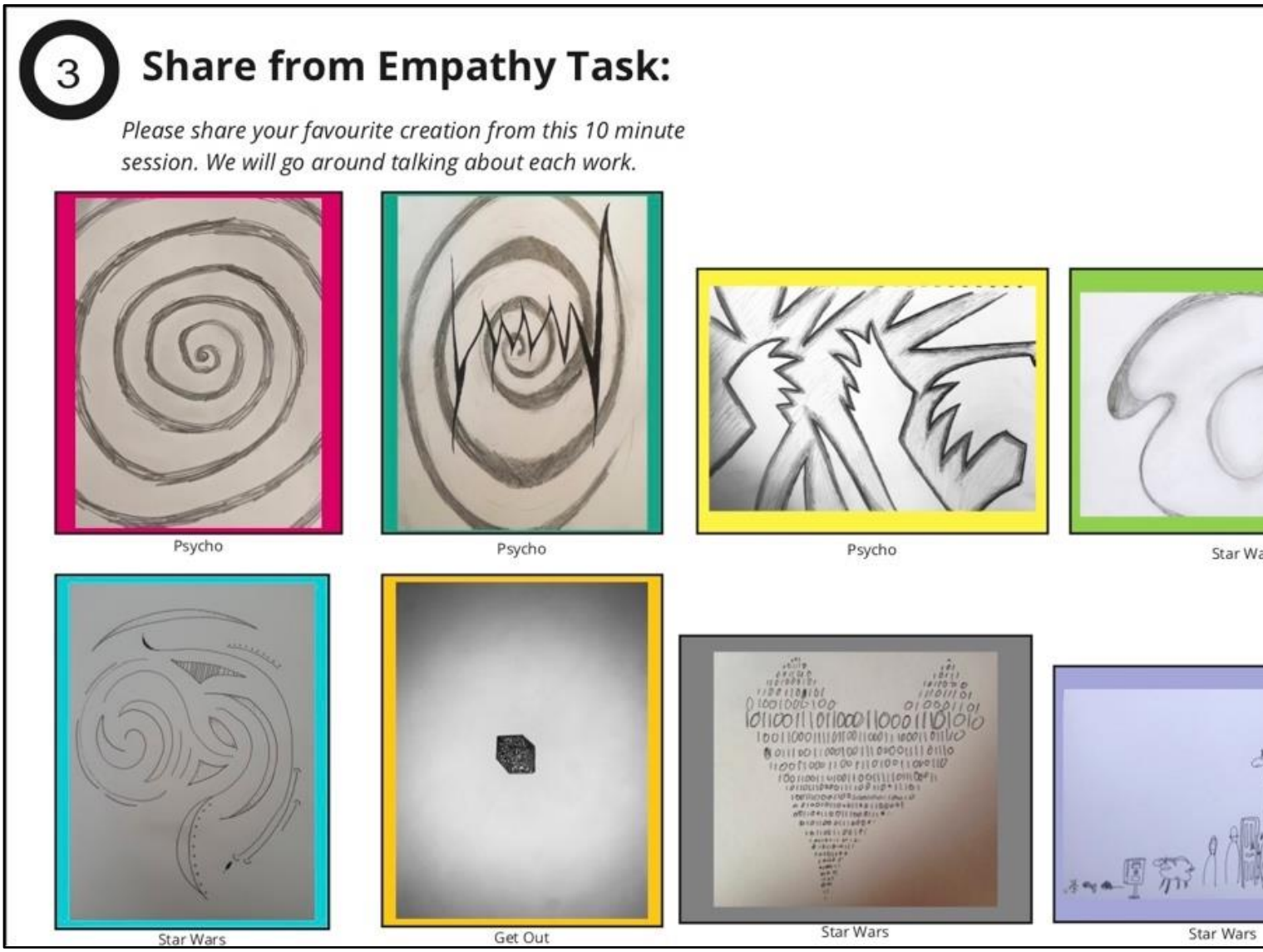


Figure 4.9 Empathy Artworks

ars

Psycho

Final Morning Task:

Choosing an Emotion, can you to create a visual embodiment of that emotion using any and all the materials you have been given, I would really like to see clever use of colour here. You can select one of the given emotions or add to them depending on if you would rather work on another emotion, you have 30 mins to do this .

Happy

Sad

Anger

Calm

Disgust

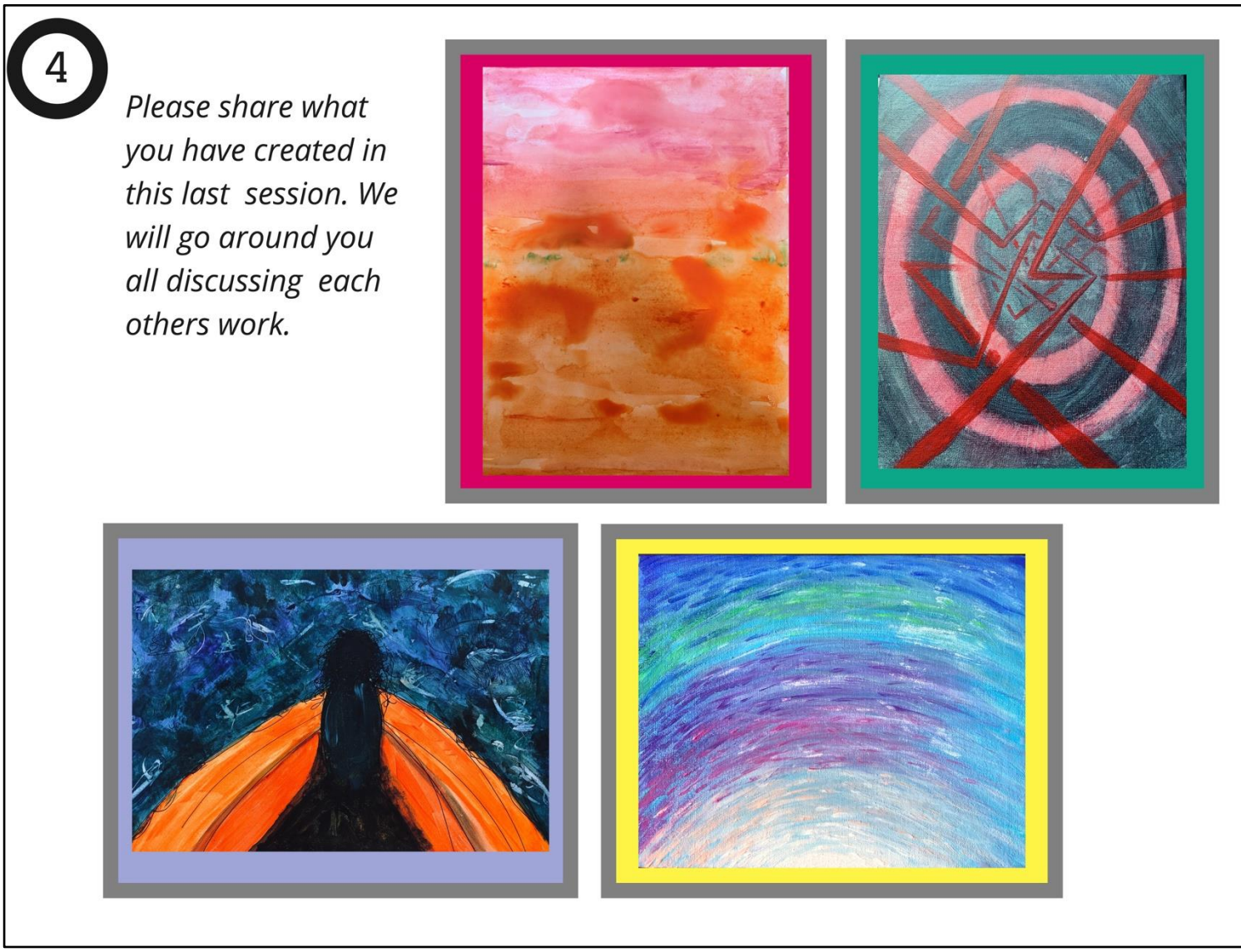
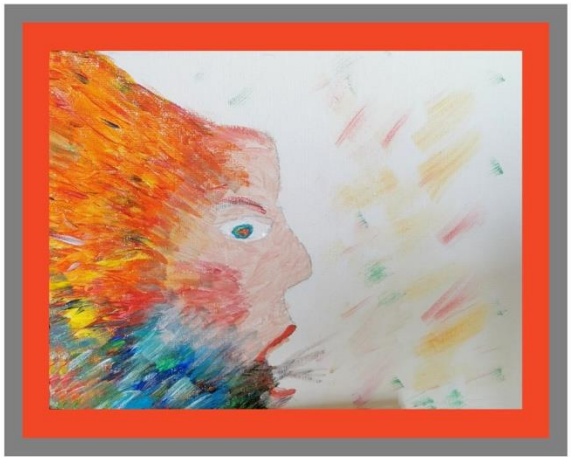
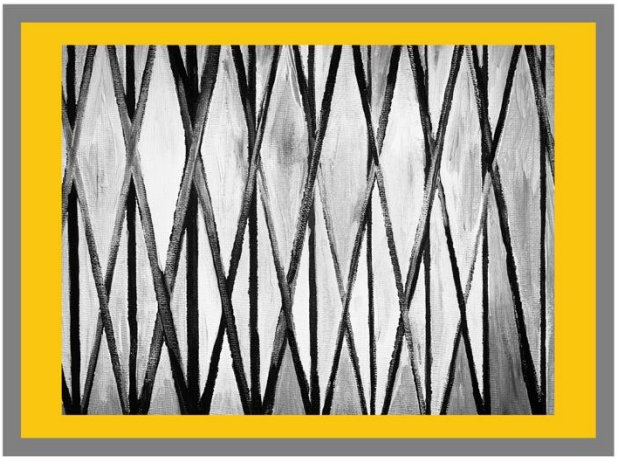


Figure 4.10 Emotion Artworks

4.31 Workshop 2- Key Artworks and Discussion

During Workshop 2, key insights around artmaking as a mechanism for growth emerged. Within our discussion surrounding our emotion artworks, Jay shared her 'calm' artwork (see Figure 4.11), where she described her process of artmaking and self-reinvention towards a calmer state:

> Jay: While I painted it… it was quite effective, quite therapeutic… I was trying to capture like water flowing… but also like that calm aura some people have about them, I wanna be one of them people, I was trying to capture that… I'm quite a worrier I've definitely not got that aura yet but I'm working on it. But painting it was actually very therapeutic it was very calming.
>
> (*Appendix 3,* p.354-357)

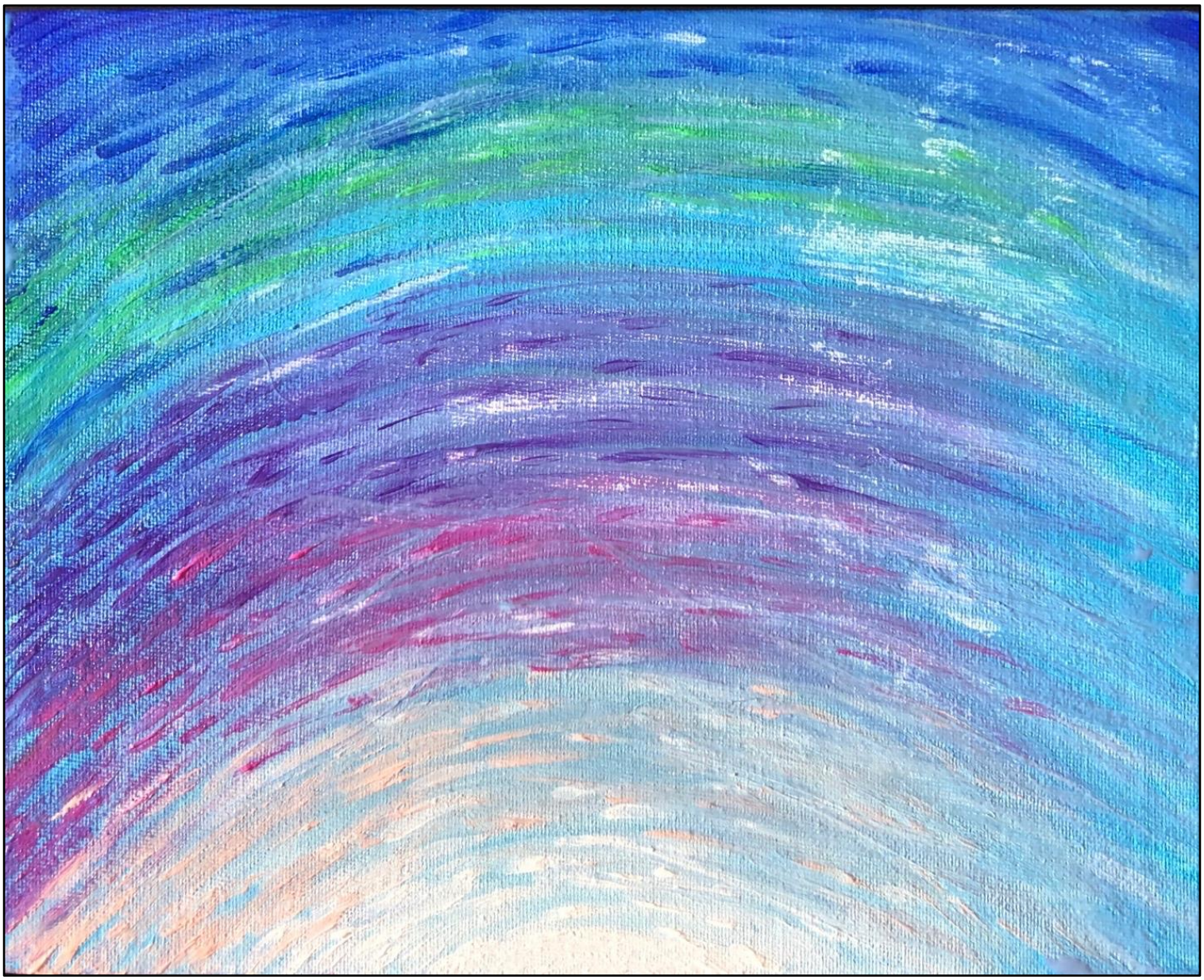


Figure 4.11 Jay's Emotion Artwork

4.32 Participants Feedback

Within the feedback (see Figure 4.12) Jay's comment reflected the technical limits of the online arts group. Addressing this, Elle and Fi, who were disrupted the most by technology, suggested having 'more to read before the Workshop 'so we can try things out' or 'handouts with explanation and tips for tools'. Reflecting on the workshop, Marz and Trina gave positive feedback, describing how they 'enjoyed the 'sharing' and 'discussion'. While Tigerlily enjoyed the playing within the tasks. Trina also described a 'good pacing' while Joni enjoyed the 'layering approach' I felt this was due to me adding smaller tasks as Trina suggested and incorporating an overarching structure or narrative between tasks as advocated last week.

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Figure 4.12 Participants Feedback-Workshop 2

All good apart from my internet connections.

Great fun, enjoyed the empathy task in particular and the layering approach with the painted pieces into the editing software.

Perhaps handouts with the explanation and tips for the tools on Pixlr - something to refer too. Otherwise loved it today, thank you :)

Really good fun to play about, given food for thought for next week. Know this was edited from last week, for me the lunch slot could be shorter than the an hour, just a thought.

4.33 Participants Wellbeing Indicator

Starting in Workshop 2 and at the beginning and end of every following workshop (see *Section 3.61*), I collected the Wellbeing Indicator. Jay, Trina, and Marz all described how their work involved supporting others, leaving 'not much time' for themselves, and all three chose figures that helped others on the tree. Tigerlily's comment described her pressure to do work but her desire to create art too; this left her 'clinging on for dear life' like her selected figure. Joni, Elle and Mark all felt positive in different ways. Fi was 'just starting' as she had missed the first week, so this task of sharing might have felt strange after so little time in the group (see Figure 4.13).

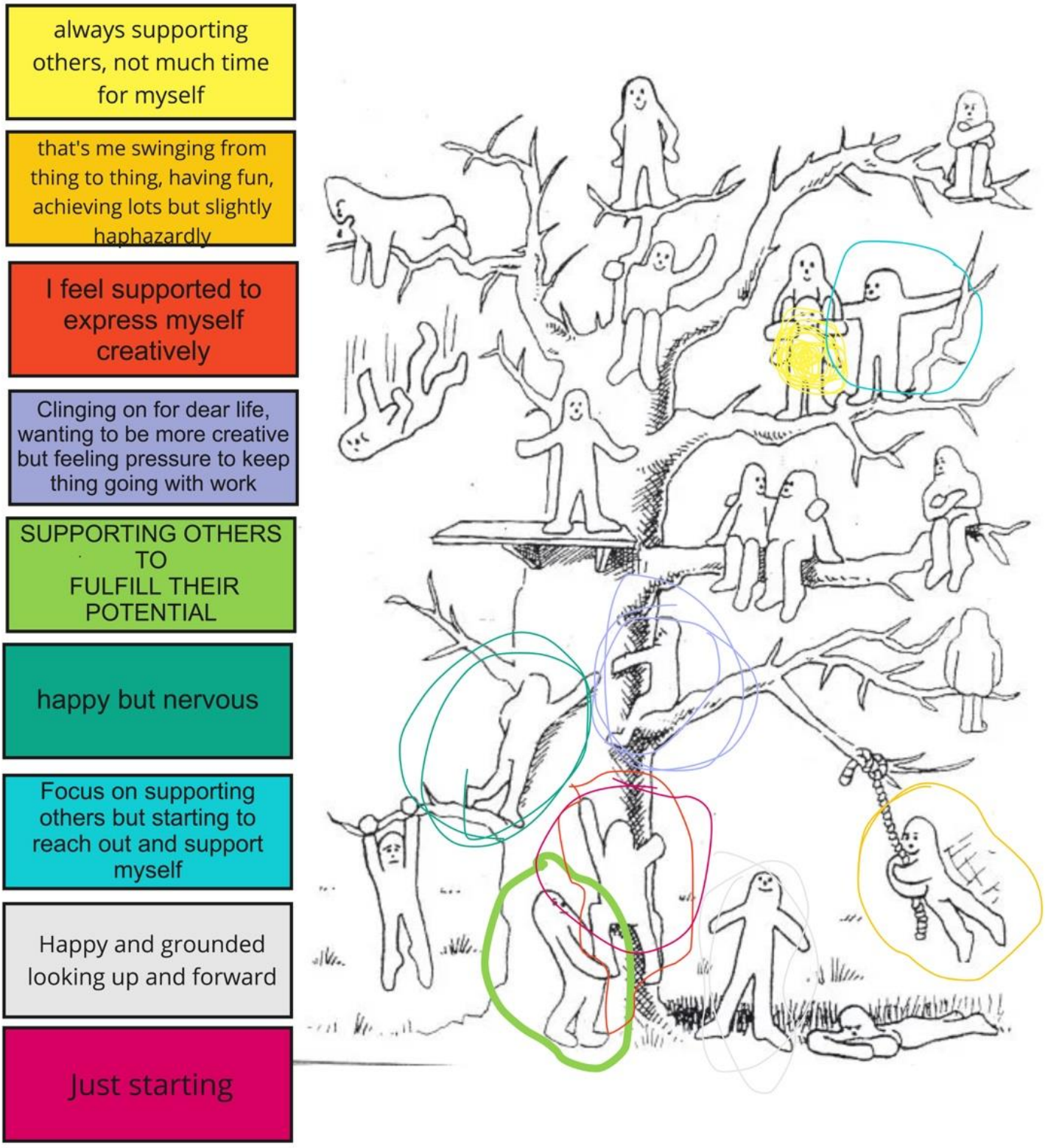


Figure 4.13 Wellbeing Indicator-Workshop 2 Morning

After the workshop changes occurred, Jay and Trina reported being ‘happy’ and ‘relaxed’ while Marz described feeling ‘comfortable’ with herself. Tigerlily, who felt external pressure that morning, expressed her feelings of ‘fun’ and experimentation. Joni, Elle and Mark maintained their positive feelings throughout the day. Fi, who had experienced technical difficulties that disrupted her participation, did not fill in the Wellbeing Indicator. This disruption had potentially affected her negatively, and she perhaps did not feel comfortable sharing, given this was her first time in the group (see Figure 4.14).

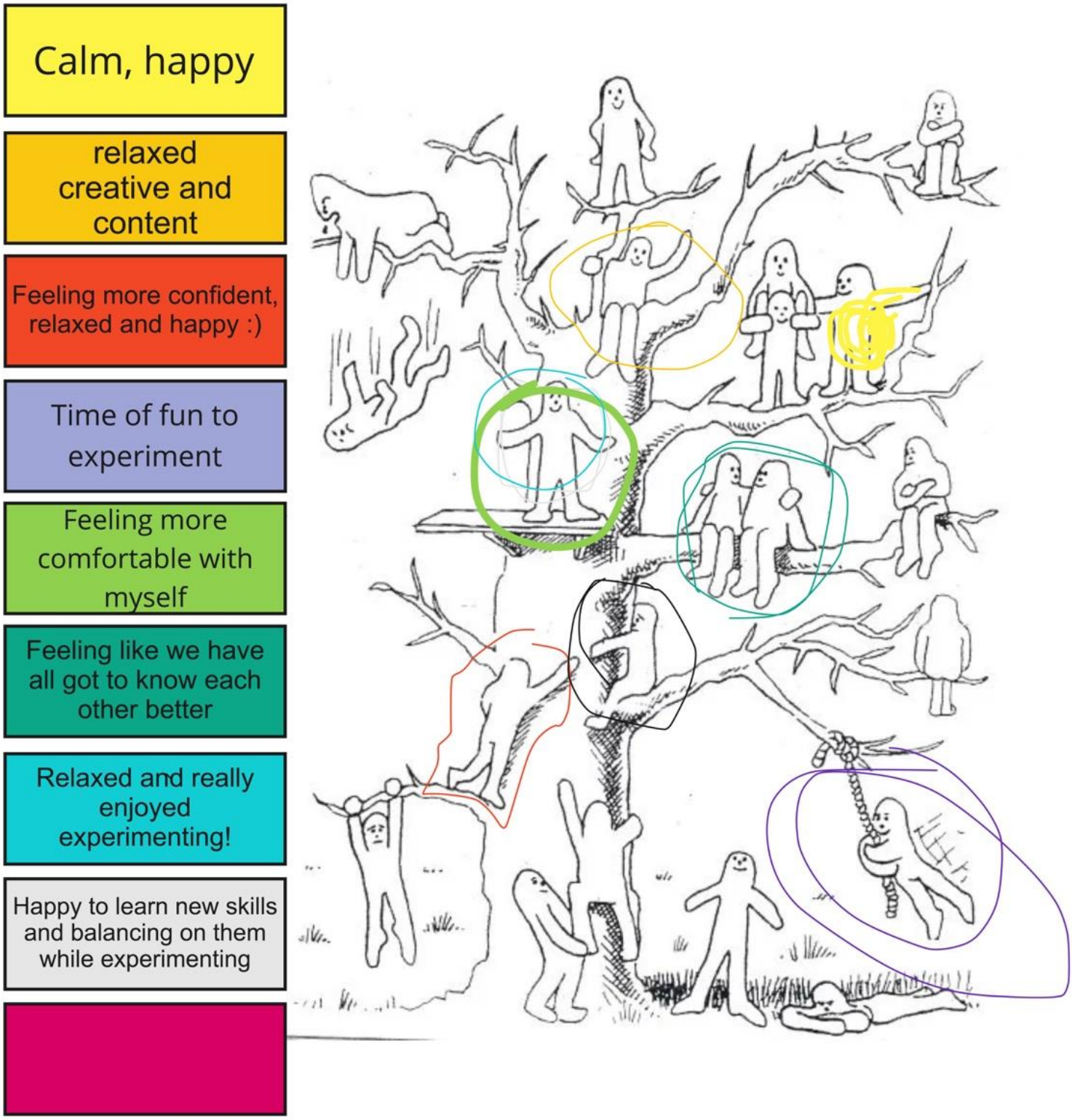


Figure 4.14 Wellbeing Indicator-Workshop 2 Afternoon

4.34 Researcher Reflections

My reflections considered detailed planning (see *Appendix 2, p.263*) and preparing participants for the Workshop rather than just facilitators. By developing a pre-Workshop task for participants to test the software, Fi's malfunctions might have been averted. In this case, if this didn't work, Workshop's might be adapted to suit her technology's capabilities through communication.

Reflecting on the efficacy of this workshop, the loosely structured nature of the artwork discussion activities, in particular, supported the participants to engage in a more free-flowing dialogue where they began opening up and sharing aspects of their lives. This was highlighted within Trina's feedback (see Figure 4.6). The purpose of the wellbeing indicator was to diminish some awkwardness while sharing our feelings in an unknown group. Lastly, when my malfunctions occurred, with prior planning, Mark, my co-facilitator, was able to take over keeping the workshop on track.

After the workshop, I shared an online tutorial with Fi and Elle, who requested help with the software. During planning, I was also more vigilant for contingency (e.g., re-setting my audio and charging my headset before every workshop). I shared next week's activities within a mid-week email reminder for the upcoming workshop to further prepare participants. Before Workshop 3, Joni and Tigerlily emailed, explaining they had work and family commitments and could not attend the upcoming workshops.

4.4 Workshop 3 Summary

Similar to Workshop 2, Workshop 3 began with the participants completing the Wellbeing Indicator. We then moved into the first explorative activity, where participants were asked to depict a 'utopian alien' arts group where wellbeing is expertly supported. I also shared examples for guidance (see Figure 4.15).

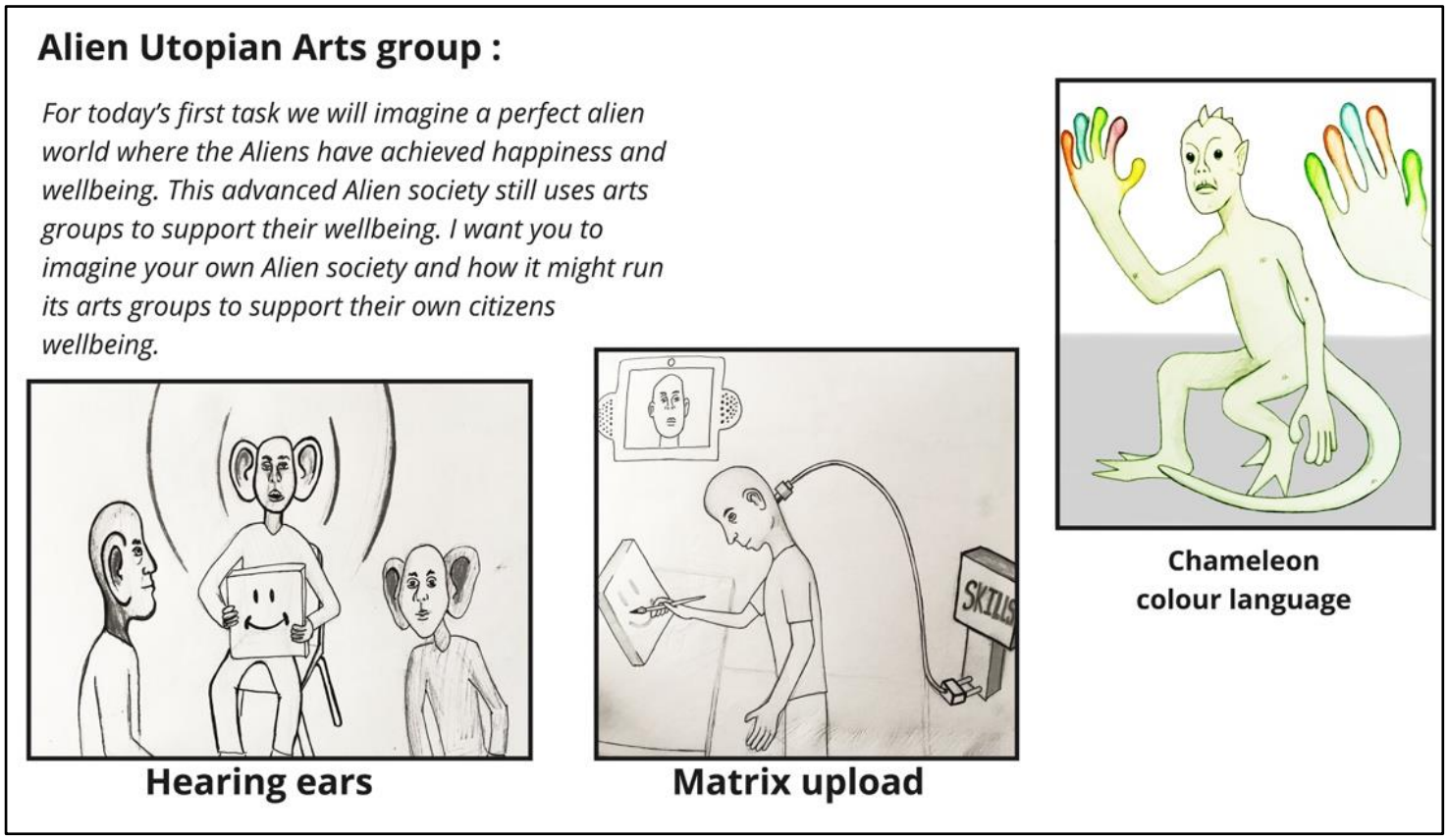


Figure 4.15 Alien Arts Group Task Examples

This task was to prime participants minds with imaginative possibilities regarding the online arts group for wellbeing. Participants had 20 minutes to complete this task, though I explained it was about generating ideas not finished artworks. Participants discussed and shared their artworks (see Figure 4.17).

Following this discussion, I asked the participants to then create and present to the group two to three practices each that they considered to support wellbeing in the online arts group (see Figure 4.18). These were then collectively synthesised and refined down to ten key practices to be iterated in the next workshop.

Each participant chose one of these practices for the afternoon session and made an artistic representation of their selected practices (see Figure 4.16). I demonstrated this task by working together with participants, asking how I might signify my practice visually while drawing live on Zoom as they suggested ideas.

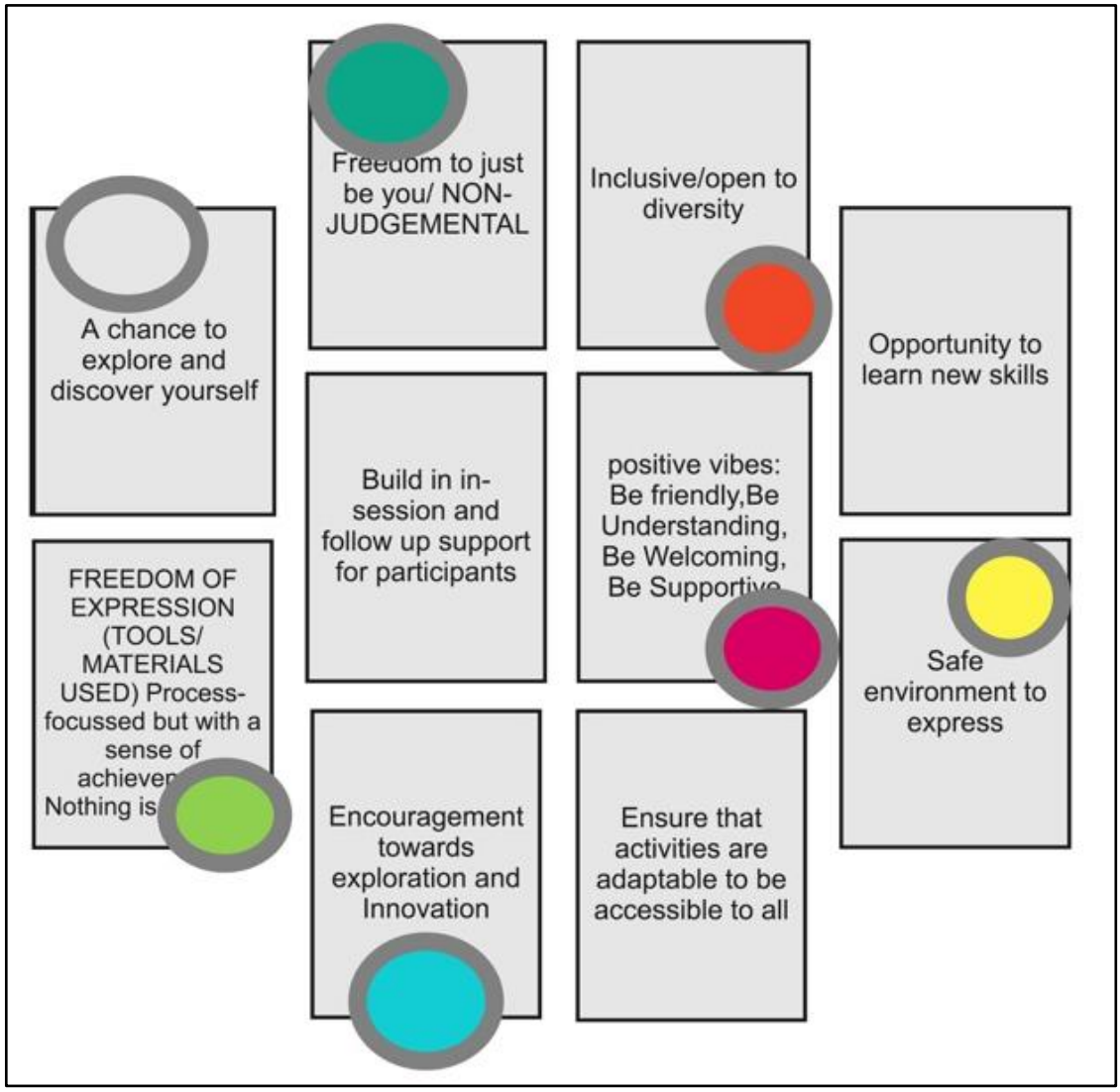


Figure 4.16 Practices Choices

I then asked participants to start their artworks. We shared and discussed the artworks (see Figure 4.19). To finish, I asked participants to share their feedback on the Workshop, consider what they would like to do next week, and complete the wellbeing indicator.

2 Share Artworks:

Please share your work with the rest of us

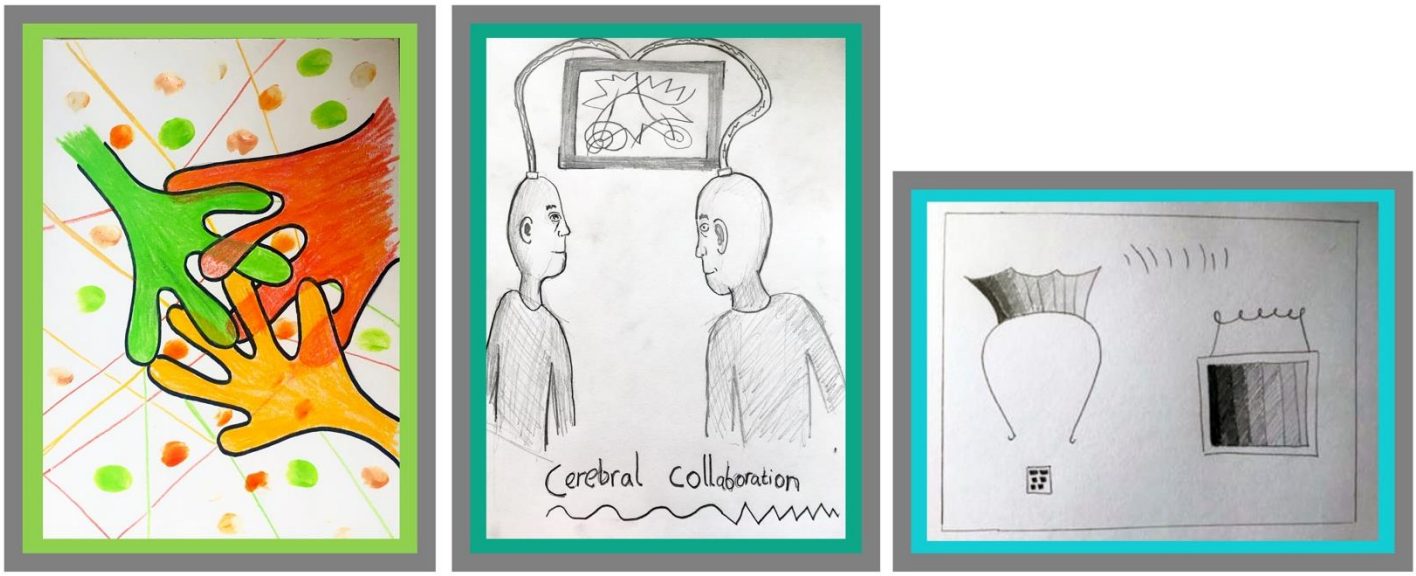
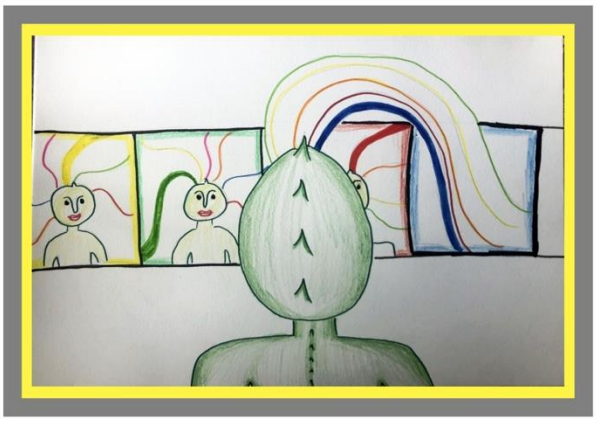
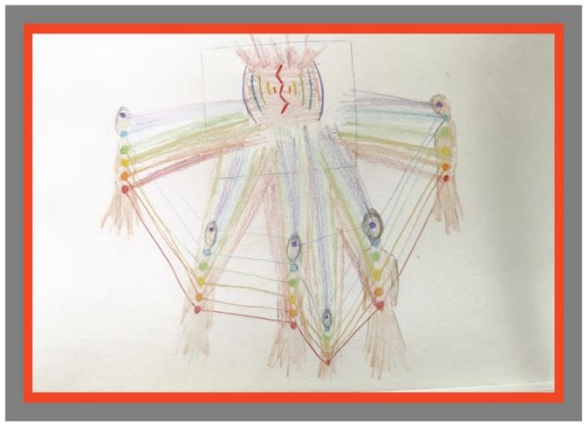
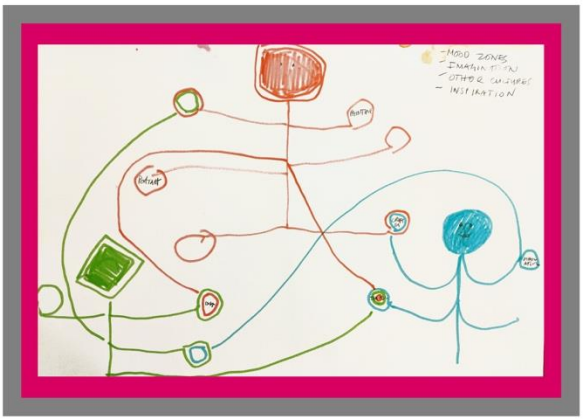


Figure 4.17 Alien Arts Group Artworks






MOOD ZONES
IMAGINATION
OTHER CULTURES
INSPIRATION

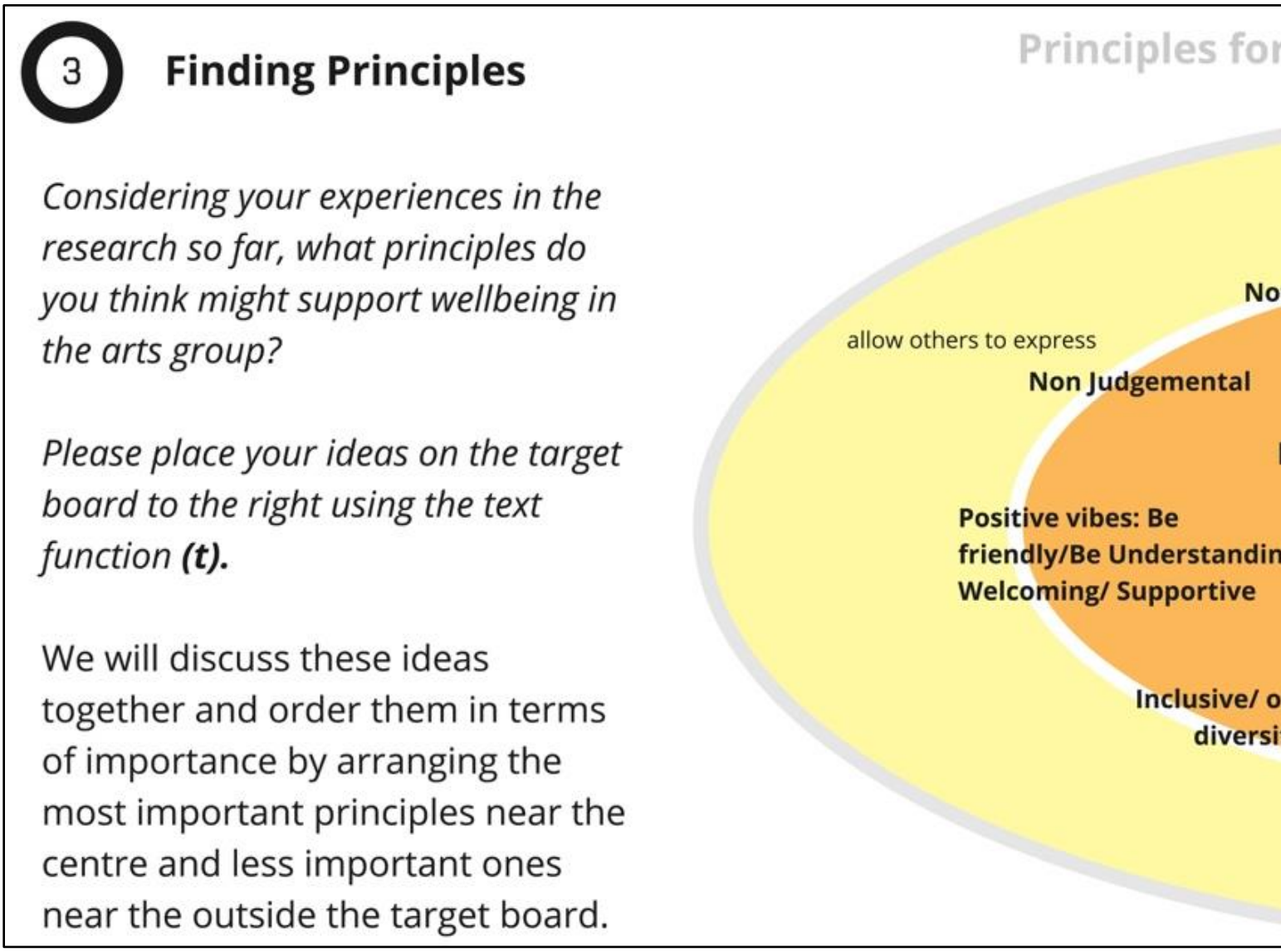
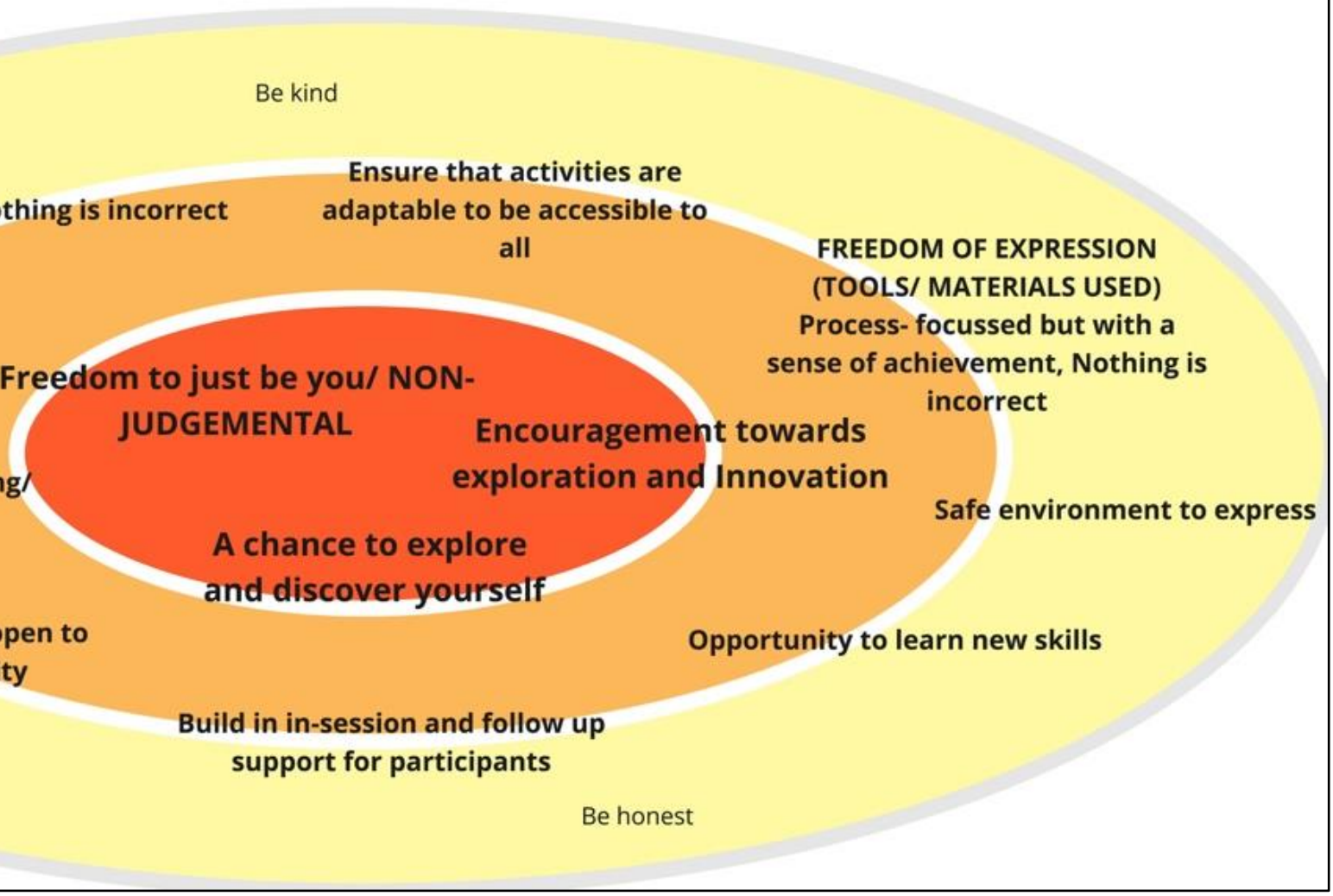


Figure 4.18 Idea Arena Task

r supporting Wellbeing in the online Arts group.



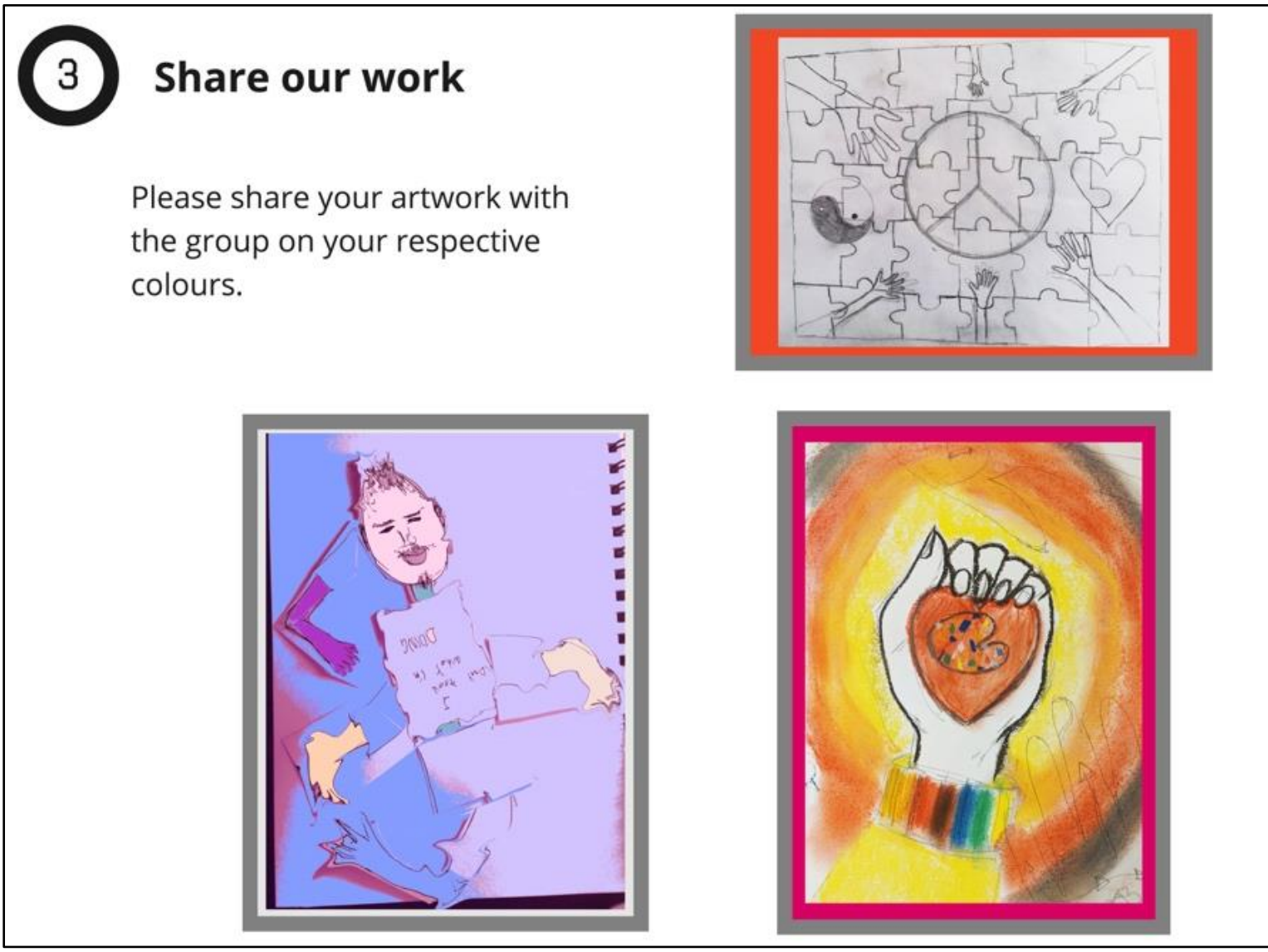
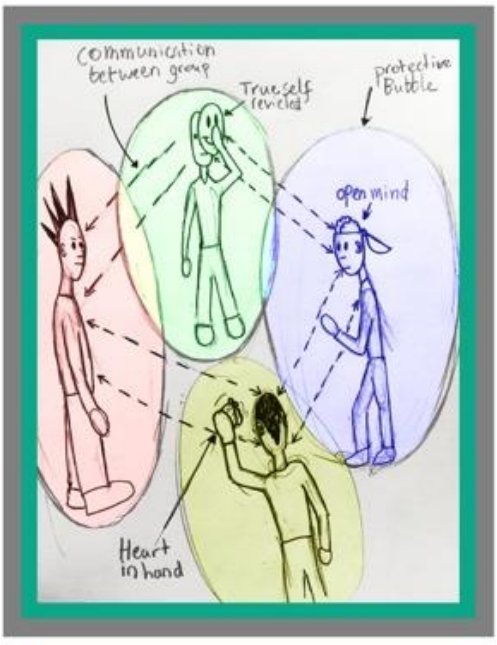


Figure 4.19 Participants Practices Artworks


communication between group
True self revealed
protective Bubble
open mind
Heart in hand

4.41 Workshop 3- Key Artworks and Discussions

Many interesting ideas and concepts emerged in the first discussion surrounding a utopian 'alien' arts groups for wellbeing. For example, Trina proposed a device that allowed any participant to share their feelings seamlessly (see Figure 4.20). She said:

> Trina: A headset… that visually indicates wellbeing... Within arts Workshops people get so ideally comfortable that things can come out. So, I thought that the headsets would give an appropriate response…This would be useful in terms of motor skills. Some people have barriers because of the expectation's other set on them of what they can accomplish and what they can't. Maybe that means that the tools have to change not the people.
>
> (*Appendix 3,* p.387- 393)

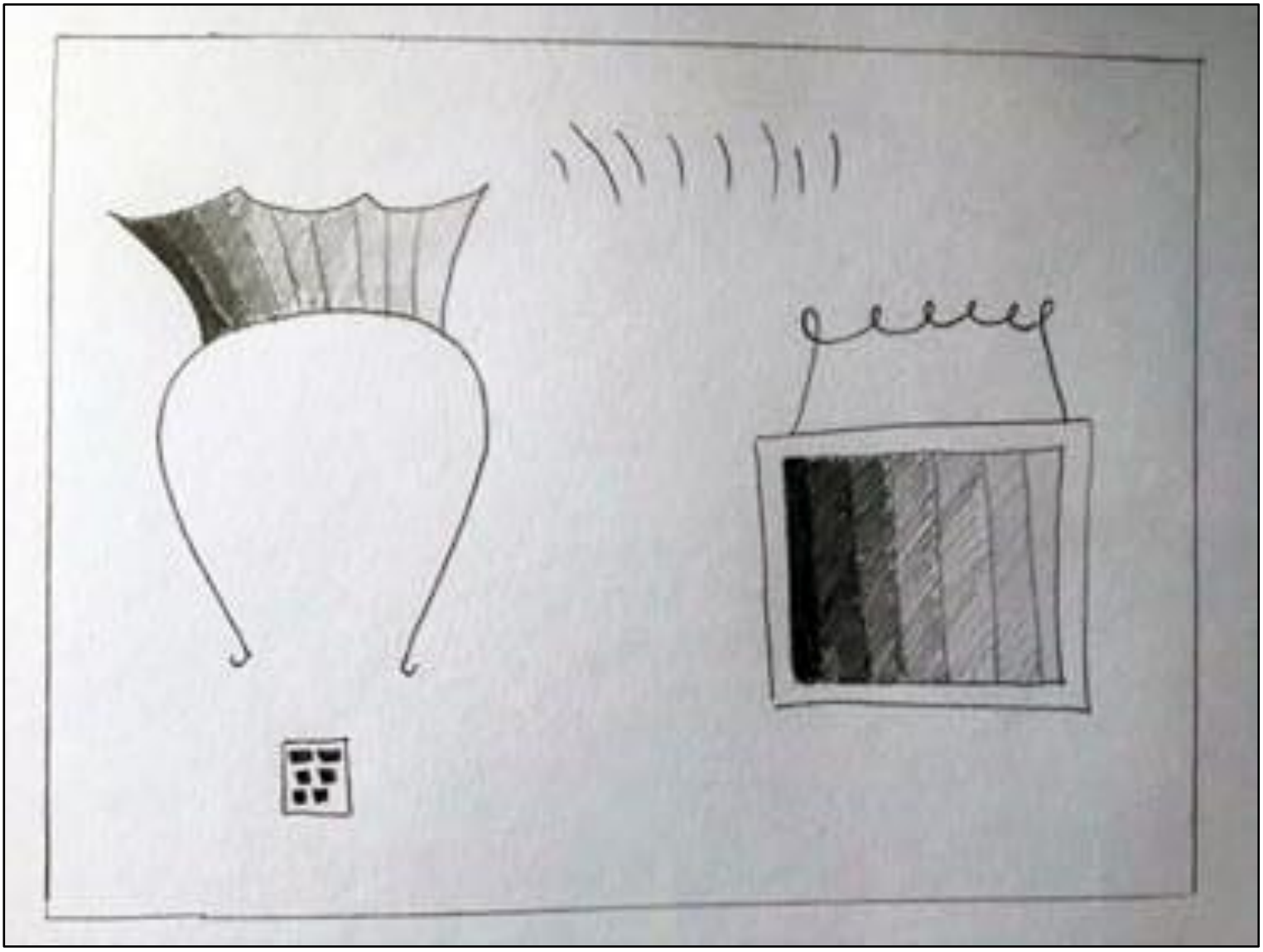


Figure 4.20 Trina's Alien Arts Group Artwork

During a discussion of Marz's artwork (see Figure 4.21), a dialogue opened up around the concept of originality, particularly concerning my example artwork (see Figure 4.22). Below is an excerpt from that discussion:

> Marz: These guys have different colours, some of them have different numbers of fingers. So, it's very individual... I started just putting some finger prints with ink on the paper. I was doing it and I was like; I'm just copying Skyler…
>
> Fi: That's true about doing a piece of art though. You know like how we were saying about copying somebody's idea, because everybody needs to be so **"**original**"**, it doesn't really matter!
>
> Marz: It doesn't! I mean you are original in the end of the day though because it's done by you…
>
> Mark: I love how you did the finger prints as well.
>
> Jay: it's a little unique stamp on each thing.
>
> SKY(Skyler): Yeah, in that sense it couldn't be any more original.
>
> (*Appendix 3,* p.393-399)

Figure 4.21 Marz's Alien Arts Group Artwork

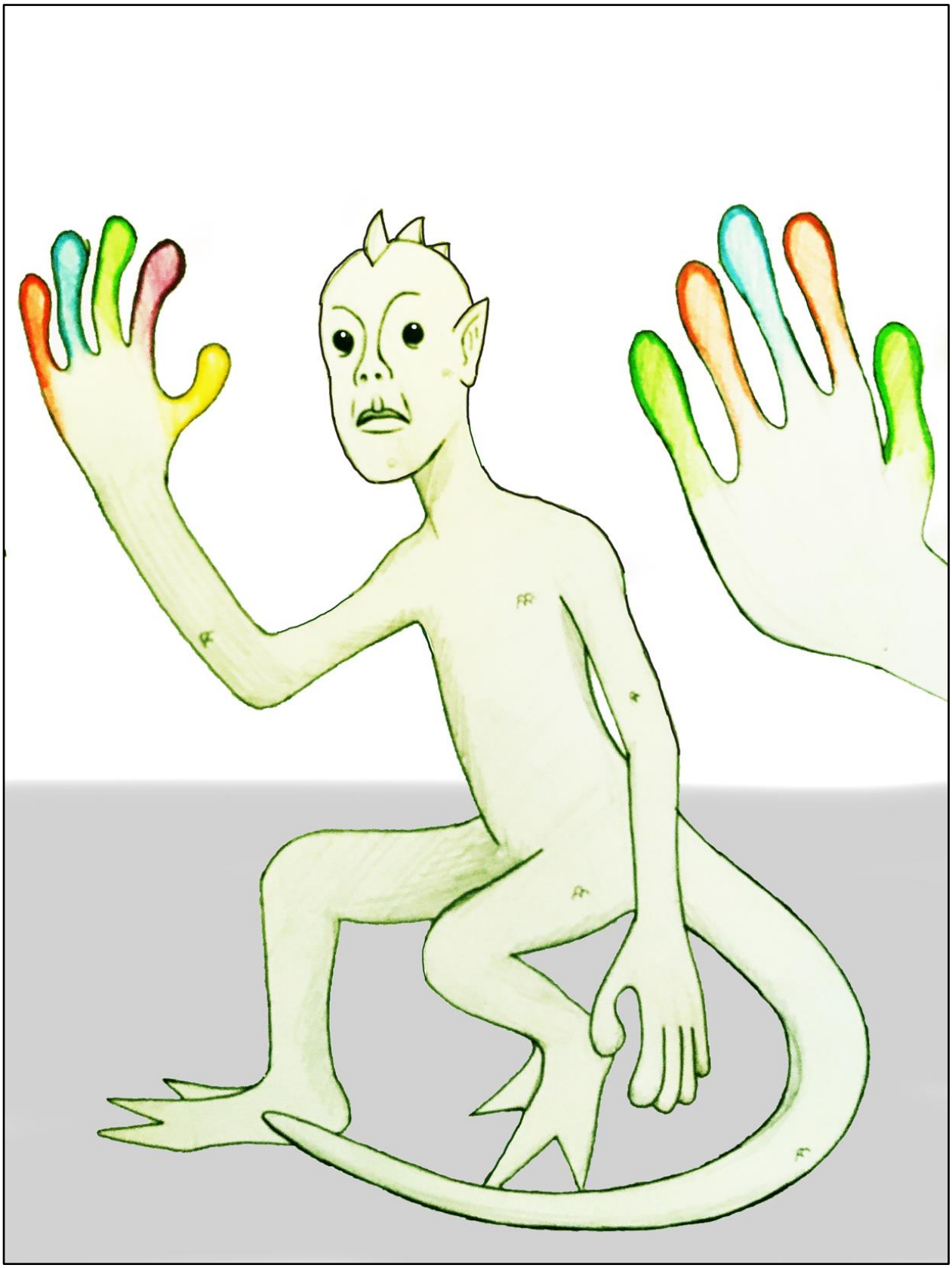


Figure 4.22 Skyler's Alien Arts Group Artwork Example

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When discussing our artworks that reflected the practices we co-created, Fi shared her concerns for safety inside and outside the group. She acknowledged the limited 'time' and 'resources' available to groups and the personal vulnerability groups often uncover in participants through her heart in hand metaphor (see Figure 4.23). She suggests having a backup:

> Fi: create that atmosphere where it is welcoming and safe… where you can be really yourself… but there will always need to be backup… you've got to have people there to support, because… you have a time limit and somebody talking about our drawings. It could be at the end and it triggers something and we have all left, I think it's really dangerous, when someone opens up in a group and you don't have sufficient time or resources so to delve a little deeper and consider that person entirely.
>
> (*Appendix 3,* p.389)

Figure 4.23 Fi's Practice Artwork

Marz, while sharing her practice artwork (see Figure 4.24) delved into the process of free artistic exploration of self through creative materials:

> Marz: I tried to do both … *the chance to explore discover yourself* and … the *freedom of expression tools/materials used).* I thought I'll do it, by doing it. So, I started drawing shapes, relating to exploration… I wanted … a background so I poured ink …and I had a play with it... but then it was wet so I couldn't put the drawings on top so I thought I'll place them with pins and I can move them around. Nothing is set everything is very much in motion.
>
> (*Appendix 3,* p.414-417)

Figure 4.24 Marz's Practice Artwork

Like Marz, Mark spoke about the creative process of reinventing yourself using art (see Figure 4.25). This was more overt with Marks self-portrait choice, which he creatively altered using the photo editing software that I shared in Workshop 2:

> Mark: …a self-portrait that I cut up into parts allowing me to break from my normal position and explore with my whole body and mind new connections, new arrangements free from the constructs of physical reality.
>
> (*Appendix 3,* p.399)

Figure 4.25 Mark''s Practice Artwork

Trina, when describing her artwork (see Figure 4.26), speaks of the role of the facilitator in the online arts group, describing facilitating as a dynamic reflexive activity where the group starts with a shared structure. This structure should allow participants to direct their own artistic trajectories with bespoke support from the facilitator during artmaking. In her artwork, Trina attempted to map such a person-centred process abstractly:

> Trina: Maybe we start off all at the same time or with the same materials. Having quite a structured support, to begin with, and then letting each participant just go wherever they feel naturally inclined. I was using line in a broken way like you let somebody go and then maybe they need some support, so you pick up with them. The colourful lines were one facilitator and they are picking up with people at different points in their journey… the different colours were, how you would react to different people in different ways giving them different sorts of support.
>
> (*Appendix 3,* p.404-407)

Figure 4.26 Trina's Practice Artwork

Corroborating Trina's understanding of facilitation, Jay's artwork (see Figure 4.27) describes the environment of the arts group that a facilitator should create, using a mother duck and duckling metaphor:

> Jay: "I seen a mother duck with her wee ducklings behind... they're totally fearless because they're following their mum, like they're following their leader... They'll go for a wee wander off, but they'll return to the path that the leader has created for them...it gives them the freedom to express."
>
> (*Appendix 3,* p.409-412)

Here, Jay describes the security that structure can provide, explaining that this security allows unique participants to do as they like and be themselves.

Figure 4.27 Jay''s Practice Artwork

4.42 Participants Feedback

Marz and Trina celebrated the discussion element of the group. Trina particularly liked the visual ‘tools’, saying that they helped navigate the ‘complex task’ of defining the practices, making the task more accessible. Marz found the ‘ideas and concepts ‘interesting’, showing how she enjoyed participating in the inquiry. While Elle and Fi particularly liked seeing others artworks, emphasising the social elements of the workshops. Jay, who also enjoyed the Workshop, apologised for her internet connection, highlighting workshop limitations (see Figure 4.28).

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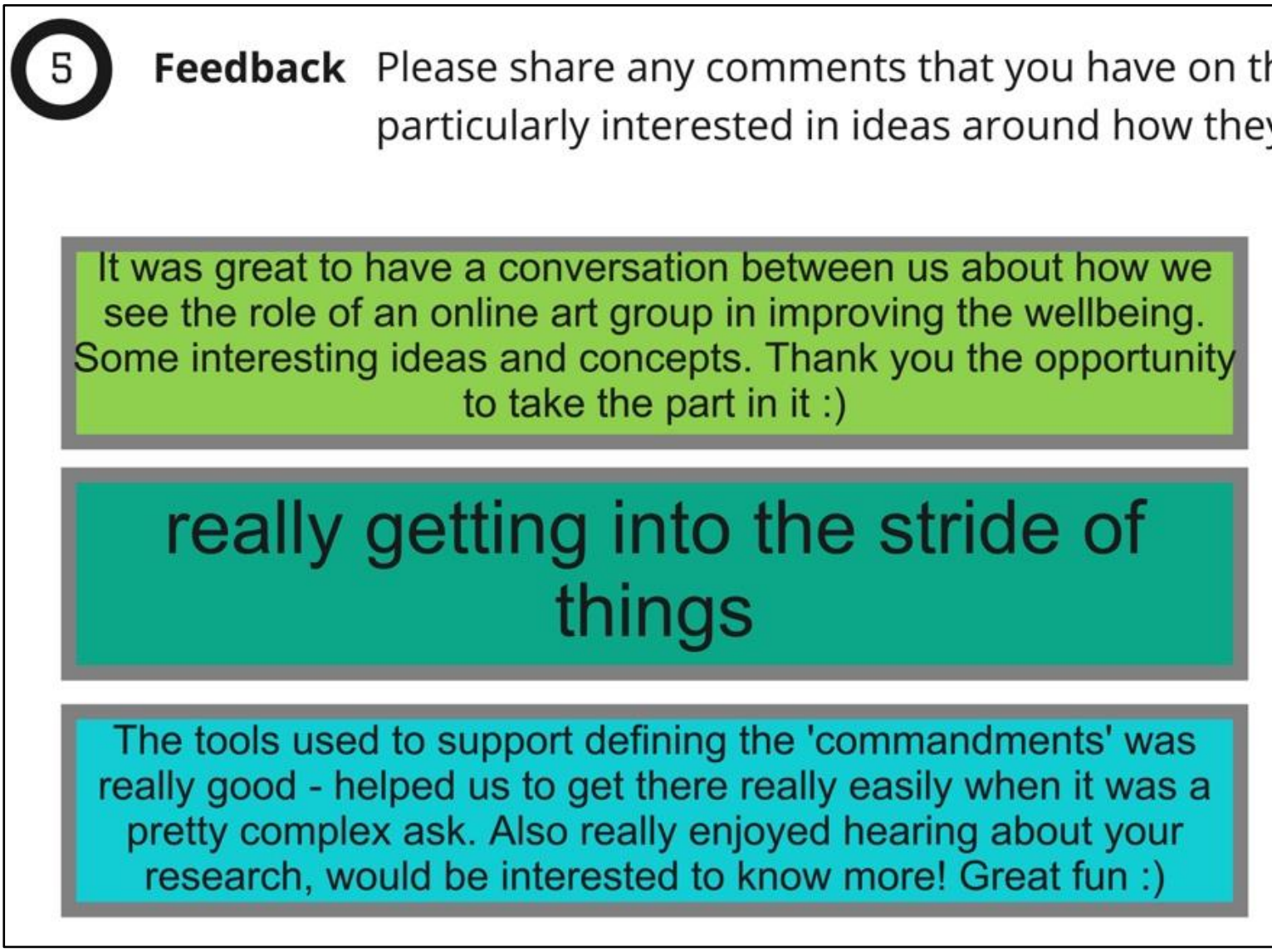

Figure 4.28 Participant Feedback- Workshop 3

he workshops today. We are
y might be improved

Great workshop, sorry I lost Zoom connection right at the end

Enjoyable session. I enjoy the discussion about all the great works produced.

Really enjoyed today and seeing everyones art

This week, I asked participants what they wanted to do for the final Workshop (see Figure 4.29). Marz wasn't sure, so I asked her to email at a later point. Jay wanted to see how our understandings might be used in 'everyday life', but I thought that could be a whole new project. Fi and Elle wanted to 'explore' Pixlr, the photo editing software, while Trina advocated a collaborative task where 'we create individual pieces/elements that are combined'.

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Figure 4.29 Empowerment Feedback- Workshop 3

er what you have learned so far in this project. Then from that consider what you would
f what you would like to learn in the realm of traditional and technical art please share it
gestions into a lesson for next week.

Explore how to take what we've learned into everyday life, e.g creative thinking and expression

GETTING TO GRIPS WITH PIXLR.

I would like to explore using Pixlr

4.43 Participants Wellbeing Indicator

This week, participants were in a relaxed state (see Figure 4.30). However, there was an underlying excitement for the day's activities, with Trina 'feeling positive to move forward' and Elle 'excited to take part'. Jay's indicator had progressed from the previous week where she felt she never had time to support herself (see *Section 4.33*). This week, she began 'helping others while accepting help from others; this indicated a notable enhancement of her wellbeing.

helping others while accepting some help from others

Feeling chilled and relaxed and excited to take part today

just mellow and relaxed, waving hello to all :)

Pretty chilled out today.

Feeling positive to move forward.

Tired chilled sunday vibes

Sleepy

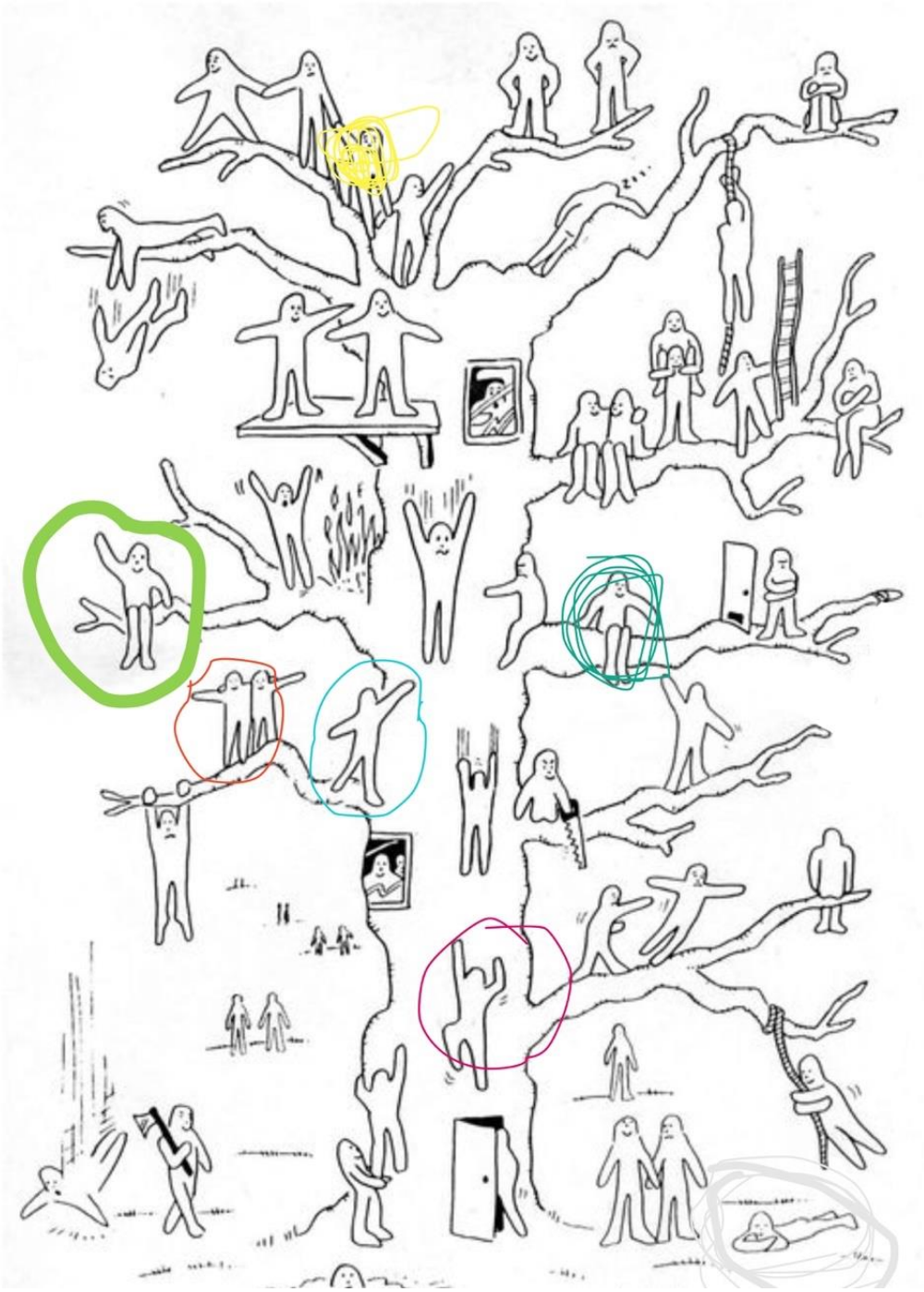

Figure 4.30 Wellbeing indicator- Workshop 3 Morning

Positive feelings were maintained throughout the Workshop (see Figure 4.31). Iterating Jay's feelings from the morning indicator, Trina spoke about how she enjoys the 'protected time to be creative', while Jay described how the Workshops were a 'comfortable way to learn'.

it's a very enjoyable and comfortable way to learn

Enjoying our Sundays very much

Feeling adventurous

CLIMBING UP THE RESEARCH TREE

Enjoying having a protected time to be creative

Happy to have explored and played with some ideas. Practiced new things.

Gets me thinking.

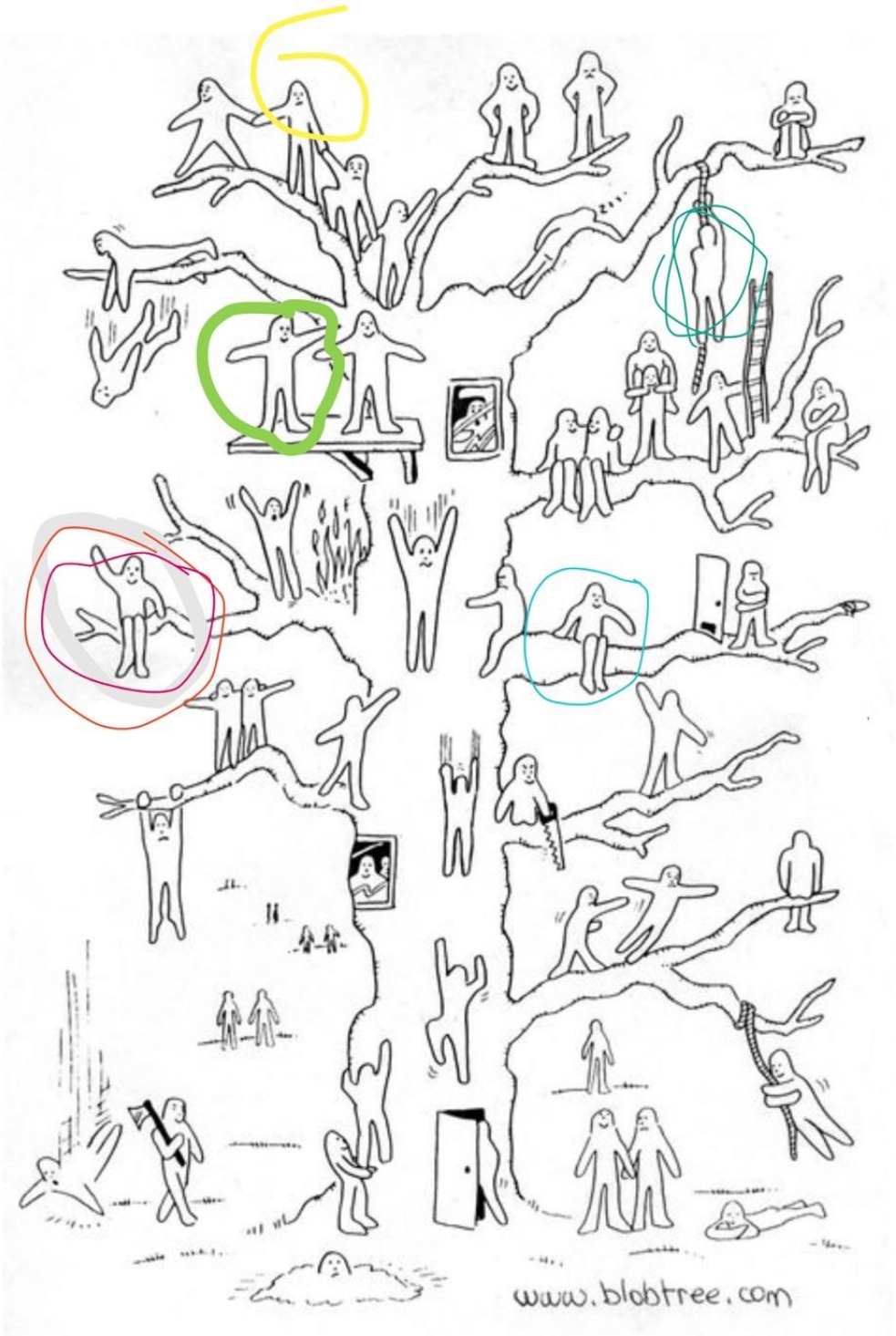

Figure 4.31 Wellbeing Indicator- Workshop 3 Afternoon

4.44 Researcher Reflections

This week, the visual tools such as the idea arena and Wellbeing Indicator helped navigate complex tasks (see *Appendix 2, p.280*). Trina corroborated this in her feedback (see Figure 4.28). I noticed the social dynamic, seeing how some members shared more than others, although I found that quieter participants shared more with encouragement. Using creative tasks to address problems within the arts group helped us to explore, discuss and ultimately address issues together. The artworks in this Workshop seemed to communicate ideas and serve as thinking tools for the participants in tackling how to support wellbeing in this context.

Actions taken before the final Workshop included using more visual tools for tasks while carefully considering how I might implement participants ideas around collaboration and using the photo editing software within next week's Workshop. Elle and Fi contacted me prior to the final Workshop, explaining they couldn't attend due to work commitments. This left Trina, Marz, Jay and Mark.

4.5 Workshop 4 Summary

We started with the Wellbeing Indicator then reviewed the practices we created while considering how they might be realised. Together we went through each practice's terminology and clarified it using an open discussion with participants. Then participants considered and articulated how practices might be realised. We finished using discussion to clarify what was meant (see Figure 4.32, Figure 4.33, and Figure 4.34).

Afterwards, we started the task inspired by last week's feedback, advocating collaboration and using the photo editing software. Participants were instructed to break off into groups and then interview each other to create an abstract portrait of their interviewee. I had pre-planned interview groups and gave participants example questions to use (see Figure 4.35). Using Zoom's breakout room function, we split into two groups, and the interviews commenced.

After ten minutes, we stopped and started our artwork based on our notes from each other's interviews. I asked participants not to add colour yet as that would be part of the second task. Participants finished the artworks during lunch. Afterwards, we shared and discussed our portraits (see Figure 4.36).

The second part of the task followed the same format as before but with different partners. We interviewed each other once more. Following Fi and Elle's feedback from Workshop 3, participants were asked to download their new partner's portrait and then copy it over to the photo editing software we used in Workshop 2. They were asked to alter the portrait

based on their new interview answers, culminating in five final portraits (see Figure 4.36). After discussing the edited portraits, the final task was to use Miro to create a digital collage using each portrait. This functioned as an abstract group photo of the group to remember our time together.

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Figure 4.32 Practices and How 1-4

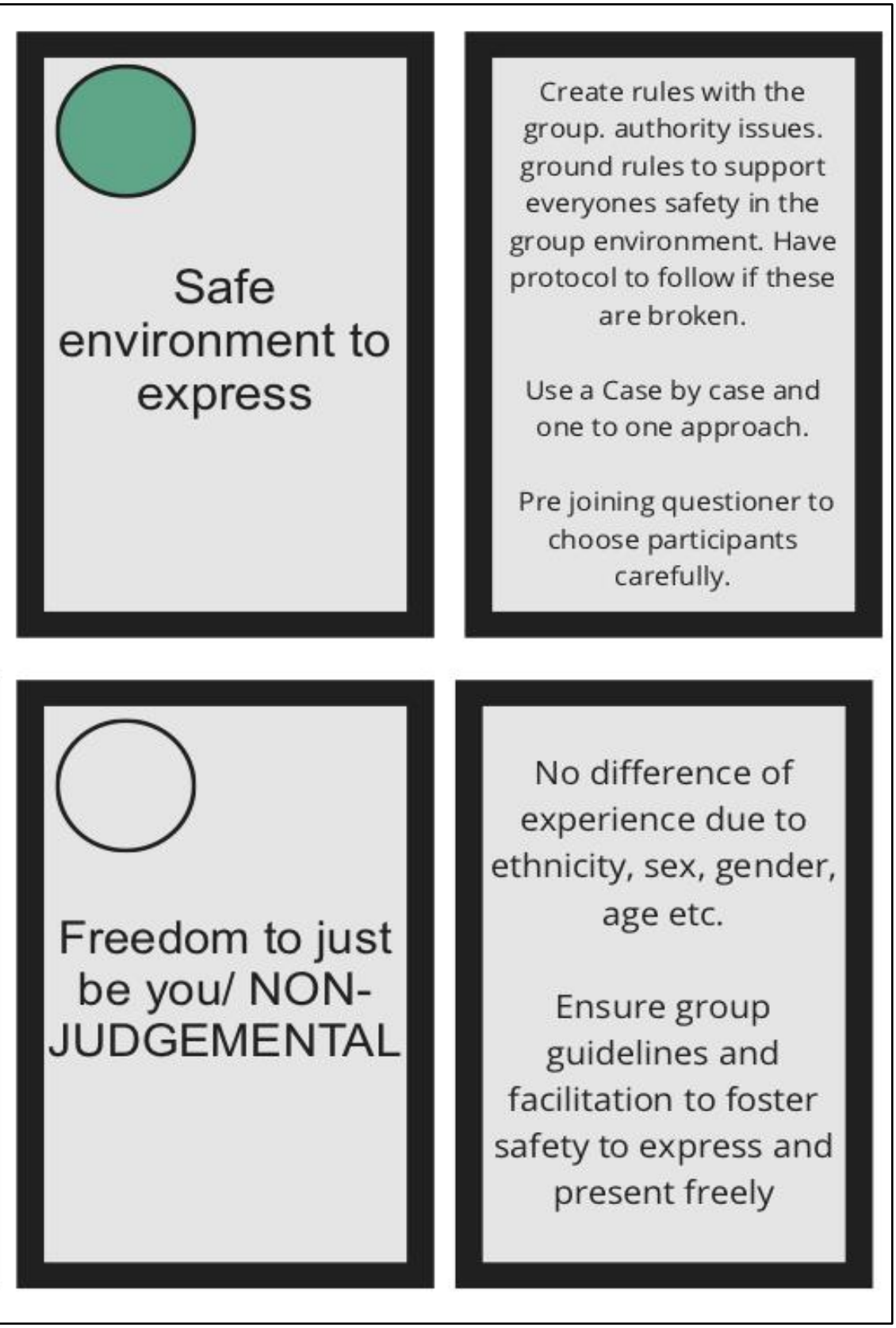
Encouragement towards experimentation and Innovation

Create challenges and opportunities to problem solve and think outside the box. do this early on.

Inclusive and open to diversity

During application process ensure financially accessible, gender and ethnically balanced, accessible for different abilities and defined age range.

Figure 4.33 Practices and How 5-8


Safe environment to express
Create rules with the group. authority issues. ground rules to support everyones safety in the group environment. Have protocol to follow if these are broken.
Use a Case by case and one to one approach.
Pre joining questioner to choose participants carefully.
Freedom to just be you/ NON-JUDGEMENTAL
No difference of experience due to ethnicity, sex, gender, age etc.
Ensure group guidelines and facilitation to foster safety to express and present freely

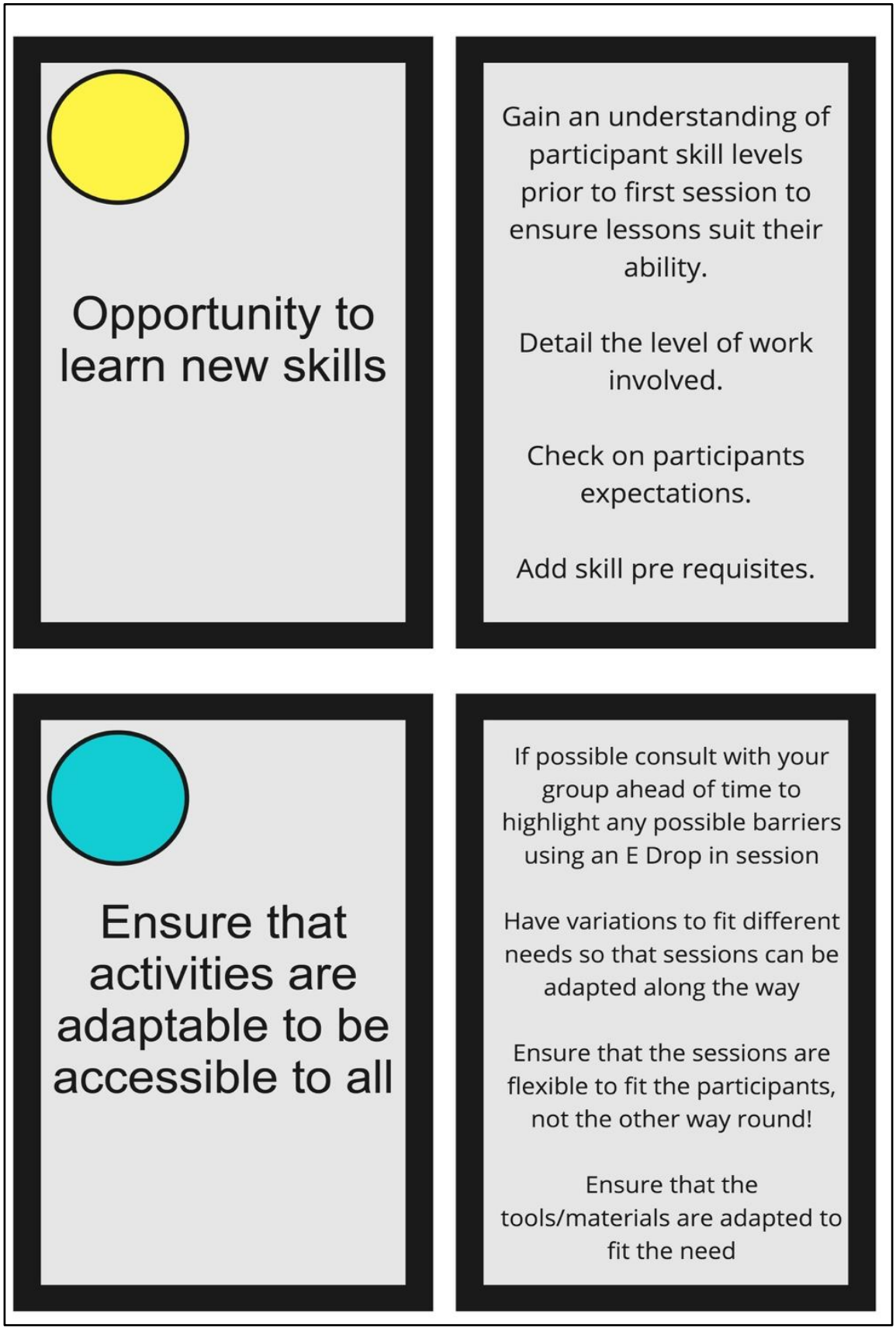


Figure 4.34 Practices and How 9-10

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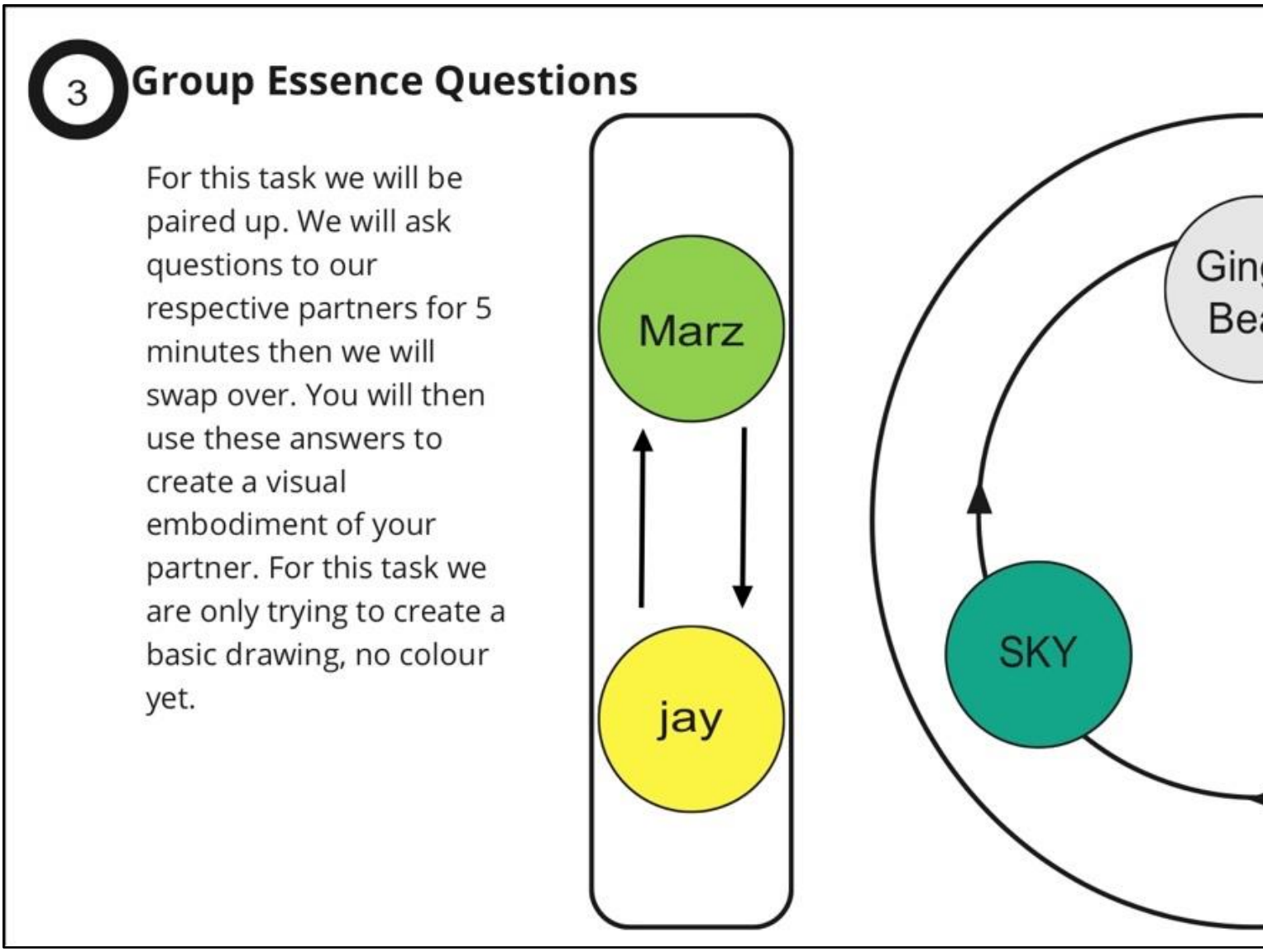
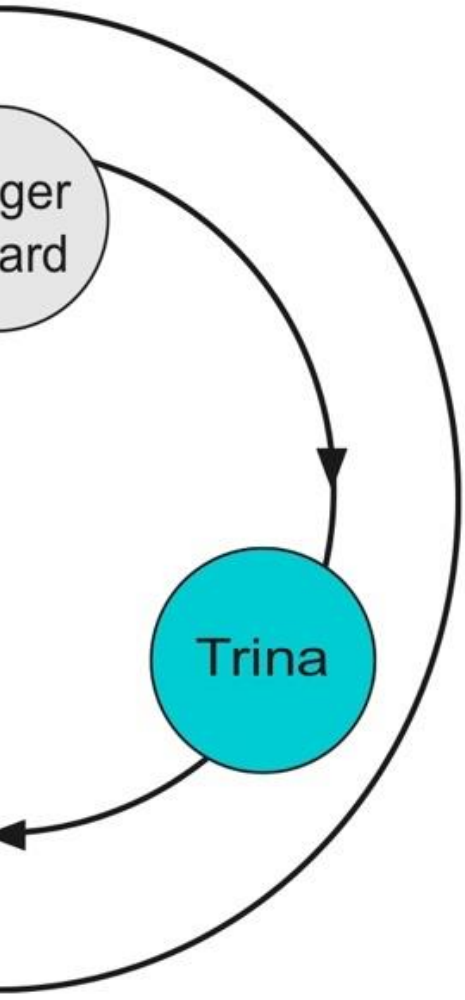


Figure 4.35 Interview Groups 1



We have given you some questions, use them to help you understand the formal qualities of your partners personality:

1.If you were a line what kind of line would you be?
2.In a picture do you see yourself in the foreground or the background?
3.If your life was a picture would it be busy or spacious?
4.If your life was a picture would it be simple or intricate?
5.Do you consider yourself a light or dark person?
6.Do you consider yourself a geometric or more irregular person?
7.Do you consider yourself a rough or smooth person?

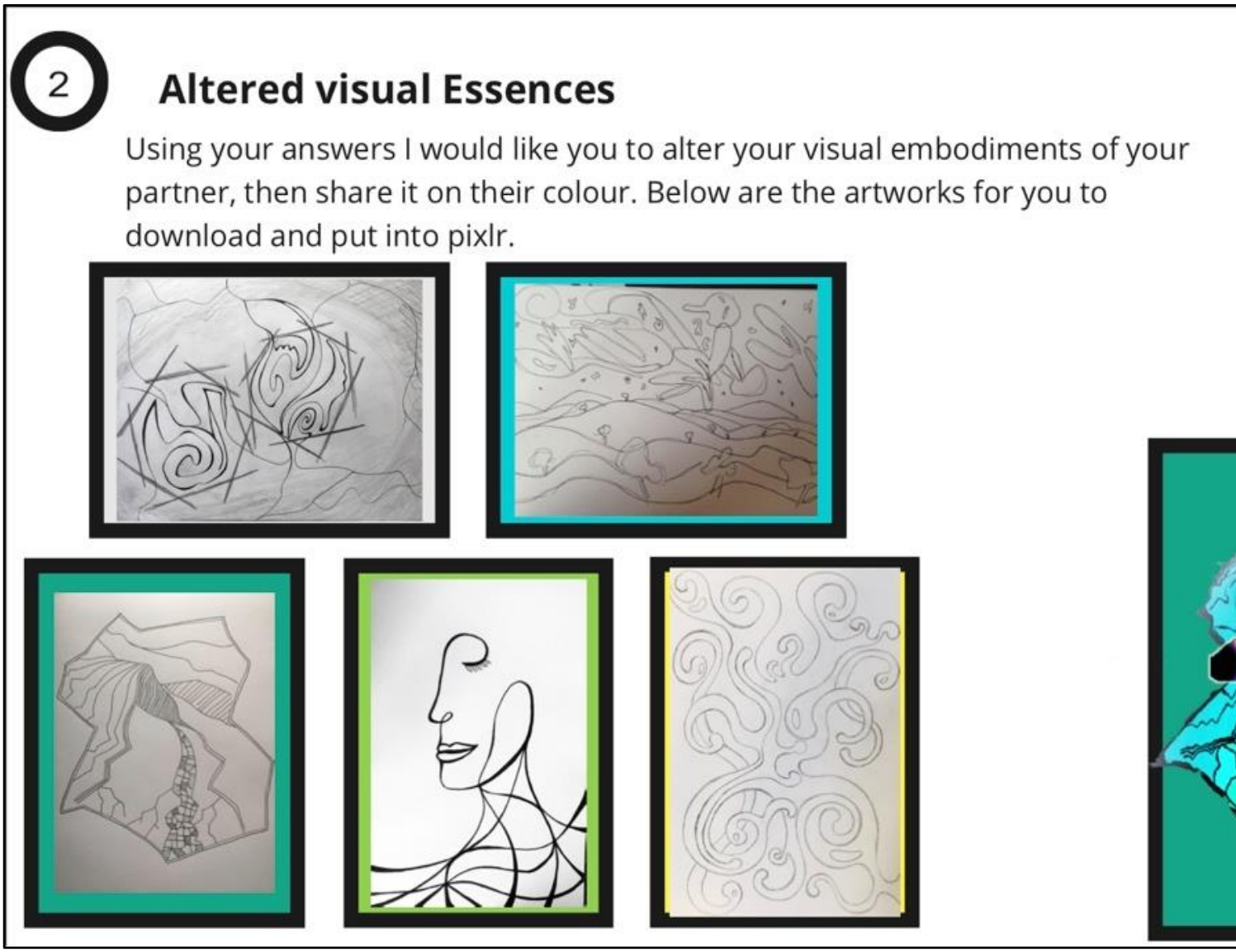
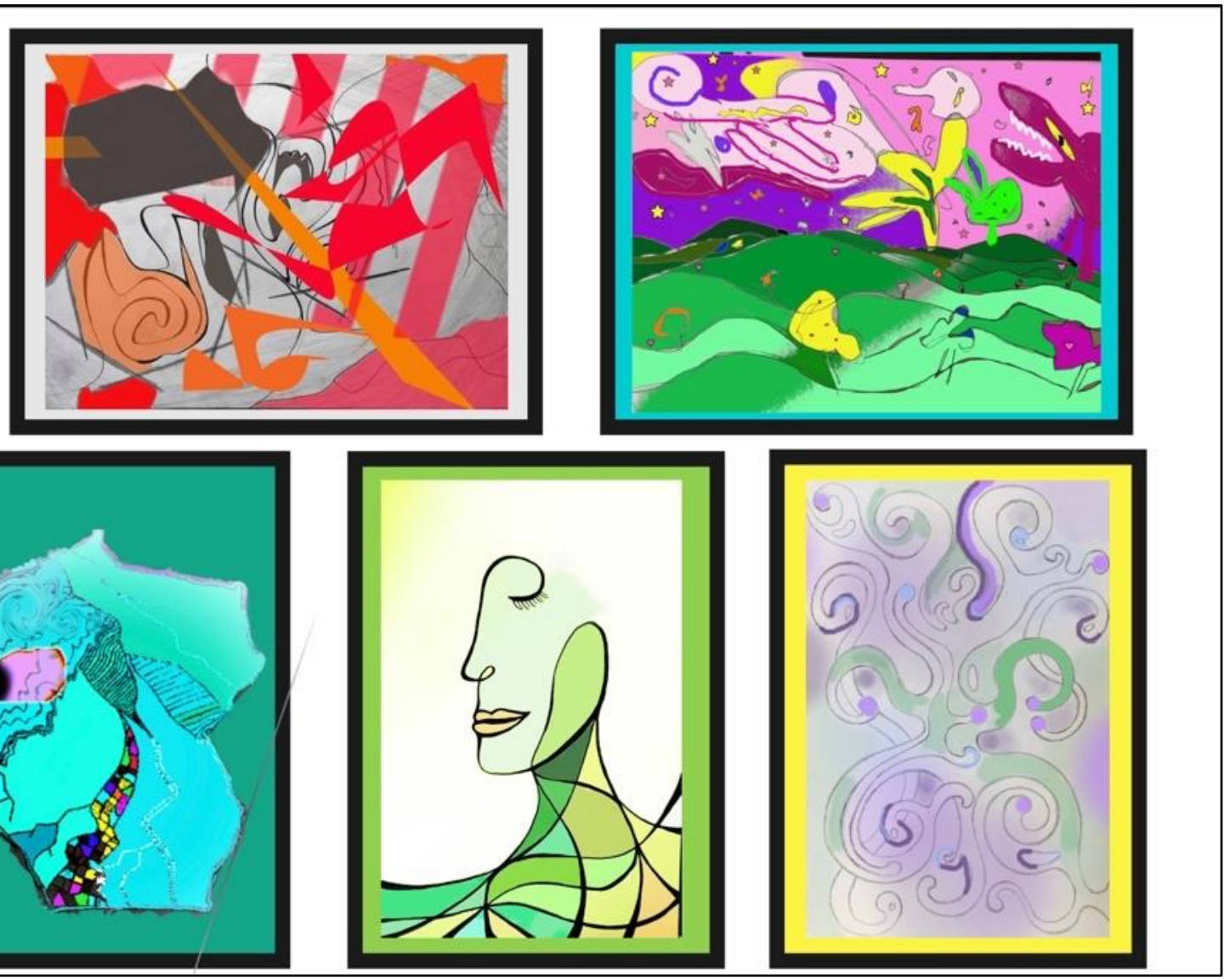


Figure 4.36 Participants Abstract Portraits Edited



4.51 Workshop 4- Key Artwork

Given the personal nature of the conversations which surrounded the task, I decided not to record to allow participants to feel less observed while sharing. Instead, I share the digital group portrait collage (see Figure 4.37).

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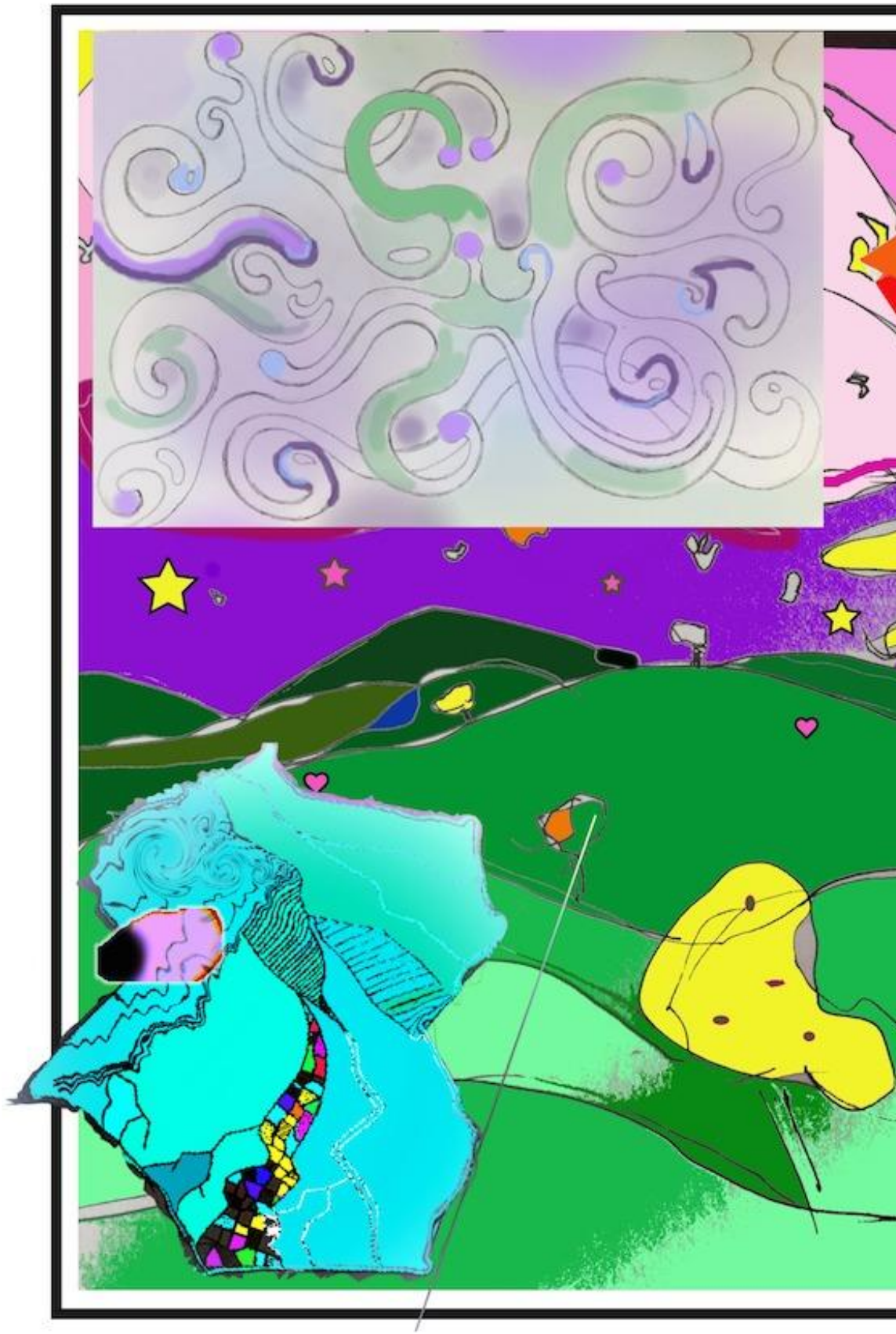
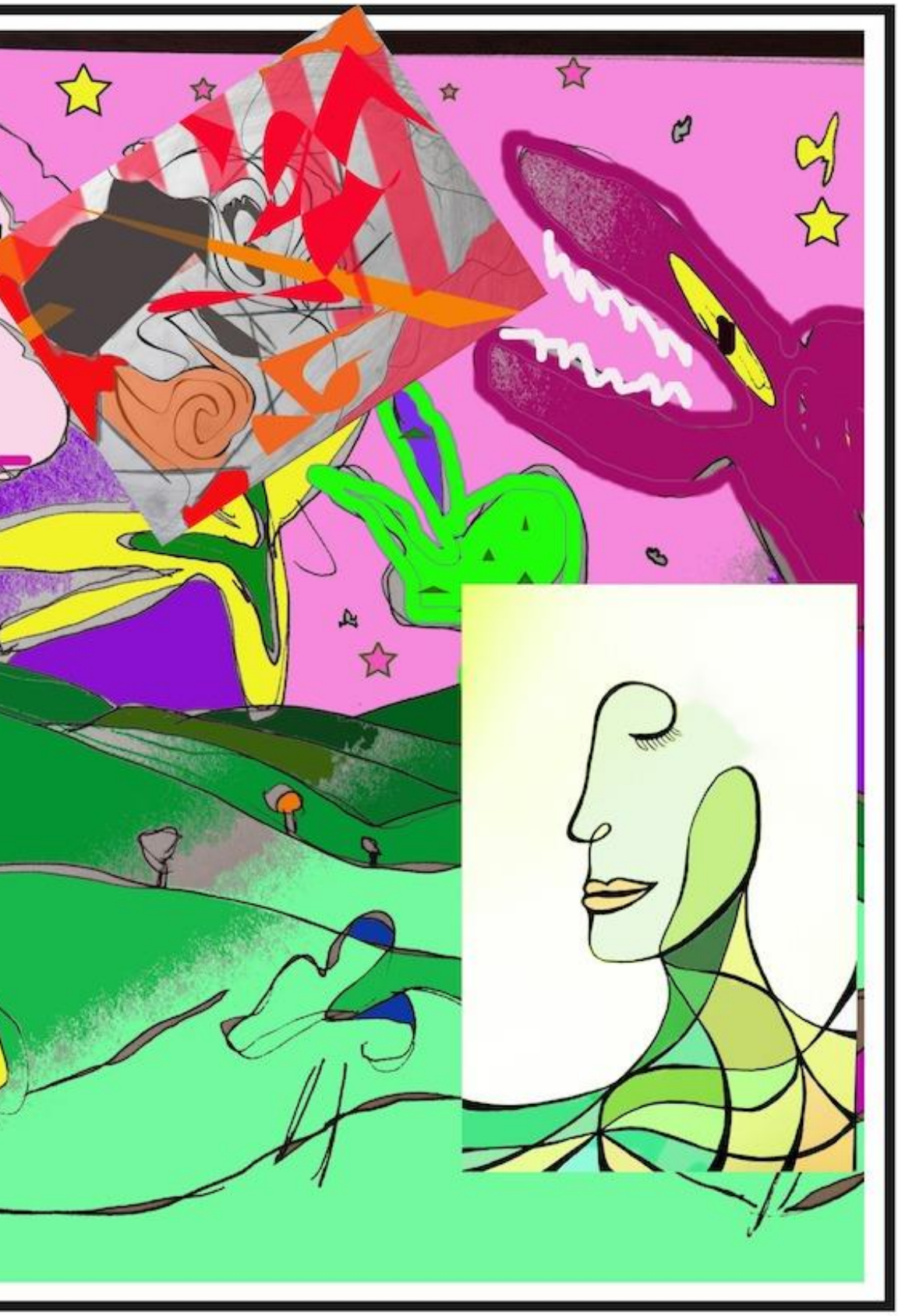


Figure 4.37 Digital Group Collage



4.52 Participants Feedback

Participants' feedback reflected their enjoyment of the tasks (see Figure 4.38). Responses from Marz, Trina and Mark detailed how the task got us to know each other. Jay said we had mastered our positive vibes practice, meaning this was a positive, social and most importantly fun experience.

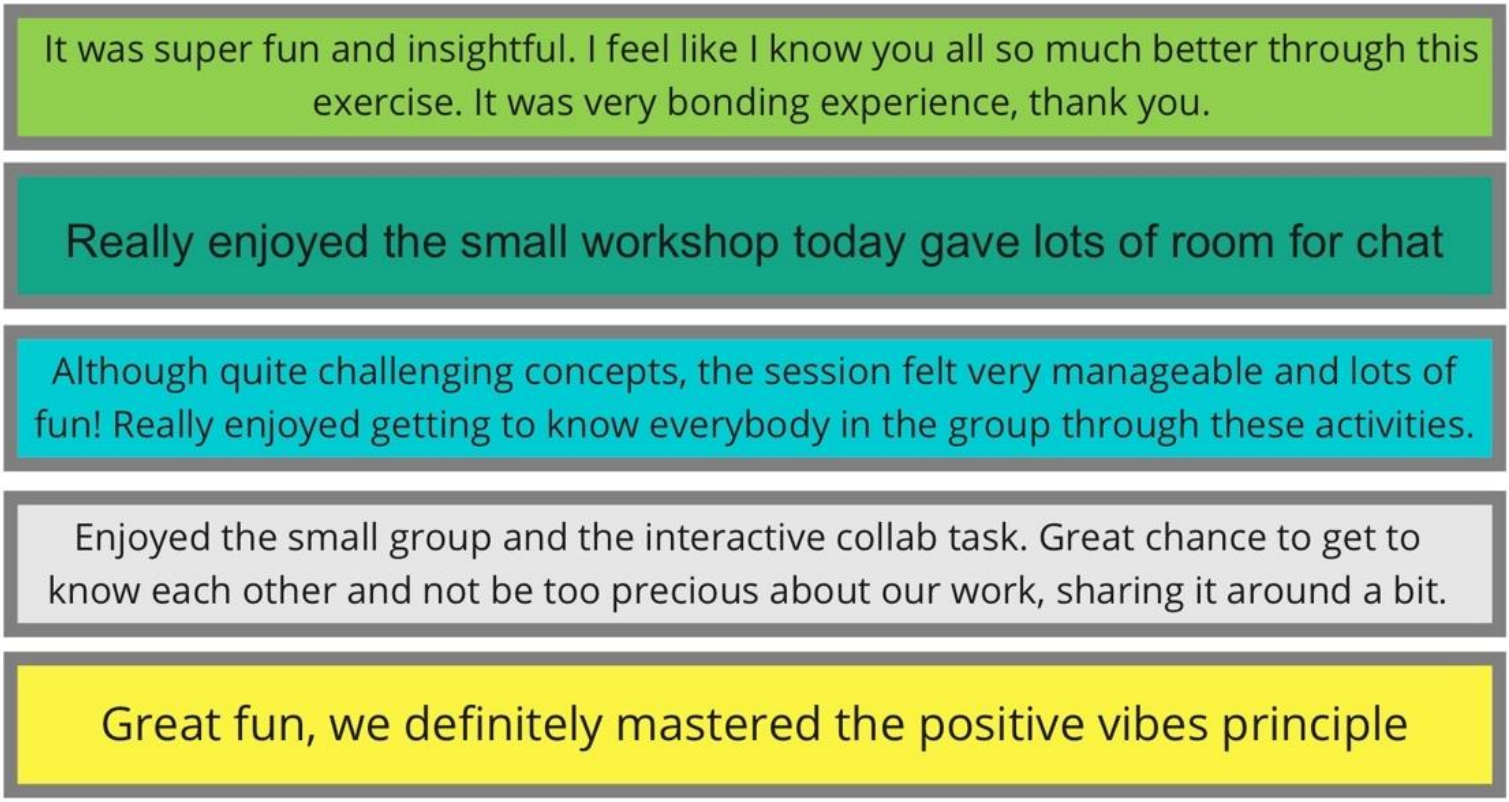


Figure 4.38 Participants Feedback-Workshop 4

Trina particularly enjoyed ‘visualising abstract concepts, while Marz expressed her enjoyment of the ‘collaborative’ elements of the project. Mark pointed towards how he got to learn and enjoy new skills, while Jay enjoyed the relaxing aspects of the project (see Figure 4.39).

Figure 4.39 Project Feedback

4.53 Participants Wellbeing Indicator

Jay, Marz and Mark seemed weighed down by life outside of the arts group, particularly Jay, who had had a ‘stressful week’ (see Figure 4.40).

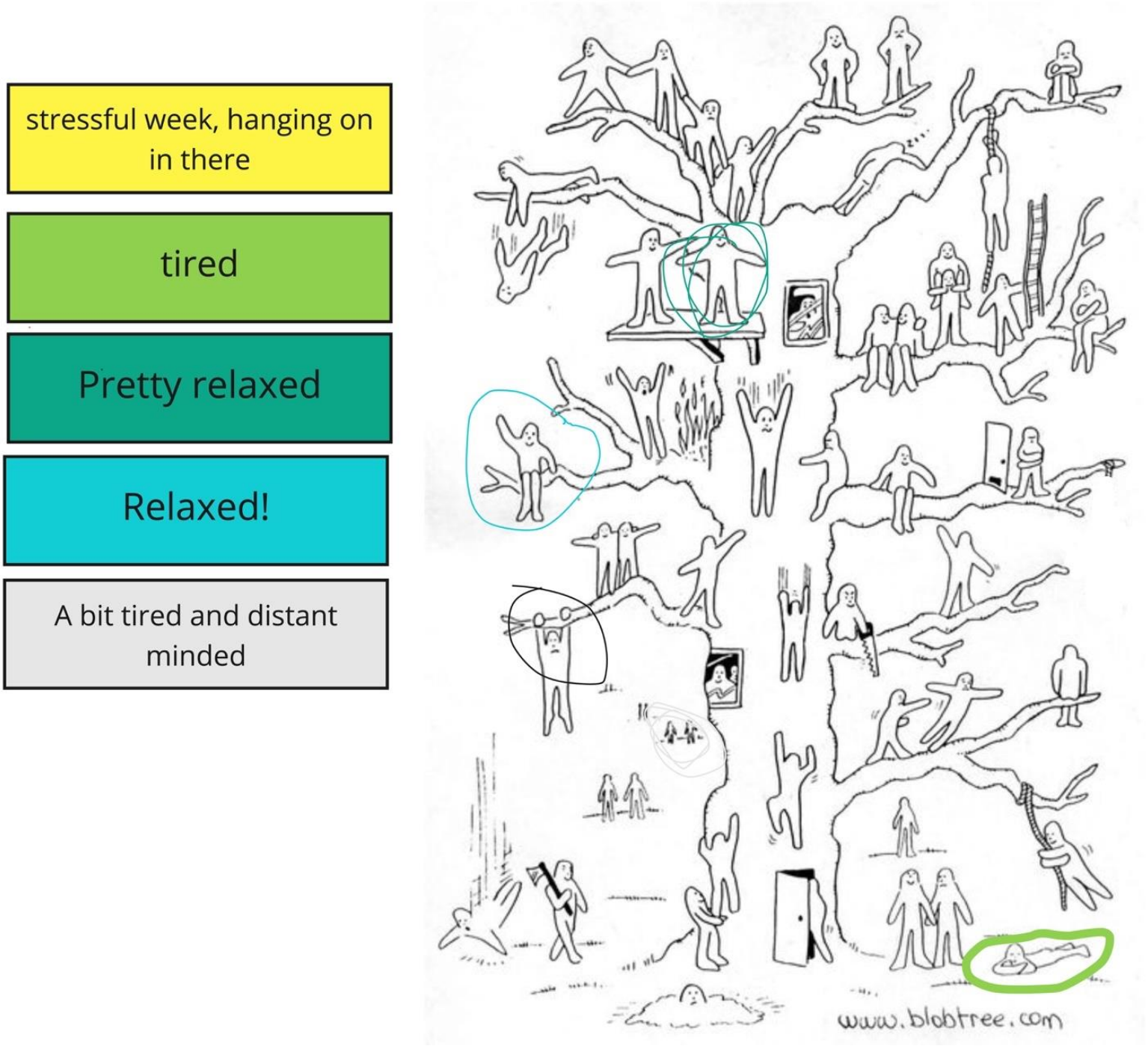


Figure 4.40 Wellbeing Indicator- Workshop 4 Morning

After the Workshop, moods seemed to have lifted; Jay and Trina pointed to the social, collaborative elements of the Workshop. This was emphasised by the characters they both circled, who were supporting each other on the tree. Marz felt like ‘playing more’, showing how she had enjoyed the activities (see Figure 4.41).

working in pairs was nice and a supportive way to create art

Feel like playing more

One happy boy

Enjoyed working collaboratively and being part of the group

Climbing up and up

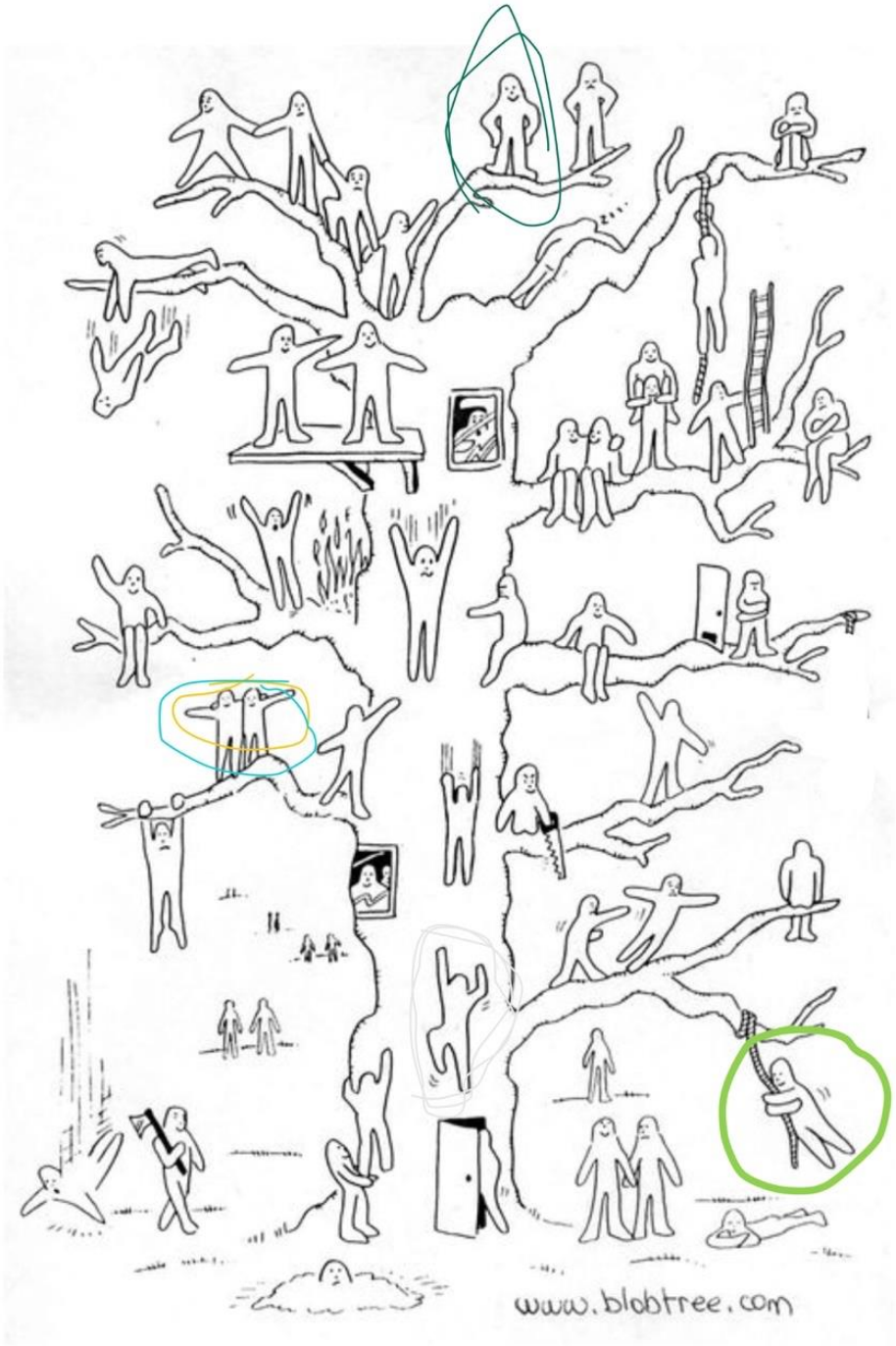


Figure 4.41 Wellbeing Indicator- Workshop 4 Afternoon

4.54 Researcher Reflections

We bonded as a group using the collaborative task. There was so much laughter and enjoyment throughout the day (see *Appendix 2, p.298*). Had I redone the Workshop, I would have moved the more draining tasks like clarifying and describing the practices to after the first creative task. Also, I would have used Mark, my cofacilitator, to check that the plan went smoothly in both virtual rooms in the other break out room, instead of being in the same room as him.

4.6 Practitioners Focus Group

Before the practitioners' focus group (see *Appendix 3, p.415*), the dataset underwent analysis, creating themes from the artwork discussions, and the ways of being, which were constructed from participants co-defined practices by further clarifying, condensing and renaming them (defined and described in Chapter 5). I similarly planned the focus group to the Workshops using Miro. I created a set of Miro boards structuring the group's activities to expand and evaluate the findings. Then I iterated the focus group structure with the help of my supervisors. In this focus group, the themes and ways of being were presented to a group of five expert practitioners to expand on and evaluate.

All practitioners but one consented to their identity being shared. Practitioners included Christine Novosel, an arts facilitator and manager at Impact Arts; Linda Vickers, a therapist at a creative Higher Education Institute; Ursula Kelly, an art therapist based in London (to gain a perspective beyond the Scottish context); Emrys Mordin, a facilitator for an online creative writing group; and Fiona Grant (pseudonym) an arts facilitator working within a

local arts charity. These experts were brought together to validate the findings by considering them alongside their own experiences of facilitating online arts groups, allowing experts to evaluate and expand on the existing findings.

I started the session by getting practitioners familiar with Miro's basic functions; then, I briefly explained the project thus far, and started the icebreaker task. Prior to the session I asked practitioners to create their own ways of being that described an aspect of their practice for wellbeing. Each practitioner shared their *way of being,* and the group commented to highlight its value.

In the next task I shared the themes from my analysed transcript; explaining that they were meant to answer *what are experiences of supported wellbeing like in the online arts group* (Sub-Question 1). I asked practitioners to consider what was important about the themes and any experiences they had relating to them. Next, I shared each of the ways of being, then asked practitioners to consider what was important about them and share any relevant experiences they had.

I reused the 'Idea Arena' (see Figure 4.18) from Workshop 3 to see if we could constitute a final set of ways of being. However, the practitioners explained that whilst many of the ways of being are closely related, they are still distinct from one another and thus not easily synthesised. The focus group concluded with the participants reflecting upon and sharing their broader experiences of conducting online arts groups.

4.61Focus Group Key Insights: Practitioners *Ways of Being*

The practitioners presented their own ways of being these are documented within *Appendix 3, p.*417 Christine and Ursula's way's (see Figure 4.42) provide examples of only some the useful information that fed into my own ways.

For Christine's way she encouraged a *do it yourself (DIY)* facilitation strategy when elaborating on how she does this she says:

> Christine: it's really important to be…wearing a facilitator hat, and coming in and out of the group rather than being a bit more of a hierarchical instructor, which is really difficult online. Because in an online format, it's always one person speaking, who has the floor. So, I suppose I'm always trying to find ways to make sure that it's more of a group experience
>
> (Appendix 3, p.424)

Way Of Being: **DIY (Do It Yourself)**

How it might be achieved:

As a facilitator, communicate you are not a teacher - bounce questions back to group, encourage participants to work through challenges themselves.
Encourage subversion of 'instructions'
Use what is at hand, use inconsistency and difference to advantage.
Praise all efforts, put value on process (important where it is difficult to share finished work online)

Experience from Practice:

These are pieces of a mobile that will never be finished. I made this as part of my group's response to the Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival. I thought it was important for me to also make something alongside them as encouragement, but in the end thought it best that only their work was to be showcased. I used old postcards to create shapes based on body parts and bones. The idea behind it was that I am trapped in my body (with chronic pain) and trapped in lockdown, working online. I wanted to make a mobile from kitschy holiday images as an 'out of body experience' to animate my discordant bits. I found working through an idea valuable, rather than producing a finished artwork.

Share what's valuable about this way of being

freedom to express

shared control over pace etc

Flexibility for participants

value on process can be super helpful in terms of managing expectations of having to create something specific

Freedom to speak/no conventional 'leaders'

Acknowledging different ways of learning

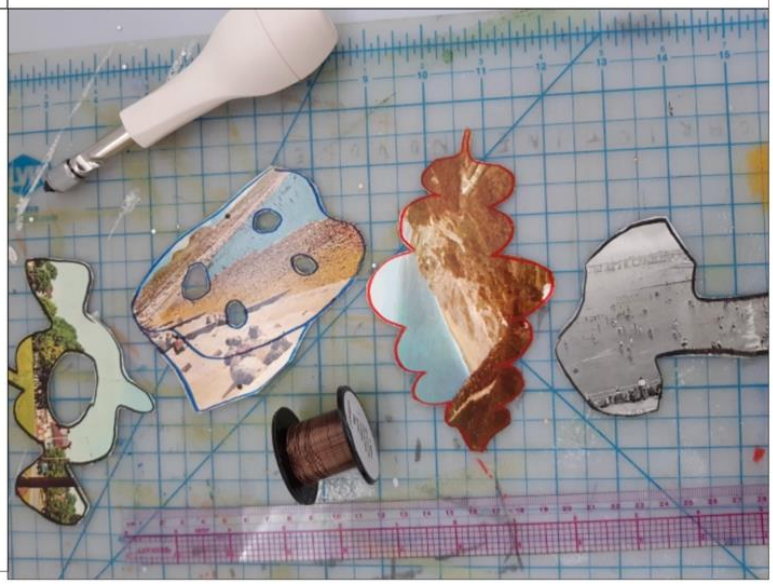


Figure 4.42 Christine's Way of Being

For Emrys' way (see Figure 4.43) they encouraged *creating a thriving community and making people feel welcome.* When elaborating on how they do this they describe the importance of freedom within choosing your own level of online participation:

> Emrys: the people that I have seen engage the least have been the people have privately gotten in contact and said, 'Thank you for the space, even though I don't engage. It means the world that exists'. And I finally feel like I can be me, even though they haven't expressed themselves in any other way. It doesn't mean they're not getting anything out of it. So yeah. Let them stay quiet as they want, but acknowledge that they use their space as much as others.
>
> (*Appendix 3,* p.433)

Way Of Being: **Creating a thriving community and making people feel welcome**

How it might be achieved:	**Experience from Practice:**
Regularly checking in with the community and making people feel welcome and included by interacting with their posts/work	**Weekly new member posts on FB group, leaving room for impromptu performances or pieces in open mics/feedback spaces, being authentic about the way I interact with people in the space**

Share what's valuable about this way of being

included

recognising all participation is an achievement, even if just watching or dipping in and out

helping the more quiet participants

people feeling part of a group, knowing they will be missed if not attending, recognising people value different interactions

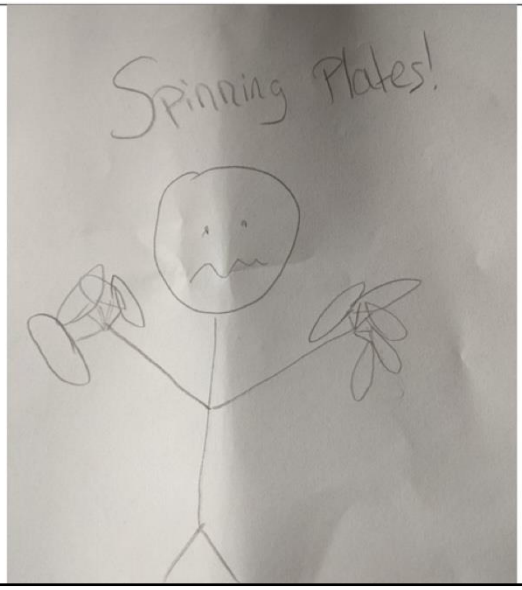


Figure 4.43 Emrys' Way of Being

4.62 Practitioners Feedback on the Themes and Ways of Being

Practitioners shared their feedback on the themes and ways of being (see *Appendix 3, p.441).* I steered the conversation towards what was important about the themes and identified potential areas that may have been omitted. I then repeated this process when discussing how these ways might be achieved in an effort to improve the original ways. For examples of this, see Figure 4.44 and Figure 4.45.

4 Theme 1 Structured Freedom

"I was thinking of the role of the facilitator. Maybe we start off all at the same time or maybe with the same materials... Having quite a structured support, to begin with, and then letting each participant just go wherever they feel naturally inclined."

Trina

Trina's Artwork

Using line in a broken way... like you **let somebody go** and then maybe they need some **support later**, so you pick up with them... the colourful lines were like one facilitator and they are picking up with people at different points in their journey but the different colours were ... how you would react to different people in different ways giving them different sorts of support.

Trina's Artwork

Jay's Artwork

I seen a mother duck with her wee ducklings behind... they're totally fearless because they're following their mum, like they're following their leader... They'll go for a wee wander off, but they'll return to the path that the leader has created for them...it gives them the freedom to express."

Using post-it notes please consider:

Share your own experiences of and what's valuable about this Theme

having a starting point from which everyone is free to move in their own direction but needing that same start

activities that allow varied space help to allow freedom to take activities in various directions

Need to have a pinpoint to start somewhere, but difficult to have a step-by-step activity online

discussing the directions you have taken activities in sometimes help to feel like your response is listened to/ valued

Figure 4.44 Experts Feedback on Themes Example

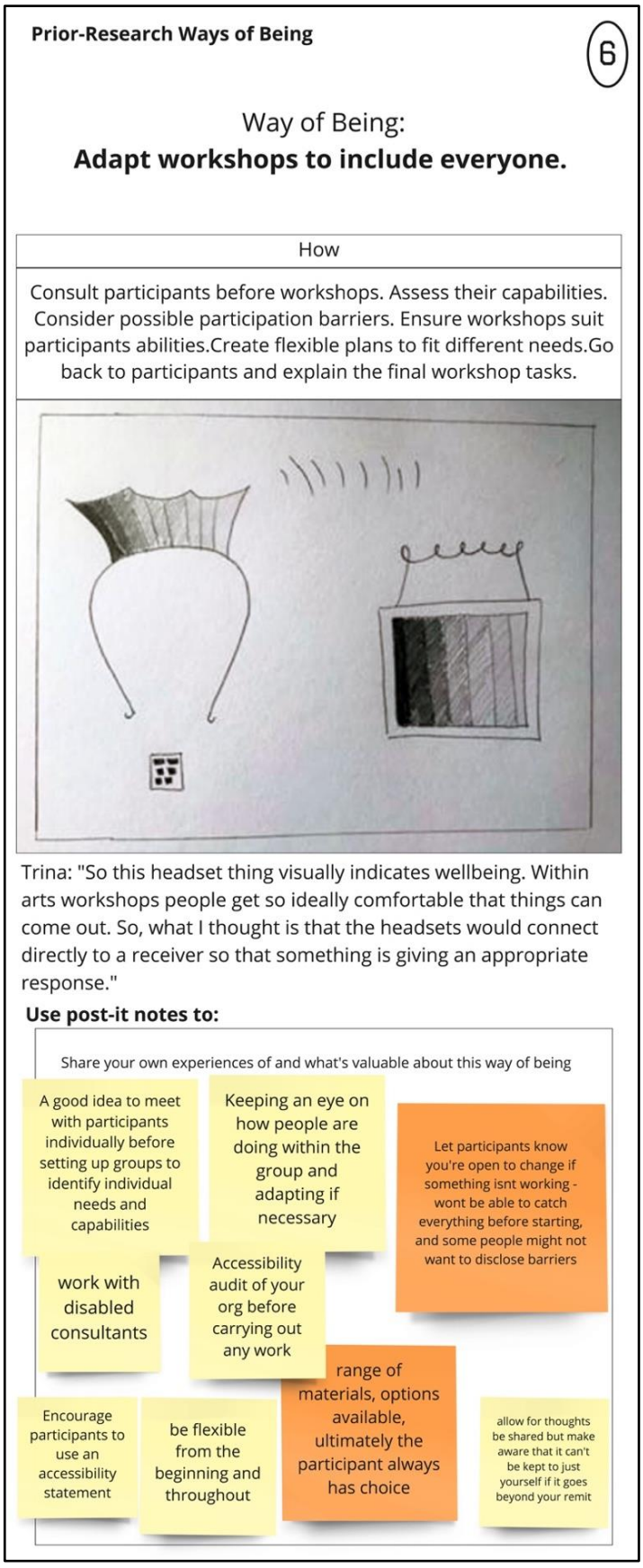


Figure 4.45 Experts Feedback on Way of Being Example

4.7 Chapter 4 Summary

In this chapter, the four online arts Workshops and practitioner focus groups have been summarised, and relevant data and insights from each are showcased. Participants and experts and my reflection highlighted and addressed several specific concerns for the online arts group. These are hinted at within the practices shared in 4.4 but are fully embodied within the findings in Chapter 5. These mainly surrounded the role of the facilitator in providing structure in the arts group while supporting individual needs and freedoms. This existed in many facets of the group, from material choice to activity creation. Despite this care for individuality, participants also highly valued the social and collaborative aspects of workshops. Participants also understood the artmaking process as an avenue for self-reinvention in a social setting. Experts reminded me of how important checking hierarchies is and iterated the importance of participant freedom. In the next chapter, I analyse fieldwork data and insights and present the findings.

Chapter 5 Analysis and Discussion

5.1 The Chapter

In this Chapter, findings from phases 2 and 4 have been shared by interpreting the data I gathered in phases 1 and 3 (showcased in Chapter 4) to answer my research questions. To do so, the themes created from the thematic analysis of the artwork discussions transcript have been presented and explained. The co-defined practices that were simplified and renamed *ways of being* have been shared. Throughout, each theme and way of being has been supported using multiple data sets and the findings discussed in relation to the literature in Chapter 2. It has then been described how the ways and themes interact. Finally, my holistic reflections as the researcher in this project have been explored.

5.2 Themes from Artwork Discussions

To answer *what are experiences of supported wellbeing like in the online arts group* (Sub-Question 1). I created a community of practice (COP) that explored the problems of transferring arts groups to online spaces by sharing creative tasks that supported artmaking and discussion and were instrumentalised towards exploring the research questions. We participated in the COP by discussing key issues and reifying them into artworks and text to embody our knowledge (see *Section 4.4*) (Wenger, 2010, p.2-5). This involved using the creative tasks in the Workshops to inform discussions, the transcript and ultimately the themes. These tasks centred around defining our aims for the workshops, emotional explorations, imaginary alien arts groups for wellbeing and explorations of practice for wellbeing.

Using thematic analysis (see *Section 3.8*), I created themes from the artwork discussion transcript (see *Appendix 3, p.323*). This involved immersing myself in the data by reading the transcript twice, and then creating initial codes that drew meaning from key transcript excerpts (such as 'perceived rules' or 'individuality'). Then I copied these codes into a separate document and categorised them into key themes. I finished this by reviewing and refining the themes (such as 'structured freedom' or 'reinventing 'ourselves together'). Towards the end of the project, these themes were presented to experts for further discussion and evaluation (see *Appendix 3, p.441*). Finally, I drafted the thematic report as seen below.

5.21 Theme 1: Structured Freedom

The above theme balanced two elements thought to be important when supporting wellbeing. Structure referred to the planned aspects of the group that brought the group together, ensured their safety and helped them express their ideas, whilst freedom allowed participants to create, interpret and discuss artworks as they pleased. Without freedom, individuals cannot direct their growth within the group, but without structure the group falls apart.

Participant's feedback advocated both structure, and freedom within the group (see Figure 4.6, Figure 4.12, and Figure 4.28). By incorporating both perspectives, participants and experts advocated balance by supporting freedom of expression alongside structure to guide the group (see Figure 4.32, Figure 4.44 and *Appendix 3,* p.404).

This theme was explored by Jay in her artwork depicting a mother duck and her ducklings which respectively represented the facilitator and their participants (see *Section 4.41* and Figure 5.1). Jay used individualised styles on each duckling to show their freedom in going for a 'wee wander off'. The facilitator's structure assured Jay of this freedom, explaining that 'they'll return to the path that the leader has created for them...it gives them the freedom to express'.

Figure 5.1 Embodiment of Structured Freedom

Facilitators can fail to provide both structure and freedom. For example, within Workshop 1, I structured the workshop in a way that may have restricted Marz's freedom in material choice (see (*Appendix 3,* p.326-329) while perhaps not structuring some tasks enough to lead participants smoothly through the Workshop (see *Section 4.22 and 4.23*).

Following Dodge et al.'s (2012) definition of wellbeing, freedom within the group empowered participants to choose their level of participation and thus their resource acquisition and the challenges they took up. I also made it clear that during the workshops, participants were under no obligation to stay. Participants that dropped out explained that their work or family commitments got in the way (see *Section 4.44*), detailing how life can present multiple challenges that often consume time for building resources. This can make balancing resources and challenges for wellbeing difficult, as Tigerlily pointed out in her wellbeing indicator (see Figure 4.13).

Van-Lith et al. corroborates this theme by highlighting the necessity of 'guides 'and 'freedom' for participant development (2010). Freedom includes the freedom to not share oneself on screen. This theme extended Turner-Haliday's freedoms into the online realm (2013) and is implicit within humanistic Art Therapies that insist on participant-led care (Malchiodi, 2003, p.58-70; Rogers, 1969, 1961). However, this level of freedom may contradict Shaw's case study, which persuaded the group to use their cameras despite their unwillingness to share (2020, p.215). Such an approach was contested by Emrys, Linda and Ursula in the focus group. As art therapist Ursula Kelly explains, '…for some people, just sitting there with their cameras off, it's enough for them to hear what has happened and to feel part of the group' (*Appendix 3,* p.433, 435, 441).

Experiences of supported wellbeing required Structured Freedom and for facilitators to nurture this theme, it became clear that they must plan and structure in a multitude of ways to mitigate issues from arising while being wary not to restrict participants' freedom. In navigating such complexity, the ways of being have been crafted to guide facilitators. Many

of the ways of being related to this theme, particularly Facilitate an empowered freedom of expression (see *Section 5.32*).

Analogous to Turner-Haliday's (2013) 'Freedom from expectation' in the arts group causing 'Personal growth' to occur for participants, if Structured Freedom is attained in the group, the following theme of Reinventing Ourselves Together is more likely to be experienced by participants.

5.22 Theme 2: Reinventing Ourselves Together

While *structured Freedom* brought the group together and facilitated individual liberties, the participants pointed towards the Workshop's creative and social processes as avenues for self-conceptions to change. The *theme Reinventing Ourselves Together* embodied this mechanism of change, where participants' conceptions of selves were thrown into flux during the interpretative processes of artmaking and discussion.

Marz's alien arts group artwork depicted each participant's uniqueness (see Figure 4.21 and *Appendix 3,* p.393-399). Despite this, Marz attributed her artwork's originality to my example (see Figure 4.22). Afterwards, however, the group uncovered that she had used her own fingerprints in the image and that each of her artworks had explored the individuality of each participant in the group. Positive group discussion made Marz aware of her artwork's value, and her own value as its creator which helped her redefine her contribution and her sense of self by saying 'you are original… because it's done by you' *(Appendix 3,* p.396).

The desire towards social reinvention culminated in Workshop 4's feedback inspired task. In this task, to better understand the group, we interviewed each other and translated our interviews into artworks. We collated our artworks together, creating a digital group collage (see *Section 4.5* and Figure 4.36). By doing this we formed social bonds (see *Section 4.52* and Figure 4.38) and gained new perspectives of ourselves from the viewpoints of others within the group.

Figure 5.2 Embodiment of Reinventing Ourselves Together

This theme elaborated upon Art Therapy's understanding of a changing self-narrative (see *Section 2.41*), by insisting on Structured Freedom as a prerequisite that allowed participants the liberty to create and self-reinvent. The theme took this changing self-narrative into the group domain by insisting on a synthesis between internal (individual) and external (social) conceptions of self where participants were empowered to self-explore through artmaking and then discuss and reflect upon this as a group, both of which appeared to feed into participants' sense of self-conception. This theme expanded on what Van-lith et al. (2010) and Turner-Haliday (2013) call '*expanding one's potentia*l' or '*personal growth'*. Like both authors explain, this theme relied on freedom, but contrary to Turner-Haliday's understanding, it also required *structure*. Her omission of structure may be due to her not consulting practitioners who are typically the facilitators of *structure* in arts groups. Dodge et al.'s definition of wellbeing links to the theme by seeing this change as supporting participants to build physical, psychological and social resources within the group that inevitably alter their conception of self (2012).

Reinventing Ourselves Together seemingly was considered an experience of supported wellbeing in the online arts group by the research sample. Experts helped corroborate aspects of the theme but highlighted the barriers in achieving it (see *Appendix 3,* p.441) and possible solutions contained in the ways of being described in the next section.

5.3 Ways of Being

To answer *what practices and resources could support the delivery of an online arts group for wellbeing* (Sub-Question 2). I positioned the *ways of being,* which originated from the online arts group's Community of Practice in Workshop 3's practices co-creation task (see *Section 4.4*). These practices were iterated three times: once with participants in Workshop 4 (see *Section 4.5*), again in phase 2's analysis which was informed by the thematic analysis of artwork discussions and finally in phase 4's analysis where I incorporated the focus group experts own *ways* and feedback to expand and clarify the existing ones (see *Appendix p.415*).

In Phase 2's analysis, I clarified the remaining practices and how they might be achieved. Care was taken not to alter participants original sentiment by referring to the discussion recording. I also changed the practice's terminology to ways of being to connote their embodied subjective and contextual nature, whereby each practitioner might have their bespoke ways for their arts group. These ways were presented to expert practitioners in a focus group. In phase 4's analysis the final set of *ways* were reached by systematically going through the expert's own ways and direct feedback on the preliminary findings, then integrating key insights into the existing ways particularly regarding how to enact them. In table 2 the final ways are listed along with guidance on how to realise them. They are presented individually, and despite this categorisation, the complex nature of online arts groups meant that they were not mutually exclusive, as experts pointed out in the focus group (Appendix 3, p.477, 481).

Ways of Being	How to realise
Devise rich social interactions.	Create collaborative activities around common experiences to help participants form bonds and share ideas and artworks. Sincerely build trust by checking on all participants personally. Start artwork discussions with positive feedback; ensure all voices are welcomed, heard, and valued. Respect boundaries and accept that not all participants will connect equally.
Facilitate an empowered freedom of expression.	Share duties with a co-facilitator. Undermine hierarchies by participating equally using open and adaptable process-based activities and tools that provide a choice of expressive avenues. Listen and guide by offering practical examples rather than instructing or judging participants' artmaking. Identify and act on support points by being attentive and responsive to help participants artworks develop. Do not force participation; instead, praise it at any level.
Support playful self-exploration and discovery.	Create playful environments using unpredictable activities and tools for spontaneous experiences. Listen to and inquire with participants to understand them and their artworks. Participants explain their artworks before the group discusses them and reflect on their wellbeing before and after Workshops.
Safeguard both during and after the session.	Use a pre-joining criterion to select appropriate participants. Have initial group guidelines and protocol that are iterated and agreed on to ensure a bespoke, safe and consistent space. Affirm the freedom not to participate. Attend to participants using the messenger and video stream. Avoid delving into topics you cannot handle. Share safe and sensible ways to contact you outside Workshops. Prepare a list of referral routes to signpost to after workshops. Finish with a grounding activity to leave participants feeling safe.
Adapt Workshops to welcome and include everyone.	Conduct a capability, accessibility and technology audit to identify potential barriers and design Workshops accordingly. Use flexible activities and tools. Consult and inform participants before Workshops to explain the tasks and technology involved and confirm their expectations. Ask participants to suggest improvements to Workshops and implement suggestions. Use live captions and typed comments to overcome participation barriers.

Table 5.1 Final Ways of Being

5.31 *Way 1:* Devise rich social interactions.

This way encouraged practitioners to devise rich social interactions to navigate the nuances of supporting social interactions and collaboration for wellbeing. Participant's feedback praised group discussion and collaboration elements of Workshops when exploring ideas and getting to know each other (see Figure 4.28, Figure 4.38, and Figure 4.39) supporting a need for this way.

Joni and Trina's aim artworks (see *Section 4.21 and Appendix 3,* p. 325-329, 335) depicted their desires to collaborate with others allowing for emergent social experiences. Some examples of these social experiences included sharing feelings, aspects of self, stories or skills, particularly in Workshops 2 and 4 (see Appendices 2, p.298, 340, and 3, p.415). Almost all participants artworks from Workshop 3's alien arts group task embodied this *way* by depicting groups where communication and collaboration barriers were overcome (see *Section 4.4 and Appendix 3, p.372*).

The themes, wellbeing indicators, feedback and the literature considered social aspects of the group as influential on wellbeing (Billington, et al., 2012; Teuton, 2015; Tough, et al., 2017) (see Figure 4.38,Figure 4.39,Figure 4.41). However, despite this importance of encouraging socialisation, practical guidance on supporting social interaction were limited and not mentioned in Burghes, et al. (2020), Huet, et al. (2020) or Shaw (2020) who share guidance for online arts groups and highlight communication issues in virtual contexts and resultant social strain.

5.32 *Way 2:* Facilitate an empowered freedom of expression.

This *way* encouraged facilitators to empower their participants' freedom of expression. In tasks, facilitators were to allow participants to create whatever they wanted, with whatever materials they liked, to help them express themselves (see Figure 4.6). Facilitator's empowered participants' expression by supporting individuals throughout the workshop. As Trina said, 'you let somebody go and then maybe they need some support, so you pick up with them' (Appendix 3, p.404-407). This *way* showed that facilitators needed to balance providing an overall Workshop plan and facilitation structure against delivering a bespoke experience for each participant to support their individual sense of wellbeing.

Within my reflections, I found supporting participants far easier when a detailed structure had been planned for each Workshop. This particularly helped in Workshop 2 when technical malfunctions occurred for me, and Mark had to take over (see *Section 4.3*). Having pre-planned facilitation, together we supported participants' expression; illustrating how this way linked to the theme Structured Freedom. Several experts particularly supported this way, highlighted by Christine who suggests 'wearing a facilitator hat… rather than being a bit more of a hierarchical instructor' (Appendix 3, p.424, 421, and 438).

Furthermore, Trina's aim artwork advocated being 'person centred'; then in her explorations of practice artwork she depicted the *way* abstractly using broken lines and different colours to show the facilitators bespoke interactions with each participant throughout the Workshop (see Figure 4.5, Figure 4.26 and Appendix 3 p.335, 404-407)

This *way* somewhat resembled and elaborated on Van-Lith et al's (2010) *Quality 2, 'the facilitator guides yet provides freedom and support to assist in expanding one's potential'.* It also clearly described the practices that facilitators often use to support what Turner-Haliday' calls '*freedom to do*' (2013 p.51) during the artmaking process. Burghes et al. provides practical advice similar to the content of this way advocating a second practitioner (2020, p.16), as did Linda Vickers from the focus group (see Appendix 3, p.491).

5.33 *Way 3:* Support playful self-exploration and discovery.

Altogether, this way advocated that facilitators support participants in their journey of self-discovery using the artmaking process. Participants supported by the group understood it as a place to redefine themselves through emergent unpredictable creative activities and artmaking. Hence there was great concern for facilitators to create such an environment that was conducive to self-exploration and discovery.

In Workshop 2, Jay described her artwork depicting calm emotion (see Figure 4.11). She described her journey towards becoming a more relaxed person (Appendix 3, p.354-358) and how artmaking helped her achieve this. Jay's wellbeing indicators and aim (Figure 4.1, Figure 4.13, Figure 4.14, Figure 4.30 and Figure 4.31) corroborated her exploration of self, relating to how she desired to 'create me time'. She achieved her aim, in Workshop 3 where she described how she was now able to be 'helping others while accepting help from others'. This, coupled with how she felt the artmaking in Workshop 2 had helped her to achieve her other goal of being a calmer person (Appendix 3, p.354-358), supported the positive effects that artmaking and interpretation can have. These effects corroborated by Art Therapy more generally (Case and Dalley 2014; Malchiodi 2003). Seemingly, in the

group, Jay built social and psychological resources throughout (Dodge et al., 2012) that, upon reflection, shifted small aspects of her own self-conception.

Furthermore, Marz found that freedom in material choice related to her sense of self. Experiencing her expression being restricted through the material selection in Workshop 1's task made her understand and share this, saying 'I don't like pencils either, they freak me out' (see Appendix 3, p.326) while iterating this sentiment in her feedback (see Figure 4.6). She continued this idea within her practice artwork (see Figure 4.24 and Appendix 3, p.414-417) saying 'I tried to do both… the chance to explore discover yourself and … the freedom of expression within the tools/materials used'. By mixing these two early, co-defined iterations of the ways of being she described the relationship between exploring the artmaking process and discovering yourself. Marz described making her artwork and how her 'play' with ink 'related to exploration and discovery' using 'subconscious drawing'. To finish, she pinned her drawings onto her canvas, explaining that 'nothing is set, everything is very much in motion', just like participants' self-conception, as mixing these early ways of being to create one artwork implied. She explored new materials that, in turn, helped her self-discover. This importance of play was corroborated in the focus group by Linda Vickers and Ursula Kelly's *ways*, which elaborated on how the playful aspects of this way might be facilitated (Appendix 3, p.434, 438).

Mark's artwork embodied this way (see Figure 4.25). After creating a self-portrait Mark was able to use the photo editing software to 'explore… new connections, new arrangements free from the constructs of physical reality' (see Appendix 3, p.399). The Art Therapy literature supported this by encouraging ownership over self-narrative for participants

through artmaking (Kinney and Mueller, 2018, p.28; Case and Dalley 2014, p. 88; Malchiodi, 2013, p.9). This way was supported particularly by way 2: Facilitate an empowered freedom of expression. Such freedom and support were essential for participants to direct their own growth towards balanced wellbeing (Dodge et al., 2012).

5.34 *Way 4:* Safeguard both during and after the session.

This *way* concerned the nuanced challenge of safeguarding, which facilitators must consider with their participants with regards to their specific group context, while recognising its safety limitations by sourcing external input where necessary. Through carefully considering these issues, facilitators are able to more effectively protect participants' wellbeing.

From my reflections, providing initial loose group guidelines proved useful by clarifying what behaviours were acceptable (see *Section 4.23*), whilst enabling participants freedom during group interactions, (deemed imperative by *way 2)* (see *Section 5.32*). When creating this *way,* an acknowledgement was made that every group is different, and thus each group needed to create their own guidelines. We did this in our group using multiple discussions and the practices task (see *Sections 4.4,4.5*). Some of the experts highlighted the importance of getting participants to formally agree to following set guidelines (Appendix 3, p.441).

Fi stressed the facilitator must 'create that atmosphere where it is welcoming and safe… where you can be yourself' (see Appendix 3, p.389). This *way* highlighted that while discussion can be transformative, it also presents risk. Trina corroborated this risk in her artwork, saying 'people get so ideally comfortable that things can come out' (see Appendix

3, p.387). Building on this, Fi then considered the safety limitations of the online arts group using her artwork (see Figure 4.23). She described how participants could be triggered during discussions and stresses the need for a 'backup' using external support (Appendix 3, p.389).

Similar to Huet et al. (2020), the group decided that facilitators should refer all participants to support channels indirectly to safeguard in case facilitators miss participant's more indirect signals for support, which is more likely to happen online due to the communication barriers (Shaw 2020). This *way* also provided guidance on how facilitators might manage interactions with participants outside of the group context, aligned to Burghes et al. (2020) who speaks of the safety risk to facilitators wellbeing by being a supportive point of contact for participants outside the group. In negating this pressure, the *way* recommended outsourcing participant support to other services outside of group time where appropriate.

It was also suggested that potential participants be recruited using a pre-joining questionnaire (see *Section 4.3* and Figure 4.33), a step corroborated by Huet et al. (2020). Meaning that, if necessary, some individuals should be signposted to more appropriate services. Furthermore, and while I did provide guidance and descriptions for using the software within the group (see Appendix 1, p.215); as the research was emergent, I neglected to provide safety instructions for the software as Huet et al. advocate. As the group consisted of adults who understood the internet, this was low risk and resulted in no issues. However, if working with other groups, particularly children, this might have been necessary as Burghes et al. (2020) suggest.

5.35 *Way 5:* Adapt Workshops to welcome and include everyone.

This *way* was particularly concerned with issues surrounding inclusivity and accessibility. This meant not just making sure participants could participate but also making sure the Workshops were designed to suit individual capabilities.

Trina, in her artwork, spoke to this *way* by conceptualising a tool that allowed participants to share their wellbeing with the group at their discretion (see Figure 4.20). She explained that her device could reduce 'barriers' to participation and expression (Appendix 3, p.387-393). There may be an analogy to be made between Trina's tool and the arts group itself. While our tools, namely computers, internet etc., connected us, allowing new possibilities for participation, due to their imperfections they also created new technological 'barriers'.

These barriers highlighted by Louisa in Workshop 1 and Fi in Workshop 2 both had their participation restricted due to technological malfunctions (see *Sections 4.2, 4.3* and Appendix 2, p.245, 263). This was made particularly pertinent by Fi's reluctance to participate in the wellbeing indicator after the malfunction (see *Section 4.33* and Figure 4.14). My own reflections alongside Fi and Elle's feedback in Workshop 2 supported this need for planning and adaptation (see Figure 4.12 and Appendix 2, p.263). Although participation for most participants was successful, having a flexible plan in place (which includes preparing participants) for contingency may have mitigated some of these issues.

These challenges were also raised in the focus group, where Emrys in particular advocated undertaking audits to ascertain the technological literacy of participants, access to hard and software, and physical capabilities before Workshops (see Appendix 3, p.493). This *way*

expanded on recommendations made by Huet et al.'s (2020) and Burghes et al. (2020), which emphasised the need for technological auditing.

5.4 Validation

I validated the findings in several ways. To consider if my Workshops supported wellbeing, I used the wellbeing indicator before and after the Workshops. Despite small exceptions, the effects seemed positive overall (see *Sections 4.33,4.43 and 4.53*), indicating some level of efficacy within the created practices, which were iterated and clarified by participants in Workshop 4. The ways of being contained these practices. The themes gave a possible conceptual understanding of an arts group's qualities that were conducive to positive change in participants and their wellbeing. They, along with the *ways, were* refined and clarified further using my experience and the other data during analysis before they were reviewed by the group of experts. Finally, I once more iterated the findings by integrating insights from the expert focus group during the final round of analysis, achieving Objective 3, to *validate findings with experts in online arts groups for wellbeing*. All of these procedures validated the findings and ultimately made them useful for practitioners and pertinent to the online context, meaning they could have a level of truth-value according to pragmatist epistemology.

5.5 Findings Relations

Describing the findings holistically below is the thematic map depicting relationships between the findings. The themes are in large black writing; the sub-themes are within coloured circles in medium black writing; and the ways are within blue circles in white

writing (See Figure 5.3 Thematic Map). *The ways describe the interconnected aspects of running the online arts group for wellbeing. The sub-themes are the component parts of the themes. The black arrows show how Structured freedom should be embodied within the ways while the grey arrows show how the ways provided practice and resources to make Reinventing ourselves together through artmaking and interpretation individually and collectively more likely to occur. In this sense the ways of being bridge the themes through practice.*

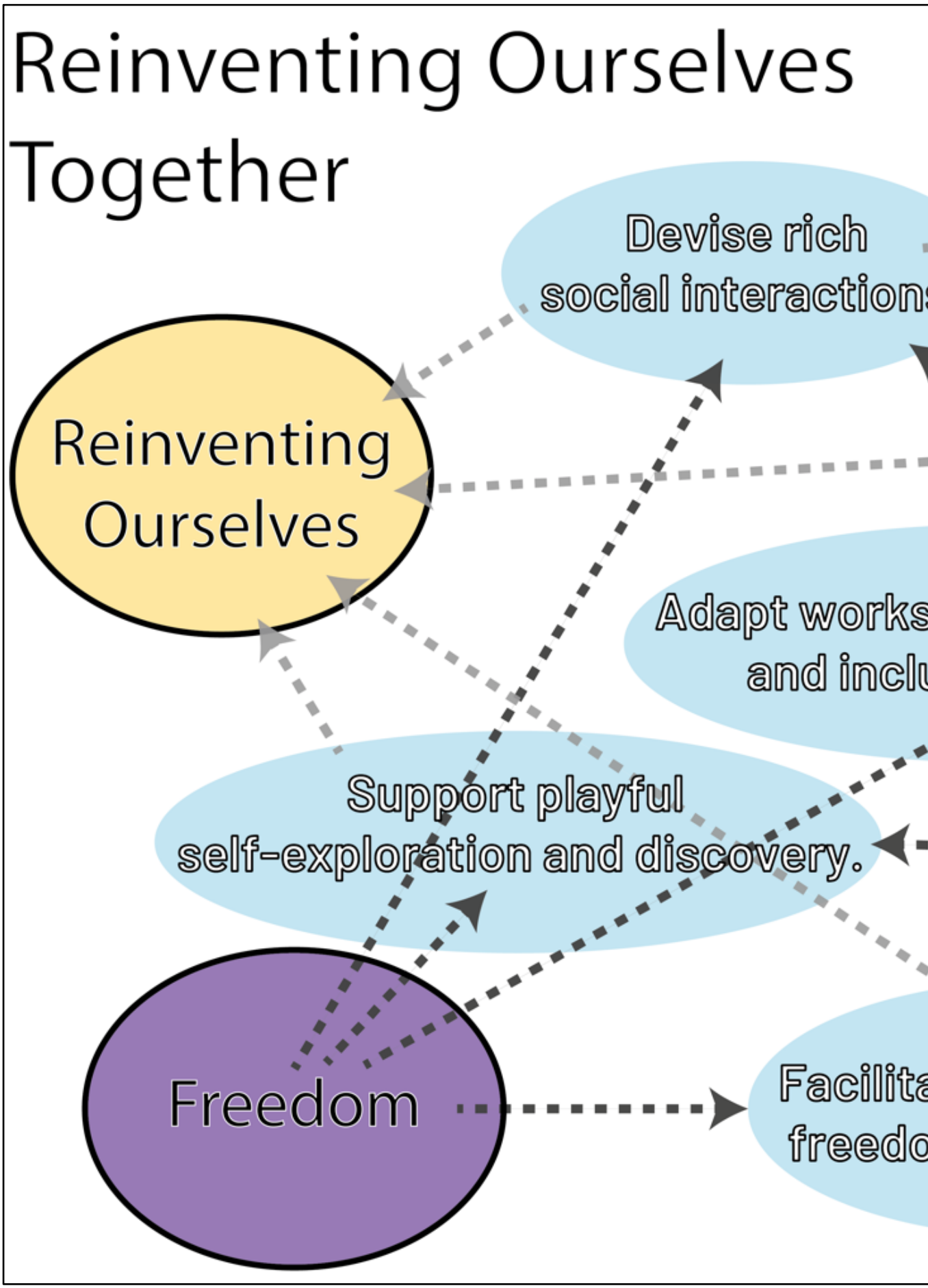
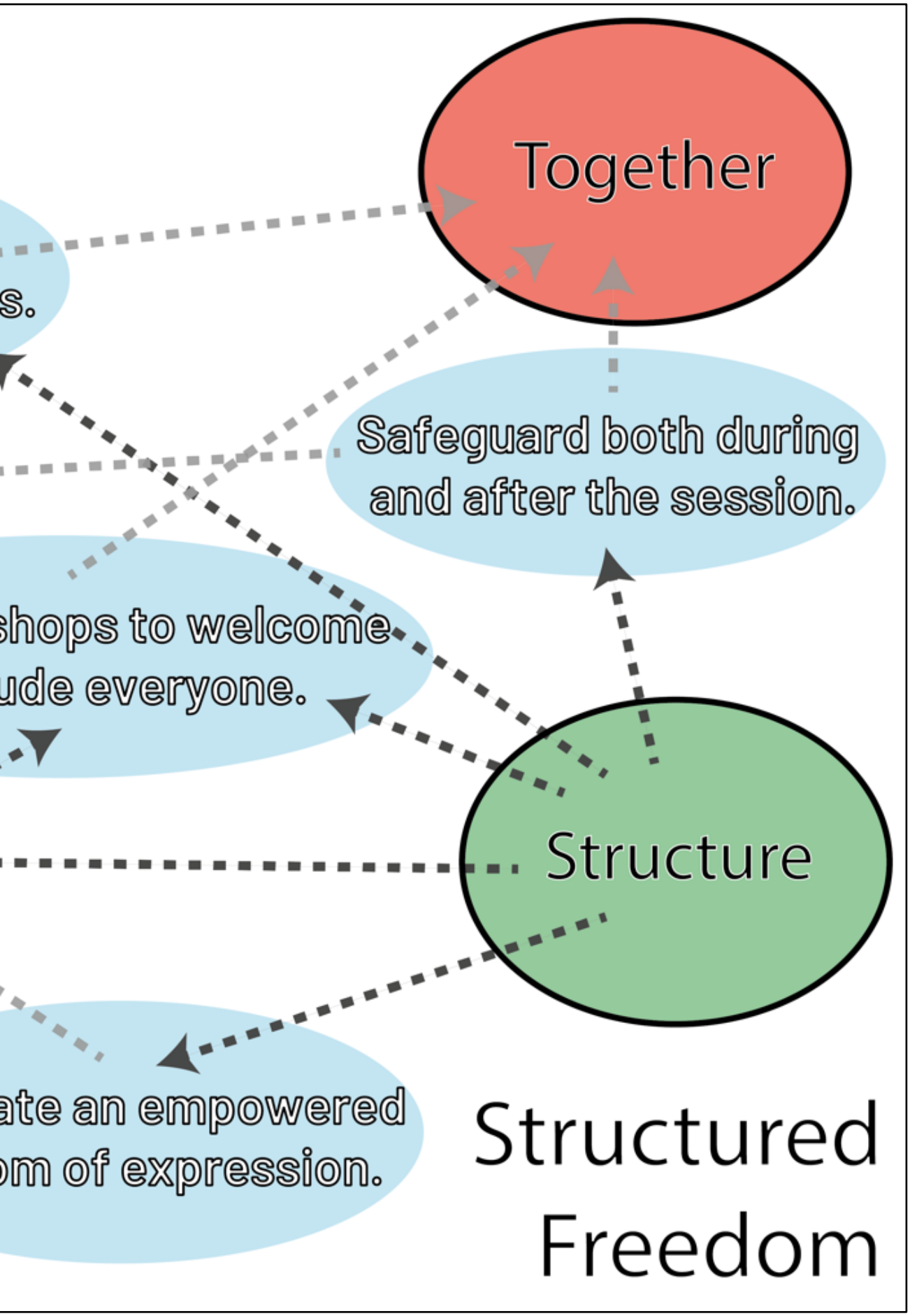


Figure 5.3 Thematic Map


Together
s.
Safeguard both during
and after the session.
shops to welcome
ude everyone.
Structure
ate an empowered
om of expression.
Structured
Freedom

5.6 Key Reflections

To answer *how can an in-person arts group for wellbeing be created as an online shared experience for participants* (Primary Research Question), I collaborated with an arts organisation and co-facilitator to prototype a series of four online Workshops, which were then delivered to a group of participants. Whilst participating, this newly formed Community of Practice (COP) explored the challenges of transferring the experience of in-person art groups to digital platforms as well as reflected on ways wellbeing was and could be supported. Implementing this research through a Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodological framework, insights were gleaned to inform future practice. In analysing the data, I developed a set of preliminary findings. These findings were then evaluated and validated in a focus group attended by a group of expert practitioners with experience in hosting online arts groups. During the final round of analysis, I integrated insights from the focus group so as to develop the final findings that addressed the research questions.

Reflecting on the project and my own role, the participation of others was what gave this project its strength. Without the shared knowledge of the practitioners and participants, I would not have had such a rich growth over the last two years. Whilst they shaped the data and findings, they also shaped my practice and development. Working with my co-facilitator to plan and facilitate the Workshops using various software's expanded my practice exponentially, supporting my confidence in future engagements particularly with groups online. Participants in the Workshops and focus group were rich in both professional and life experience. Despite the Workshop's random sample, each perspective was well-informed on different pertinent aspects of the online arts group. What was interesting was

the role reversal some participants who were facilitators experienced during the Workshops. These participants reflected on my practice with regards to their own by participating in the Workshops. Inevitably, this brought up salient improvements and adjustments to both practices. The same was true for the focus group, though experts had less exposure to my practice. Instead, their focus was on validating and improving the existing findings by comparing them to their own experiences as a practitioner in the context. The subsequent analysis helped me to integrate their understandings into my findings and practice.

Reflecting on adopting a PAR methodological approach, I acknowledge the limitations I faced in doing so, particularly within the pandemic online context where interaction itself was restricted, not to mention this being my first step into academic work. All of this limited the level of participation granted to the research. Nonetheless, I made every effort to empower my participant's voices throughout. This shows clearly in the *ways of being* that incorporated the multiple ideas and perspectives in supporting wellbeing that I engaged with throughout the investigation.

This research has shown that PAR projects are not restricted to in-person settings. Instead, it embodied PAR's inherently democratic stance by demonstrating that online technology might be used as an avenue to support the participation of untapped populations who might be restricted in their ability to attend in-person sessions. Following this drive towards sustained participation, the findings have the potential to address participation barriers. They do this by supporting the social dynamics of an online group and supporting facilitators to adapt their planning and facilitation to the online context. Reflecting on the broader

context of Covid-19 and wider inclusivity and accessibility challenges, the insights presented here could contribute to and shape future PAR projects taking place within hybrid spaces (as many participatory arts projects are now using).

Reflecting further, additional limitations in the research have come into focus. One multifaceted limitation was the participant sample, which presented several biases. The oversampling of participants from arts backgrounds meant that beginners were not well represented, and seemingly no ethnic minorities participated. Another issue was the lack of male engagement in the Workshops and focus group, except for Mark, my co-facilitator. Another limitation was my closeness to the research. I personally have theoretical inclinations to Buddhist and Existentialist theories of self, which might have influenced my theme interpretations, although the mentioned humanistic Art Therapies well represent similar ideas. After reading the literature, I may have biased my interpretation of data. This is particularly true within the *themes* despite my efforts to link findings to data. Nonetheless, I did make an effort to use the data to support my interpretation. Finally, as the participants were also primarily arts practitioners, they may have been exposed to similar ideas through their education, possibly creating an echo chamber.

Reflecting on the impact the project had on participants within the scope and scale of research, participants in Phases 1 and 3, most of whom were practitioners, experienced, reflected on, gave feedback and altered my ways of planning and facilitating arts groups online. This allowed them to understand the context during the process and to engage with technology in a way that could be used in their own practice (such as Miro, Zoom and Pixlr). This engagement's impact might also include supporting digital inclusion, as sharing these

skills with practitioners inevitably means they could share some of them with their participants. Given the PAR approach taken, it was important for participants to contribute to each other's learning, which made the process reciprocal in nature and, as participants alluded, an enriching experience.

5.7 Chapter Summary

In this Chapter I have interpreted the data presented within Chapter 4 and the Appendices, yielding findings that answered the research questions. I have explained, explored and discussed the themes of *Structured freedom* and *Reinventing ourselves togeth*er using the multiple data sets and the literature. I have done the same to the *ways of being*: *devise rich social interactions, facilitate an empowered freedom of expression, support playful self-exploration and discovery, safeguard both during and after the session, and adapt Workshops to welcome and include everyone*. I have subsequently described the findings holistically and their relations. I concluded this chapter by describing how I validated my findings and presenting my key reflections from the project. In the coming Chapter, I conclude the thesis.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

6.1 The Chapter

This chapter summarises the research, key findings, potential transferability to other contexts, and limitations. Then I outline key areas for future research.

6.2 The Research and its Findings

This research used a participatory action research methodology and explored the context of online arts groups for wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic. It did this by conducting a series of online Workshops with participants, followed by an expert focus group to investigate *how can an in-person arts group for wellbeing be created as an online shared experience for participants* (Primary Research Question*).* To answer this question, the research presents its planning, facilitation, reflection and discussions; documented within Chapters 4 and 5 and in detail within *Appendices 2 and 3*.

The research also presents two sets of findings, the interpreted themes and ways of being. The elaboration of the themes *Structured Freedom* and *Reinventing Ourselves Together* in *Section 5.2* answer *what are experiences of supported wellbeing like in the online arts group* (Sub-Question 1), by showing how *structure* brings the group together while freedom allows participants to be who they are, and do what they like. This supports the second theme Reinventing ourselves together which shows how participants through artmaking and interpretation in the safe social setting of the online arts group support their wellbeing through changing self-conceptions.

The ways of being describe practices that are a synthesis of participants and experts' voices and my own reflections. These practices were to support wellbeing within the online arts group. Hence the ways: devise rich social interactions, facilitate an empowered freedom of expression, support playful self-exploration and discovery, safeguard both during and after the session, and adapt Workshops to welcome and include everyone answer, *what practices and resources could support the delivery of an online arts group for wellbeing?* (Sub-Question 2).

6.3 Transferability

These findings should be understood as guidelines, not as rules. With this understanding and further investigation, other practitioners might employ the findings within diverse online arts groups. It was part of this research's aim to understand aspects of the context regardless of the medium used and the participants involved. While the findings cannot escape from their subjective contextualised nature, through iterations within different contexts and samples, they could reach a level where they might apply to different online arts groups contexts. Many of the findings in this research are not exclusively applicable to just the online context but also might be used within in-person facilitation.

My findings and the literature advocate that arts groups should support wellbeing. The online context presents a unique opportunity in providing online arts groups for wellbeing for people with a range of mobility limitations to support inclusion. Hence, providing opportunities to engage in art spaces virtually can widen participation by reaching these

populations who are often excluded from in-person meeting spaces due to accessibility issues.

6.4 Research Limitations

Below, the limitations of this research are set out and reflected upon, these include considerations around generalisability, research period, the sample selected and my personal biases.

A key consideration to highlight is that these findings are contextualised so should not be understood as generalisable rules. Instead, they are positioned as a set of guidelines that could be further tested, iterated and augmented by practitioners in the future. Whilst these findings have the potential to be transferable to similar contexts (like other online arts groups), practitioners should be mindful of their context-dependent nature.

Given the nature and timescale of the project, a limited set of tools and techniques were used within the group. Knowledge created in this research maintains traces of its unique context: the participants, facilitators and the technology used. This means findings cannot be generalised beyond this specific group context though insights from which might be applied as guidelines towards best practice.

In Phase 1, the sample was randomly selected using an arts organisation in Scotland. It was not representative of the general population. Most participants identified as female, except my co-facilitator, Mark, who identified as male. Hence, it may be possible that these

findings might be less applicable to men and other genders. Three participants were arts facilitators, and others had creative backgrounds. The high level of artistic skills present in this sample meant that these participants already knew how to express themselves artistically, thus making it easier to participate in the research. Participants experiencing mental illness were excluded from the sample. While participants experiencing mental illness might benefit most from these findings, more research should take place before being transferred to vulnerable populations.

The sample was purposively selected in the focus group based on the criteria that experts had facilitated an online arts group. This sample was challenging to recruit, given the busy schedule of these professionals. Nonetheless, five professionals agreed to take part. Despite an effort to contact male practitioners, the sample mainly contained female voices, except Emrys, who identified as non-binary.

Altogether the samples were rich in knowledge, but they were two very small segments of society, meaning that to become more valuable, the research should be transferred to other populations with the appropriate ethical, risk and safety measures taken before and during Workshop implementation.

Given my closeness to the research, a level of non-transferability is inherently present within the findings. While findings were created with the research sample, so many choices were made by me without the space or time to document them as this practice-based context demanded instant action. My involvement is present within my analysis iterations of the *ways* but also within the *Themes*, which rely on my interpretation. Nonetheless, even

if the themes are fallible in other contexts, they provide an understanding that encourages facilitators of online arts groups for wellbeing to support social inclusion, empowerment and self-led positive transformation.

6.5 Future Research

This research should be iterated with other populations, particularly vulnerable ones that need this support most. Different technological platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Microsoft Teams and many more should be tested. The research could also be contrasted with asynchronous online arts groups, and investigations into the differences in approach within different artistic media could also be explored. Implementing a translated version of these findings within the live in-person setting of an arts group might clarify the differences between the settings. Further investigation into the ethics of online arts groups for wellbeing regarding digital literacy and digital inclusion could be useful.

The potential impact of the findings will be directed, albeit small and contextual. This is dependent on effective dissemination of the findings with the appropriate caveats and limitations of the knowledge presented, prefacing any outcome that the wider community receives. In the future, I hope to commission such an outcome in the form of a comprehensible guide detailing the context and findings. It is hoped that this will offer arts-based practitioners support when moving to online settings.

Looking to future research and practice beyond this project, the findings and reflections presented in this chapter provide a framework, including activities, formatting and tools, for

practitioners to use as inspiration when creating online arts groups. This includes practical and theoretical guidance when planning and facilitating online arts groups for wellbeing. The findings might even have implications regarding participation in the broader context of everyday life.

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Appendices Presentation

In these Appendices, you will find documentation ordered as follows. Appendix 1 contains ethical documentation for the fieldwork engagements. Appendix 2 contains supplementary data: my reflections as researcher accompanied by images from Miro (visual collaborative software) detailing the workshops, the wellbeing indicators, participants feedback and artworks from the final workshop task. Appendix 3 contains two analysed transcripts. The workshop discussion transcript accompanied by participants' artworks, and the expert focus group transcript (including discussion, artworks, and typed feedback).

Appendix 1: Ethical Paperwork

Information Sheets and Consent Forms

Workshop Participants Forms

Information sheet

About the Project:

I would like to invite you to take part in my research project, that is part of my Masters of Research degree. Before you decide you need to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully. Ask questions if anything you read is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not to take part. The project will be coordinated by myself Skyler Ridewood, a research student at the Glasgow School of Art (GSA) in collaboration with the Arts organisation, a community interest company concerned with sharing arts practices with all people. The research is concerned with how online group arts might be used to improve our wellbeing. Wellbeing is thought of as our satisfaction of life and when supported it has been shown to have a substantial positive effect on our mental health. This is why the project has been embarked on.

I hope to provide you with an enjoyable and enriching arts arts group, where we will work together in providing you with the creative skills you need to make traditional and digital

art, while improving the arts group using your understandings of the arts group as a participant, towards supporting wellbeing.

This project hopes to understand how online arts groups might be designed to:

1. Support wellbeing.

2. Facilitate skill learning in creative technologies.

3. *Define principles of participation together in arts groups hosted online (this might be, for example, rules helping us to communicate effectively using online platforms)*

Taking part will involve:

1. An online participatory Arts arts group where you will work collaboratively yet remotely with others in creating self-directed visual artworks.

2. Design workshops exploring; what principles are considered good practice in the arts group, how participants could be given opportunities to help shape the arts arts group and how skills in creative technologies might be shared.

3. Lessons in traditional arts practice and creative technologies. You will also be asked to evaluate these after completion.

Research topics:

This project will investigate and try to uncover useful principles such as guidelines, group rules and procedures that are believed to be meaningful in supporting wellbeing in the arts group. Specifically, it will consider; how group members can contribute to shaping the arts group itself and how we might best share skills in creative technologies?

You:

You have been invited to take part in this study because you have expressed an interest in learning digital arts in an online group setting, as well as this you understand the importance of mental health and that by supporting wellbeing, we can protect it.

Your participation is completely voluntary and you have the right to refuse participation, refuse any question and withdraw at any time without any consequence whatsoever. If you so choose to withdraw at any point in the project a copy of all your data will be sent to you, before it is deleted from the research data set.

Inclusion criteria:

To participate in the project there are a number of conditions that you must meet:

You must have an internet connection.

You must have a working computer or laptop.

You must have a microphone and webcam built into your computer or that you can attach.

You must be above the age of 18.

You must not be diagnosed with a mental health condition. We regrettably cannot work with those diagnosed with a mental health condition. This is to avoid situations in which potentially vulnerable people are required to reflect on their condition in a way which might be inappropriate. We are not excluding people due to bias or prejudice, but due to the scope of the research project and capacity of our research team.

How:

Myself Skyler Ridewood (the researcher), Mark Lygate (the director of the arts organisation) , yourself and the other participants will meet weekly on every Sunday of July for three hours, this includes a one and a half hour workshop in the morning and another one and a half hour workshop in the afternoon, this will be done using the application Zoom. The project will cover traditional and digital arts techniques. To send you the art packs required for the project we will need a postal address where you can collect the materials from, this is only to send you the materials needed for the project and will be kept strictly confidential.

Using my Zoom pro account, I will securely host workshops remotely using a password protected zoom call, links to the workshops will be sent via email to you a day prior to the workshop commencing. Videos of workshops will be recorded digitally using Quick Time's record function and will be stored on a password protected hard drive which will be kept within a locked cabinet. This data will be used to capture your words and actions concerning the activities that will take place. As well as this the outcomes from the arts and design workshops will be captured digitally in the form of audio and image files. Any data linking to your identity such as your face will be protected from publication by either not being used in the publication or being altered beyond recognition. No recordings will be shared with anyone outside of myself (Skyler Ridewood, the researcher)

You will need to have access to a computer and internet connection to use the group video call software Zoom and the group design software, Miro. We will also be using the online software Pixlr E to edit our artworks digitally. Listed below are web links to all of the software's that we will use.

Group Video call Software: Zoom https://zoom.us/download

This software will be used to host our workshops it will allow us to communicate remotely during the workshops. You will need a microphone and a webcam to use this software, although most laptops and smartphones have both a microphone and webcam already built in. Zoom is free, all you need to do is create an account, you can download and install the application if you like or just use it online. Links and passwords to Zoom sessions will be sent to your provided email address a day before the workshop.

Group Design Software: Miro https://miro.com/apps/

This software will be used as a collaborative visual workspace for us as a group to work together on group arts and design works. You do not need an account to use Miro, although you can create one if you like, a link and password will be sent to your provided email address a day before the workshop.

Photo editing software: Pixlr E https://pixlr.com/e/

Pixlr E is a great free photo editing and creation software rivalling payed applications like photoshop. You do not even need to create an account to use this software. Much of the workshops that we will do will teach you how to use this application in all sorts of creative ways. It allows you to upload photos you have taken, edit them and then export them after, all for free.

Benefits and Security:

I hope for this experience to be an enriching one, where you discover a new way or ways to express yourself, where you meet new people and where you just enjoy yourself.

As with all group research, there is some uncertainty as to how participants will interact with each other. While there will be rules in place to safeguard against damaging behaviour, there is no way to completely control the actions of others. If this happens the participant who behaves negatively will be asked to leave.

Sensitive topics may arise given the nature of this project and due to this, it is possible that you might be triggered. To safeguard your wellbeing, rules will be in place allowing you to take a break from the project at any time you see fit. A no-pressure policy will be established at the start of every session where you do not need to feel you have to participate at any time for any question or activity. This is to support those who feel anxiety.

To ensure you have the tools necessary to preserve your mental health details of arts groups for mental health will be given at the end of every session. Some great arts groups include: NHS Breathing space 0800 83 85 87 and NHS Living Life 0800 328 9655

Confidentiality:

Non-anonymised data in the form of signed consent forms and video recordings are collected and kept as part of the research process, although they will be stored safely and securely and not published. Your confidentiality will be ensured in the outcomes of this study. This will be done by using a pseudonym in place of your name and if any images of

your face are used, they will be blurred to avoid identification. Data will be processed in accordance with GSA research ethics code of practice and data protection policies

Security and Storage:

Until returning to the Glasgow School of art after the Covid-19 lockdown, research data and personal data will be stored in a password-protected external hard drive, which will be held in a locked cabinet along with any hard copies of consent forms. Once Lockdown is lifted, this hard drive and the copies of consent forms will be stored in secure conditions on the Glasgow School of art premises. Research data and personal data may be held for up to 1 year after the completion of my thesis in January 2021 before the data is destroyed. This is strictly only for use in any further academic works.

Outcome:

Before finalising my findings, any contributions you have made to them will be sent back to you to confirm my interpretation of them. This research will be submitted to the Glasgow school of art in the form of a thesis, as well as this the findings will be transformed into a best practices toolkit and guide for helping participatory arts programmes to operate remotely and support wellbeing.

Workshop Plan:

Attached is an outline of the projects workshop plan. This plan contains details on the sessions that are to be conducted. Do not hesitate to ask if you need any clarificationon any aspect of the workshops.

Further Information:

If you require any further information you can contact me via

[redacted]

Or if you would like to contact my supervisor at GSA you can email Mafalda

[redacted]

Consent:

Signing this form lets me know that you consent to take part in this research project. Please write YES next to any statements that you agree with. Any statement you do not write YES to will help me to tailor the project to your requirements:

I understand …

1. What the project is about and why it is being done

   ……

2. What taking part in the project will involve ……

3. What topics the project will explore ……

4. Why I have been Invited to participate

   ……

5. The inclusion and exclusion criteria

   (Including not having a mental illness diagnosis)

   ……

6. That my participation is voluntary and I have the right to refuse participation,

refuse any question and withdraw at any time without any consequence whatsoever and that If I so choose to withdraw at any point in the project a copy of all my data will be sent to me, before it is deleted from the research data set. ……

7. How the project will run including the times, dates and the digital communication Used.

   ……

8. That personal data will be processed confidentially, in accordance with GSA's research ethics code of practice and data protection policies.

   ……

9. That digitally recorded data, including video image and audio recordings will be stored within a password protected hard drive in a locked cabinet within the researcher's home, after lockdown this will be transferred to a secure locked cabinet in GSA's campus.

   ……

10. How my data will be stored.

    ……

11. That I will need a functional computer and internet connection to participate.

    ……

12. What software I will use and that all software's can be accessed online via browser,

although I can choose to install zoom on to my own equipment for easy access.

……

13. The effects this project could have on me. ……

I agree to…

1. Being video recorded during workshops

   ……

2. The fact that I meet the inclusion and exclusion criteria

   ……

3. Sharing documentation of my outcomes from the project

   ……

4. Sharing a postal address that materials can be sent to

   ……

5. Allowing the things made and said during the project to be included in Skyler Ridewood's research and future academic publications (such as reports and conference papers)

   ……

6. Allowing the things made and said during the project to be included in a public-facing digital archive that anyone can see, this will not be attributable to an identifiable person i.e. yourself.

   ……

7. Being respectful and kind to others in the project as well as and their points of view

……

Please fill in your details and sign below to consent.

Your Chosen Pseudonym (choose a name to be used in the study):

Contact Info

E-mail:

Telephone number (optional):

Postal address

Flat number:

Street name and Number:

Post Code:

I confirm that I am 18 or older and that I consent to take part in the Circle research project.

Your Name:

Signature: **Date:**

Focus Group Expert Forms

Information Sheet

The Research

Hello there, my name is Skyler Ridewood and I am a research student at the Glasgow School of Art. I would like to invite you to take part in a focus group to unpack and reflect upon and add to insights gained from my research inquiry so far exploring online arts groups for wellbeing.

Before you decide to take part, it's important to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully, and please get in touch if you have any questions or if you would like more information: [redacted] .

About the Project

The first part of the project was coordinated by myself in collaboration with an organisation in Glasgow concerned with supporting creativity. The research set out to understand What practices can support wellbeing in an online arts group? For this, I prototyped an online arts group that took place over four weeks. Embarking on the workshop series with a set of

randomly selected participants, we created six *ways of being* in the online arts group that we considered to support wellbeing if used in practice. After analysing discussions from our creative sessions, two key *themes* emerged: *Structured Freedom* & *Reinventing Ourselves Together*. In this final part of my research project, I am keen to engage with practitioners to evaluate and develop these themes and *ways of being* further, with the aim to co-construct actionable insights that could help inform and strengthen how we facilitate online arts groups in the future.

I would like to invite you to take part as your experience and insight from working in participatory arts, wellbeing and/or mental health would offer a valuable perspective on the project. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you so choose to fully withdraw at any point in the project a copy of all your data will be sent to you, before it is deleted from the research data set. As this focus group will be taking place online using Zoom, you will require an internet connection, access to a computer/ laptop to participate and access to the online software Zoom and Miro (which are both free and easy to use – see below for more details).

Taking part will involve

Before taking part in the research, you, as a practitioner within the field, will be asked to consider one of your own *ways of being* that you think supports participants wellbeing in an online arts group. This *way of being* will be used in the upcoming focus group. You will find a document containing a pre focus group task attached to my email, where you will be able to

share one of your own *ways of being* and confirm your attendance availability for the focus group. You will then email or post this completed document back to me along with your consent form before the 19th of July 2021 to take part.

You will then be invited to participate within a focus group hosted by me with other practitioners participating, on a date that suits all of us. This focus group will last approximately two hours, and here you will share and discuss your *way of being* with the group.

Ahead of the focus group, I would like you to reflect on your practice and consider your own *ways of being* when engaging with groups. A pre focus group task sheet has been provided to capture your *way of being* and valuable experience. During the focus group, we will collectively explore our ideas together as well as reflect on findings from my earlier fieldwork. Finally, we will consolidate our discussion by co-creating a final set of *ways of being* for supporting online arts groups that are to be shared with other practitioners.

How

After reading this information sheet, completing the consent form and the pre focus group task, you will be emailed a link to a video conference call using Zoom on a date that suits us all. During this video conference call, a focus group will be held virtually using Miro (a free online visual collaboration software) to investigate the insights gained so far while adding your valuable experience to the outcome. You do not need prior experience in using Miro to take part.

Using my Zoom pro account, I will securely host and record workshops remotely using a password protected zoom call, links to the focus group will be sent to you via email a day prior to the focus group commencing. Videos of the focus group will be recorded digitally using Zoom's record function and will be stored on a password protected hard drive which will be kept within a locked cabinet. This data will be used to capture your words concerning the insights. No recordings will be shared with anyone outside of myself (Skyler Ridewood, the researcher)

Group Video call Software: Zoom https://zoom.us/download

This software will be used to host our focus group, allowing us to communicate remotely. You will need a microphone and a webcam to use this software, although most laptops have both a microphone and webcam already built in. Zoom is free, all you need to do is create an account, you can download and install the application if you like or just use it online. Links and passwords to Zoom sessions will be sent to your provided email address a day before the workshop.

Group Design Software: Miro https://miro.com/apps/

This software will be used as a collaborative visual workspace for us as a group to work together. You do not need an account to use Miro, although you can create one if you like, a link and password to the focus group boards will be sent to your provided email address a day before the workshop.

Confidentiality

With your permission your identity will be published within the research outcome. If you choose not to share your identity you can choose a pseudonym to participate with instead. As we will be participating within a group via video call you can switch off your camera if you don't want to be seen. All personal data such as email addresses, or other contact information will be securely stored by the researcher and his supervisor Mafalda Moreira, with no other persons being given access.

How Your Data Will Be Used

Insights shared in the focus group will be used to inform a research outcome of an informative guide for supporting practitioners in moving their practice online. The informative guide will be shared with arts organisations and published within a public-facing website as a free accessible output for the project. This will involve me taking direct quotations from the recorded video data. You will be given the chance to alter any direct quotations that are used before the research is published. If you chose a pseudonym, any direct quotations will be attributed to your chosen pseudonym. There will also be visual/textual tasks that we will collaboratively generate within Miro, this data will be formed through group consensus. No images of you on zoom will be published. Raw data such as recorded video content will be kept by the researcher for a period of a year before being deleted.

Further Information

If you require any further information you can contact me via [redacted] , or if you would like to contact my supervisor at GSA you can email Mafalda Moreira [redacted]

Consent

Signing this form lets me know that you consent to take part in this research project. Please write YES next to any statements that you agree with. Any statement you do not write YES to will help me to tailor the research to your requirements:

	I understand…	**YES/NO**
1.	What the research is about and why it is being done.	
2.	What taking part in the research will involve.	
3.	What topics the research will explore.	
4.	Why I have been Invited to participate.	
5.	That my participation is voluntary and I can leave the project whenever I choose.	
6.	I do not have to answer any question I do not want to.	
7.	That personal data will be processed confidentially, in accordance with Glasgow School Art's research ethics code of practice and data protection policies.	
8.	That digitally recorded data, including video image and audio recordings will be stored within a password protected hard drive in a locked cabinet within the researcher's home, after lockdown this will be transferred to a secure locked cabinet in Glasgow School Art's campus and that this data will be kept for one year before being destroyed.	

9.	What software I will use and that all software's can be accessed online via browser, although I can choose to install zoom on to my own equipment for easy access.	

	I agree to …	**YES/NO**
1.	Sharing your professional identity to allow for attribution of your contributions to this research. If I choose 'No' I can decide to use a pseudonym.	
2.	Being video recorded during the focus group (this will not be shared with anyone but the researcher).	
3.	Allowing direct speech from the things said during the focus group (verbatim quotations) to be included in Skyler Ridewood's research and future academic publications (such as reports and conference papers).	
4.	Allowing direct speech (verbatim quotations) of the things said during the project to be included within an informative guide for supporting practitioners.	
5.	Allowing the informative guide (containing your research data) to then be published on a public-facing website as a free output for the research that anyone can access.	
6.	Being respectful and kind to others in the project as well as and their points of view	

Please fill in your details and sign below to consent.

I consent to take part in this research project.

Your Name:

Signature:

Date:

Researcher's Name: Skyler Ridewood

Researcher's Signature:

Date: 23/06/21

Send It Back

Please send this completed this consent from and send it back to Skyler at

[redacted] before the July the 19th.

Pre-Research Task

Enter Your Name	
Enter Your Pseudonym (if applicable)	

Before we delve into the focus group, I would like you to share a *way of being* in online arts groups that you feel supports wellbeing, based on your experiences as an expert in this field, these will be used in the focus group; but what is a *way of being*?

What is a way of Being?

A *way of being* is a vague term that describes a type of behaviour within a specific setting. In this research, this setting is the online arts group for wellbeing. The vagueness of considering a *way of being* is itself a strength due to you being an individual practitioner with your own particular working methods. The *way of being* you create may describe characteristics, qualities, values or attributes that you consider desirable in supporting wellbeing in arts groups. Alongside your *way of being*, I would like you to think how it might be achieved in the online setting. To illustrate what a *way of being* is, a quick example from my previous workshops is provided below, along with a participant's artwork describing how it might be achieved, with a quotation to clarify on the following pages.

Example Way of Being

Way of Being	How to attain this way of being
Supported self-exploration and discovery.	Create a playful environment using bespoke tools and activities. You might send unexpected or unconventional materials for activities. After creative activities reflect on the activity and its outcomes as a group using discussion.

Marks Artwork

Participant Quote: ‘So I created this self-portrait that I cut up into parts, allowing me to break from my normal position and explore with my whole body and mind through new connections, new arrangements free from the constructs of physical reality.’

Your Way of Being

On this page, I would like you to consider one of your own *ways of being* and then share how it might be attained within an online arts group. After that, to strengthen your *way of being*, please recount any experiences you may have had in practice that support your *way of being*. Finally, to finish, can you create an artwork that illustrates your *way of being* and share it on the next blank page. This could be a drawing, painting, collage or even a poem or song. These will be shared and discussed in the focus group.

Your Way of Being	How to attain this way of being	Example from experience

Share Your Artwork Below

Please share your creative outcome below; this can be anything, for example, a drawing, painting, photograph, song, poem or a performance. We will share these in the focus group on zoom, if your creative output isn't visual/textual please create a quick recording of it and send it to me along with this form.

Appendix 2: Supplementary Fieldwork Data

Workshop 1 Reflections, 5/7/2020

Aim: Get participants familiar with the project, the software it will use and each other.

Objective 1: Get to know each other

Objective 2: Use the software

Objective 3: Understand what the project is and why it is being done

Data Collected:

1. Participants aims for the project
2. Visual artworks representing participants aim's with discussion (recorded).
3. Comments on the workshop itself

Morning session.

11:00AM:

Description:

I started off the workshop having positioned my plan on one side of my screen with Miro and zoom on the other, having gathered everyone on zoom, we all introduced ourselves one by one with myself and Mark starting. I at this point noticed one participant had an issue

with their microphone glitching which was making a repetitive noise, but it was bearable and I did not want to silence that participant by muting them.

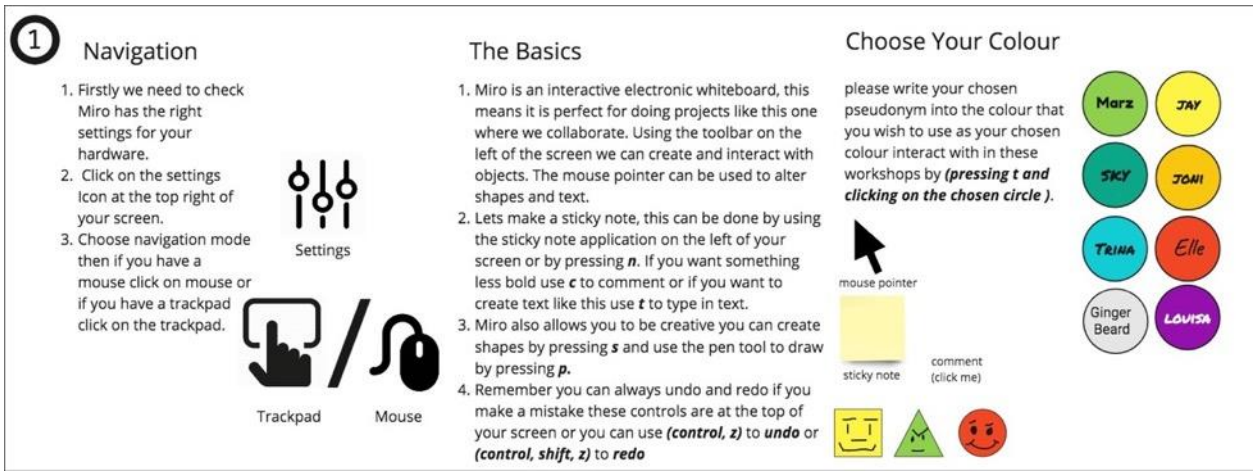
Evaluation:

Both long term planning of activities and preparing myself before the workshop helped me to not only focus on my mission but to deliver the arts group calmly and effectively. Having this plan to follow really reassured me that I couldn't go too wrong.

Conclusion:

Planning not only the workshops but also yourself is important for the success of the workshop.

Board 1:



Description:

After this I led the participants onto Miro to start the workshop. I explained how to use Miro and then gave participants their first task which was to write their chosen pseudonym inside a coloured circle. This would then become their colour which would identify them when we interact on Miro. Some participants did not understand at first so I reiterated. The same participant who had the glitch now realised that Miro on the i-pad which they were using is different than using a laptop or computer. While I could not help them to do exactly the same function as on the laptop, I managed to help them interact using different functions so they could participate.

Analysis:

Thinking on my toes is a skill that supported me in being a helpful arts group provider when problems inevitably arose. On the other hand, if I had trialled my arts group with a variety of possible variables before I started, I might have prevented these problems from ever occurring in the first place.

Conclusion:

Skills in being reflexive support practitioners in tackling live problems although pre-experimentation of a designed arts group is also a way to minimise risk of technological problems occurring.

Board 2:

Description:

After we had all got to grips with using the basic Miro functions, I began to explain the research project and what it hoped to achieve, so I shared the ground rules of the project. Everyone agreed to these rules. I then passed over to Mark who checked if anyone had any questions, several participants asked about using specific Miro functions, we explained again to clarify. Mark then asked participants to think about what their aims were for the project; participants were then asked to share their aim on a square of their chosen colour. Mark then read out the aims one by one and we noticed similarities in people's aims.

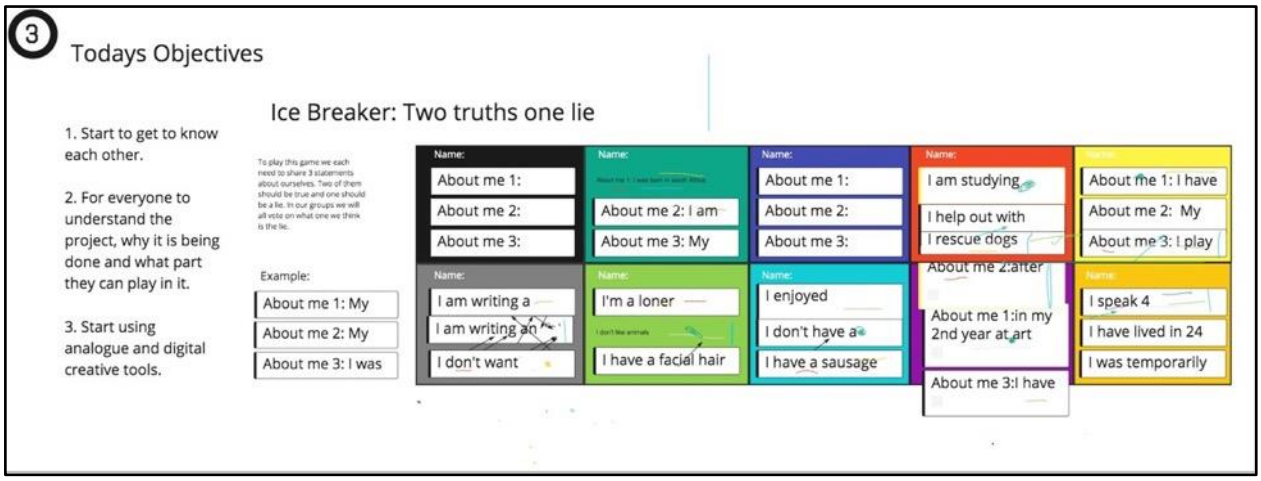
Analysis:

Although participants did not mind engaging with the aims task I feel as if it might have been better suited at the end of the session so we could have fun first before fulfilling my research needs. **Sharing our aims did though enforce the Idea of us having common reasons for doing the project.**

Conclusion:

Make sure you offer participants something first before you take data. Understanding our aims can put realistic expectations on a project but also direct the arts group provider in how to better provide.

Board 3:



Description:

We then started the first icebreaker two truths one lie; this went pretty well although some participants found it difficult to use the cards set up to write down their statements, we sorted this out by providing alternative ways of interacting. The Icebreaker really sparked conversation inside the group and if there was any lull in participants sharing their thoughts, myself and Mark would move conversation along by participating equally in the icebreaker.

Analysis:

This Icebreaker did so well precisely because it was not only planed and then tested and redesigned but also because it tackled directly the problem of what to do when you find yourself in a zoom call with 7 complete strangers. It got us to know each other in a fun way manner.

Conclusion:

Designing workshop structure that allows for common experience is deeply important to the success of the workshop and all the objectives it tries to achieve. participants can bond by collaborating in shared experiences especially ones that by their nature are fun and require interaction and collaboration.

Board 4:

Description:

I introduced the final Icebreaker of the morning session. Before we started the workshop, I asked all participants to send me their favourite visual artworks via email, I then placed them on this final Miro board. We then went around participants individually asking them three questions about their artwork so to figure out what artworks might be theirs, we then voted on the artwork we thought was most likely that persons by making a mark on the artwork in the colour corresponding to the participant in questions identity. After everyone had done this we went around participants once more with them revealing which was theirs and us seeing if we voted for the right one. Participants also explained why they chose the work that they presented adding to the discussion. We then ended for a break.

Analysis:

Two ground rules that I think helped create this safe space particularly are the freedom to be and the freedom to do (adapted from Tunerhaliday). This rule meant that all types of people are welcome in this context and that no one need feel any pressure to participate if they do not want to.

Conclusion:

Getting your participants to know each other is a great way to really form a cohesive group. Establishing participants safety and rights is important for free expression and empowerment.

12:30 PM:

Break

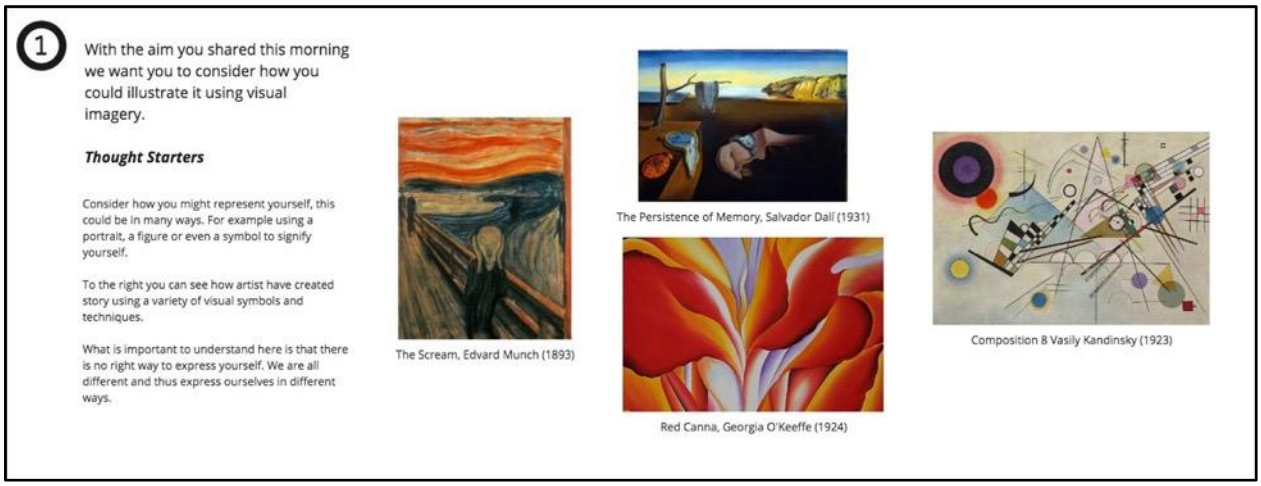
Afternoon session.

15:00 PM:

Description:

I went back to my desk to start the zoom call, one by one participants returned besides one. The Louisa who was having technical issues earlier. This participant later emailed me just as I was starting the session saying their tablet had ran out of power so they used their phone to join the zoom call shortly after the email, later they found their phone could not access my Miro board through the app.

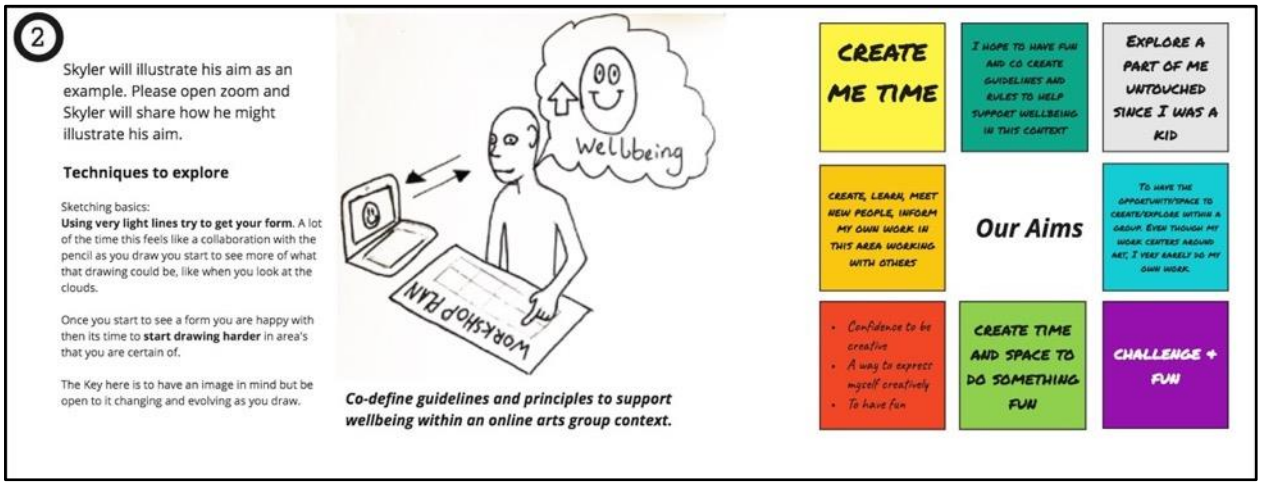
Board 1:



Description:

Using famous artworks, I talked participants through the fact that there are so many ways to express yourself and that there is no right way to do so. I quickly discussed what I liked about my listed artworks.

Board 2:



Description:

I then went onto the activity which was for us all to create a visual representation of our aims. I turned and angled my laptop's webcam so participants could see me draw. I led them through the Ideation prosses of how I might visually represent my aim using quick sketches then selecting one idea to move forward with. I then started to draw a more final version and talk through it as I went.

After a while I could see the participants were getting restless so I decided to cut it short and start everyone drawing I set a timer for 40 mins and we all got into it. Some participants started to draw, some asked for help with drawing specific realistic/symbolic representations so I demonstrated how to do so for these individuals while the others kept on drawing.

After a while there was a deafening silence so I suggested I shared music using zooms sound sharing function. I asked participants to send song suggestions to the zoom chat, only Mark did. We played Marks song and noticed that it was maybe a bit too loud on my participants end so I turned it down. Shortly after this two of our participants had to leave for other commitments that they had that day, one of which sent me her work afterwards. After 40 minutes we stopped though I let participants know when time was almost up.

Conclusion:

Planning the practical stuff in detail is especially important online as in real life you can interact in a much more fluid manner.

Participants who don't know each other may not necessarily want to share music they probably do not even have the same music taste.

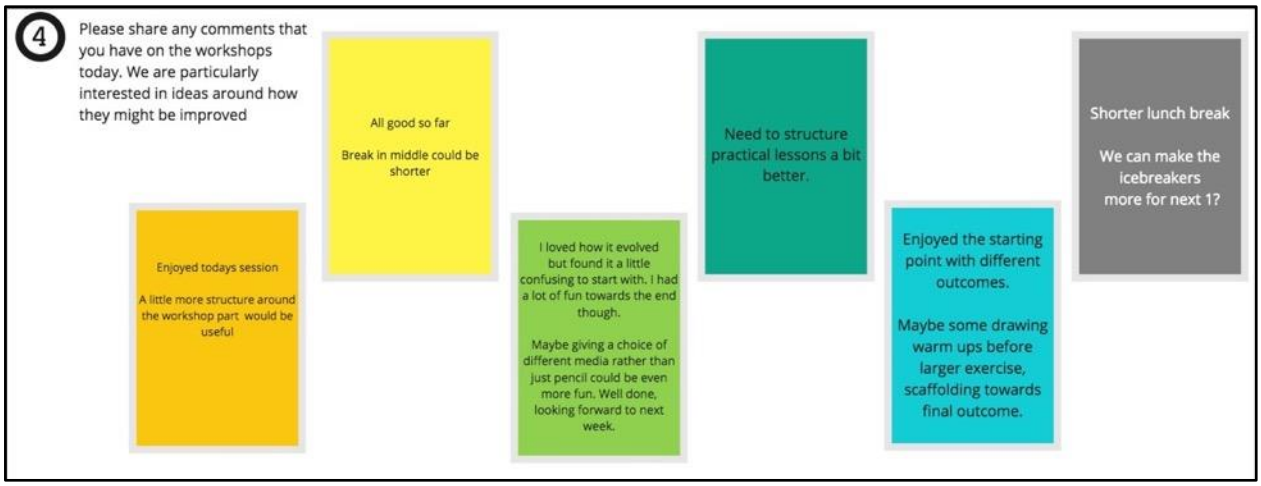
Allow for freedom let participants go for it or follow your tutorial if they so wish.

Board 3:

Description:

Mark asked participants to finish up and take photographs of their work. Then upload these to Miro, work was then placed on the 3rd Miro board on participants respective colours. I asked participants to record. Then Mark asked participants one by one to describe their aim artworks and allowed time for comments.

Board 4:



Description:

Finally, to wrap up the session I asked participants to be critical of what they experienced that day, they each wrote what they thought could have been better as did myself and Mark. I finished by thanking all the participants and explaining what next week would entail.

Final Conclusions:

Reviewing the workshops there are several apparent insights I have gained as a arts group provider:

1. A good plan makes for a good workshop. Plans not only give workshops structure to help them flow better. They also give practitioners a crutch to lean on when they find themselves flustered. A good plan reassures practitioners that they can always proceed to the next task if anything doesn't go quite right. For doing this kind of practical work live online planning even minutia details are incredibly useful

2. Be reflexive and ready to think on the spot. This helps practitioners meet the various needs participants might have as well as the variety of problems that inevitably arise, especially when conducting an online arts arts group.

3. Adding value to participants lives is the real overall goal of arts groups both online and offline. Before practitioners attempt to gain something from participants (in this case knowledge), the arts group provider should consider what they have given to the participants.

4. Designing workshops in such a way that encourages participants interact with each other is a great method for supporting group cohesion.

5. Establishing ground rules to support all participants freedoms of expression and establish their safety in the group helps to create an inclusive virtual environment free from judgement where participants can express themselves without worry.

6. Once a workshop has been designed try to trouble shoot it by imagining doing it before you actually embark on the workshop. This thought experiment can lead to practitioners picking up on issues in the original design before they implement it. This could be things that don't work or even unnecessary additions to the workshop. Once issues are found practitioners can change and iterate their design to stop these problems from ever occurring in practice.

7. Make an active effort to help participants share their voice. When doing a collaborative workshop often some individuals voices are heard over other due to their natures when it comes to empowerment a conscious effort must be made to support more quiet participants to speak. This can be designed into the fabric of the workshop.

Action Plan:

Considering this workshop holistically from the practitioner's perspective a number of alterations must be made to my approach:

Generalised changes to workshop

1. Plan in detail. Though I did plan the first workshop some elements of it lacked clarity mainly the teaching element, this left me improvising far too much in the workshop itself, in future I will plan these aspects in detail and test them out on my own beforehand using a timer.

2. Carefully consider the workshop from both my perspective and that of the arts group user's perspective. This will give my workshop a second criteria for testing against and point out flaws that I might miss if I only looked at my own perspective as an arts group provider.

3. Thoroughly go through the workshop as an arts group provider. This will literally mean doing all the planned activities by myself before actually in the workshop to trouble shoot for problems.

Specific changes to my workshop

1. My participants asked for a shorter lunch break so as of next week the break will be reduced.

2. I will contact those who had problems using tech and offer assistance.

Workshop 2 Reflections, 12/7/2020

Aim: Today we hope to gain skills in responding to a creative brief by expressing ourselves. To do this we will in the morning use traditional artistic means and in the afternoon, we will use photo editing software.

Objective 1: Gain experience in how to respond to a creative brief in many ways.

Objective 2: Learn technical and expressive skills in photo editing software and traditional arts tools

Data Collected:

4. Participants feedback on experiences using analogue and digital creative technologies.
5. Visual representations of participants emotional exploration with comments (recorded).
6. Comments on the workshop itself.
7. Qualitative wellbeing measure before and after.

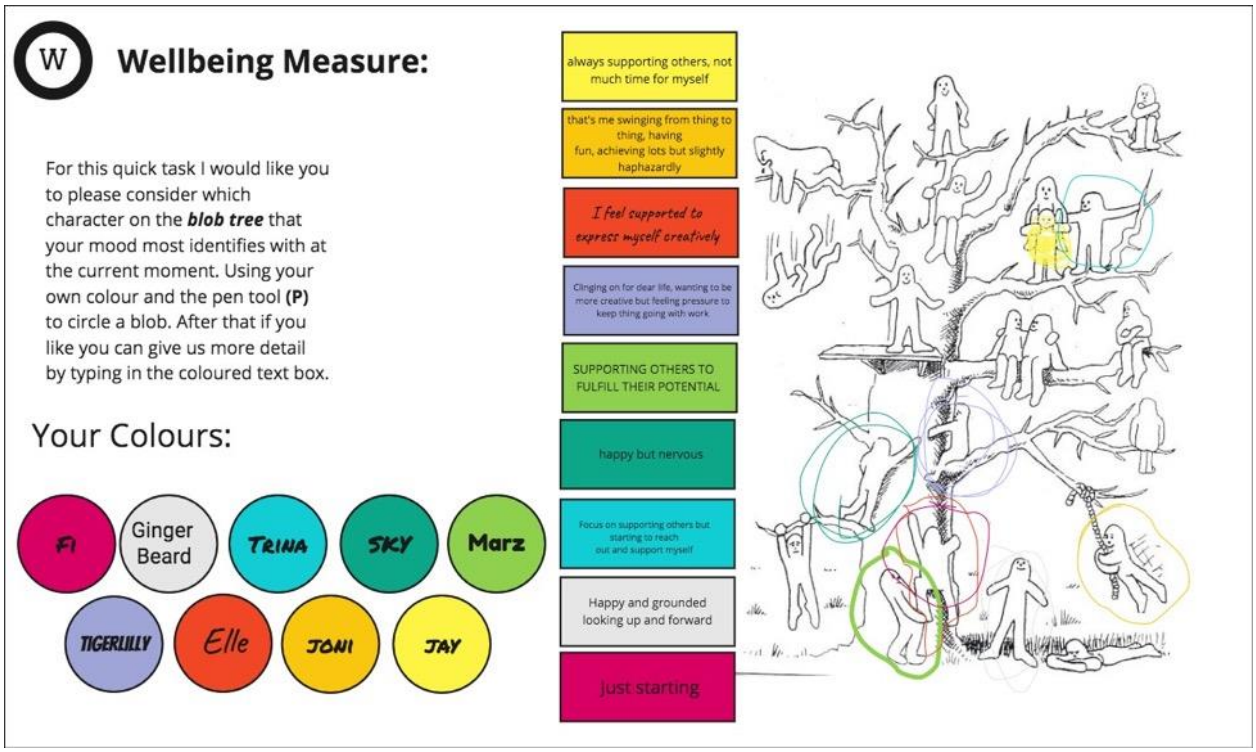
Morning session.

11:00AM:

Description:

I started off the workshop having positioned my plan on one side of my screen with Miro and zoom on the other, having gathered everyone on zoom, we all introduced ourselves one by one with myself and Mark starting. This was necessary as we had new members who had missed the first week. After this we all virtually congregated on Miro.

Starting Wellbeing Indicator:



Description

As I scripted Mark took over and described the wellbeing measure task to participants. We then all filled out the blob tree and commented on our position in the tree indirectly alluding to an aspect of our own wellbeing's.

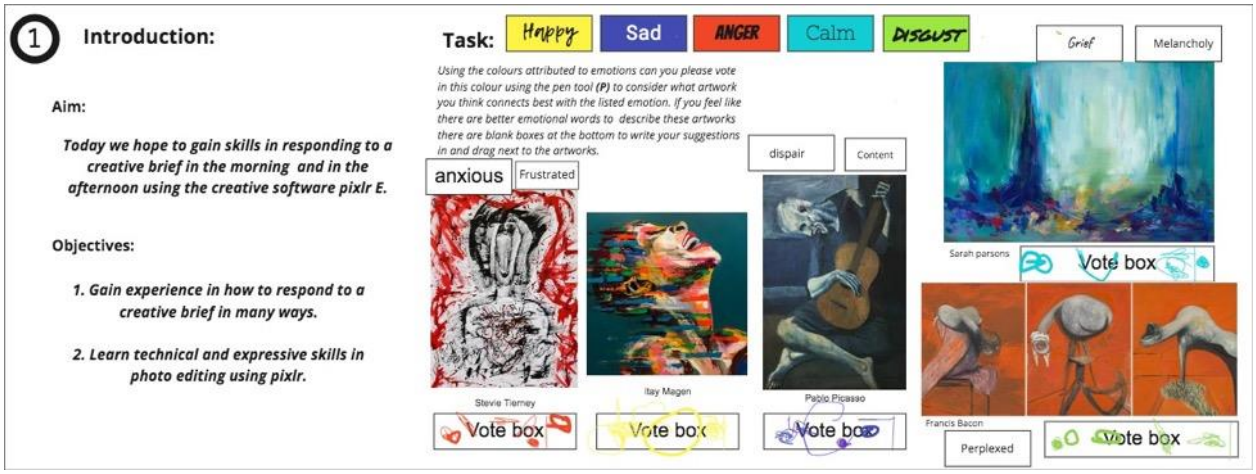
Feelings:

It was strange sharing my personal feelings in this social setting but I felt safe in that environment.

Evaluation:

This seemed to go well as all participants managed to share their feelings through the blob tree activity and the comments box. I think what really helped participants to do this was the fun nature of the blob tree. This method of understanding participants wellbeing put space between participants and their expressed feelings allowing them to express them more freely in a social environment.

Board 1:



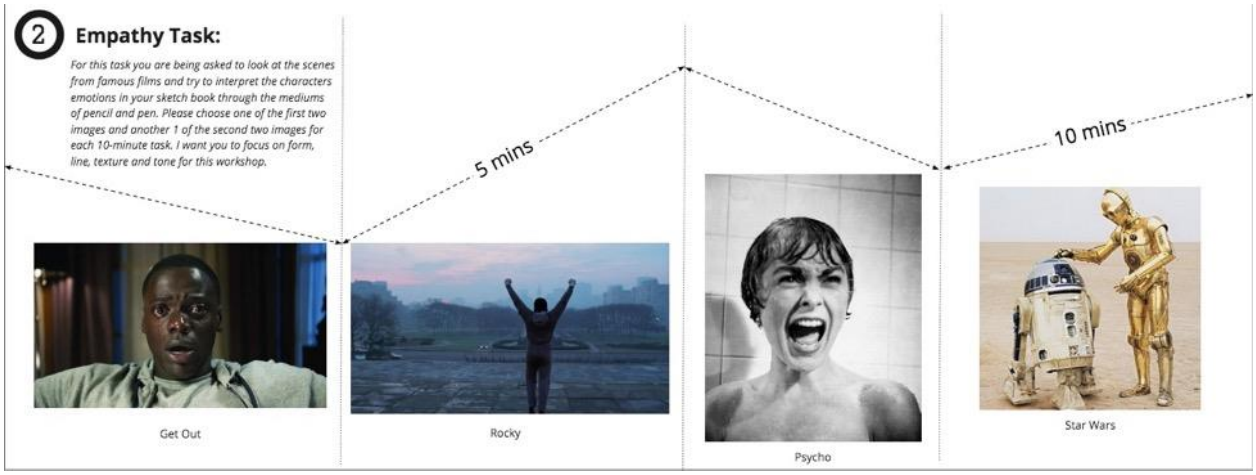
Description:

Shortly after this I tried to move onto the next workshop but just as I started to say something my audio signal from my laptop crashed and this meant participants could not hear me. Using an improvised sign language through zoom as a I could still hear the group, I gestured to Mark to cover for me. Mark shared the workshops aims and objectives, after which he described and started the activity in which we had to attribute a selection of emotions to a selection of paintings. Each emotion was coded for in colour and participants voted for which painting they thought each emotion corresponded to. I managed to reset my audio and joined the workshop midway through this process. After which we got to add other emotions that we thought the selected artworks described (these are seen on the Miro board in the white squares).

Conclusion:

Good communication and preparation with co-facilitators add a safety net in workshops when random technical disasters happen in this context. It is less likely that all of a team will have a technical issue at once this is a good precaution to take before the workshop as insurance.

Board 2:



Description:

I started to present the next task when my audio crashed again. Mark came to the rescue once more and described the workshop for me. This workshop was centred around two sets of two images from films. The idea of the workshop was for participants to empathise with the characters in the film stills, then consider what emotions these characters were portraying. After which participants were instructed to pick one of the portrayed emotions and draw a visual embodiment of it. I joined in once more after a few minutes and clarified a few things about the task including; how long each part was and the materials participants were meant to use. I set a timer to keep our activity to the allotted time. After 5 minutes for the first two images we stopped and started the next task that was set for 10 minutes. After the 10 minutes elapsed, we moved onto the next task.

Board 3:

Description:

I asked participants to take a photo of their favourite work out of the two that they had just created and share it in the frame of their respective colour. One participant who was new to the group this week had some trouble uploading their work to the Miro board, after trying several times I asked them to just send it to me via email. I then uploaded their work and we started. I went around the colour wheel systematically asking participants to tell us about their work, I then would invite the group to comment on the works. This led to much fruitful and enjoyable discussion around how we consider emotions in visual terms. After this I gave participants their final task of the morning, this was to choose any emotion they so pleased and create a visual embodiment of it. Participants were given half an hour before the break to create their work, but they were told that they could use the break as well to finish their work if they wanted, as long as they uploaded it to Miro before we started again. The participants who had trouble uploading their work earlier sat through some of the break with me on zoom attempting to upload their finished work. Eventually they figured it out and I was glad to see that.

Conclusion:

The social aspect of this part of the workshop eludes to the multiplicity of understandings people can have when it comes to art but also that between these differences there are threads tying us together.

12:30 PM:

Break

Afternoon session.

14:00 PM:

Board 4:

Description:

We gathered back on zoom to start the afternoon session off by sharing our works, this went well using the same system as earlier but in reverse order. Participants really seemed to create some brilliant works and were laughing while sharing aspects of their works and considering each other's works.

Board 1:

Description:

I started this section of the workshop by sharing some interesting digital artworks that I had found online; I did this to give participants an idea of what is possible using photo editing software. I described quickly what I liked about these works and moved on.

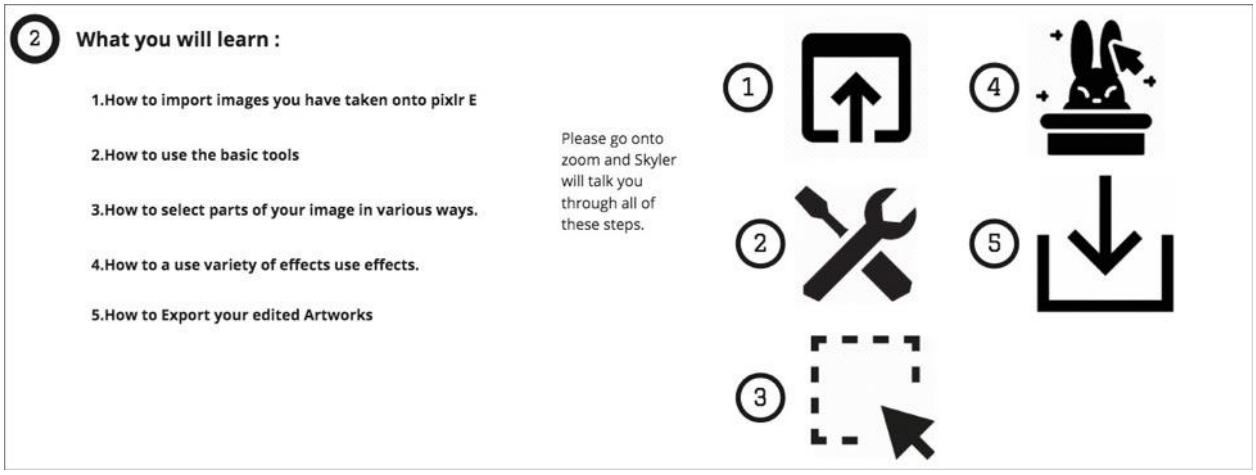
Feelings:

One participant said ironically how they were all capable of achieving something of that standard, this made me realise maybe I should have shown some less technically proficient works instead to give participants a sense less of a sense of challenge.

Evaluation:

Maybe some work from every level of skill would have been less daunting for my participants. Although participants seemed interested in the work, asking for participants thoughts on these works would have been more fruitful, although this would have cost the workshop valuable time. Having participants comment on the works though might have yielded valuable feedback on if this part of the workshop was useful or necessary at all.

Board 2:



Description:

I shared with participants what they should learn from the tutorial and then asked them to go onto zoom to see my screen which I shared. I posted a link on zoom to the online photo editing software that we would use. At this point Fi who was having technical problems earlier found that their computer could not access the photo editing software that we were to use. I asked them for the moment to just watch the tutorial and that we would do our best to help them after it was done.

I gave the tutorial explaining 5 key aspects of the software, participants were then instructed to upload their previous work to the software and give editing it a go. I then spent some time trying to help the participant who was having trouble accessing the software, sadly we could not help them as it seemed that their computer was not able to handle it, as well as this I did my best to answer other participants questions. In this time of struggling to help the participant almost 20 minutes had elapsed and I had only reserved 30 minutes for the task. **I realised even if we had fixed their technical issue, they wouldn't have enough time to do anything.**

During this situation in trying to help this participant two other participants dropped out without me noticing, luckily one sent me a quick email which helped me to notice and let them back into the call. For one of them their internet connection had just dropped off and for the other their laptop had lost power. They both re-joined the group and luckily, they saw the tutorial before they disconnected. Although only one of them managed to complete the task as the other had no time after finding their power cord. I then quickly edited my own work and exported from the software. **I asked for those who had technical issues to instead share their piece that they didn't share from the empathy task earlier.**

Conclusion:

Planning in a multitude of realms is important, this can be in the workshop itself but also what to do when something goes wrong as well as how to stop things from going wrong in the first place. Considering how to acclimatise participants to a software before they use it in an online workshop is definitely worth the time.

Board 3:

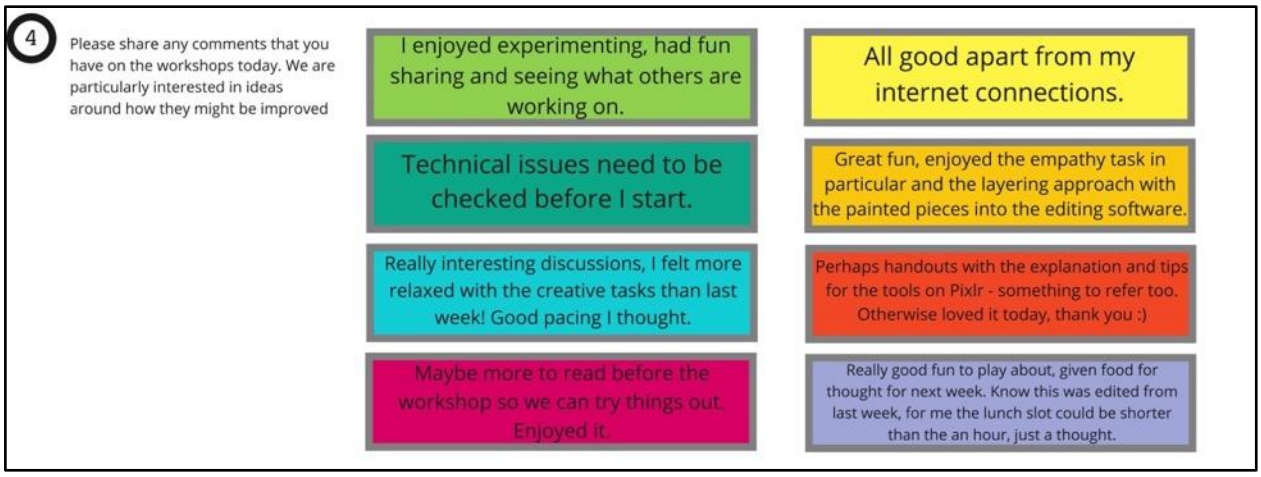
Description:

On board 3 we shared our edited work I asked the participants with technical issues to take a photo of the work in the empathy task that they had previously not shown and replace it with what they would have shared. This only included the participant whose computer could not load the software and the one who's laptop had died. 5 out of 7 participants managed to follow this quick and complex crash course which was great. We shared our works once more using the same colour system, we described what tools we used to achieve the effects that we got in our works and why we did what we did.

Conclusion:

Making sure participants don't feel left out is important. As was building in an element of peer learning as it enforced the learning element further into the participants minds.

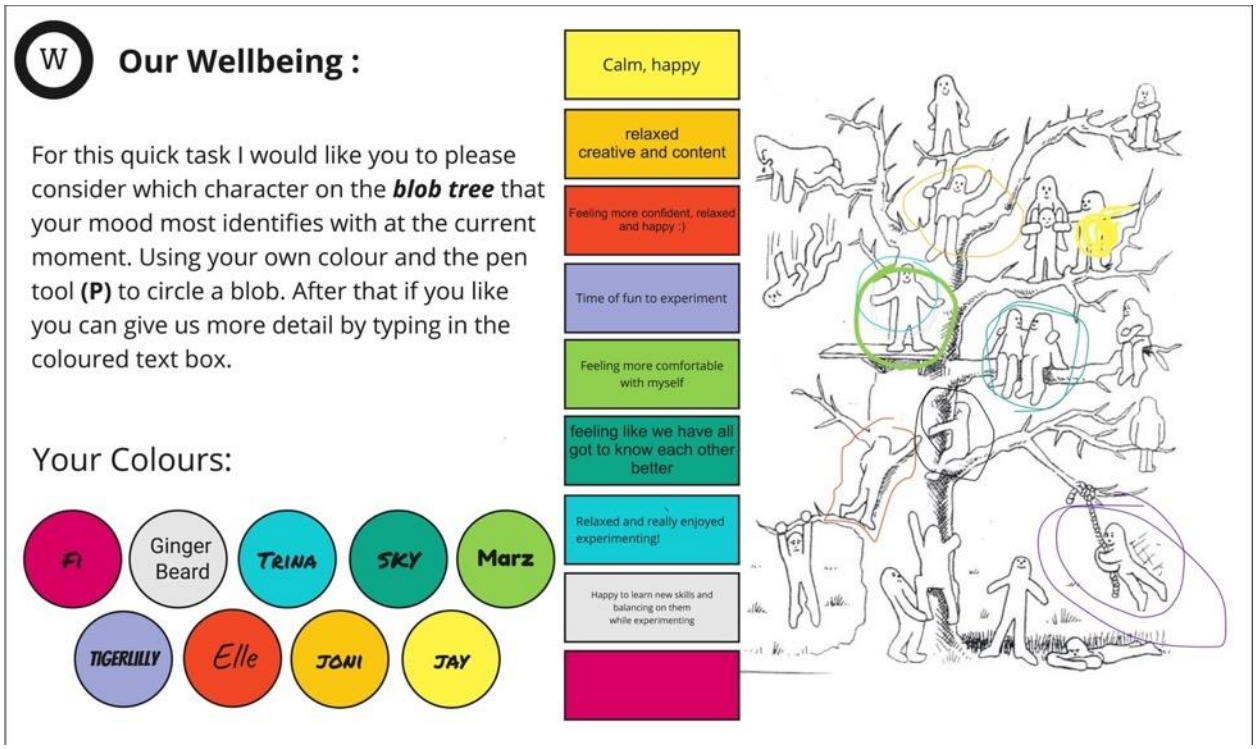
Board 4:



Description:

Bringing our workshop to a close I asked participants for their feedback thus far, participants gladly did this and all feedback was very constructive, a few said that maybe handouts would be appropriate for learning something so extensive. Others had really nice comments.

Afternoon Wellbeing Indicator:



Description:

I then did the wellbeing indicator and said bye to the participants. Fi did not complete the task

Final conclusions:

1. Fun ways of asking difficult questions are a great way to gather sensitive but much needed data on participants.

2. Good communication and preparation with co-facilitators add a safety net in workshops when random technical disasters happen in this context. It is less likely that all of a team will have a technical issue at once this is a good precaution to take before the workshop as insurance.

3. **The social aspect of this part of the workshop alludes to the multiplicity of understandings people can have when it comes to art but also that between these differences there are threads tying us together.**

4. Learning by doing is often the best way forward.

5. Keep it simple! **Don't over complicate things often the best parts of workshops are the simple parts.**

6. Consider the purpose of what you plan to do and really consider if it does this well and how you might check that it does.

7. Planning in a multitude of realms is important, this can be in the workshop itself but also what to do when something goes wrong as well as how to stop things from going wrong

in the first place. Considering how to acclimatise participants to a software before they use it in an online workshop is definitely worth the time.

8. **Making sure participants don't feel left out is important. As was building in an element of peer learning as it enforced the learning element further into the participants minds.**

9. For difficult tasks, it is worthwhile getting participants to grips with the difficult aspects of workshops beforehand to prevent issues from arising.

Action Plan:

1. I will be planning in a multitude of realms from now on, this can be for; the workshop itself, but also considering what to do when something goes wrong, as well as how to stop things from going wrong in the first place.

2. Thinking how to acclimatise participants to a software before they use it in an online workshop is definitely worthwhile as it could prevent problems in the actual workshop.

3. For difficult tasks, it is worthwhile getting participants to grips with some aspects of workshops beforehand to prevent issues from arising.

4. For participants who struggled with the software I will send out a little YouTube tutorial and offer my help with their work throughout the week with the photo editing software.

Workshop 3 Reflections 19/7/2020

Aim: Today we will discuss what we as a group feel are useful principles for supporting wellbeing in an online arts group context, we will then formalise this discussion into a visual set of principles.

Objective 1: Identify what we feel is key to supporting wellbeing in the online arts group using an empowering and democratic method.

Objective 2: Embody these principles visually using the skills that we have gained so far.

Objective 3: Discuss the principles and artworks together.

Data Collected:

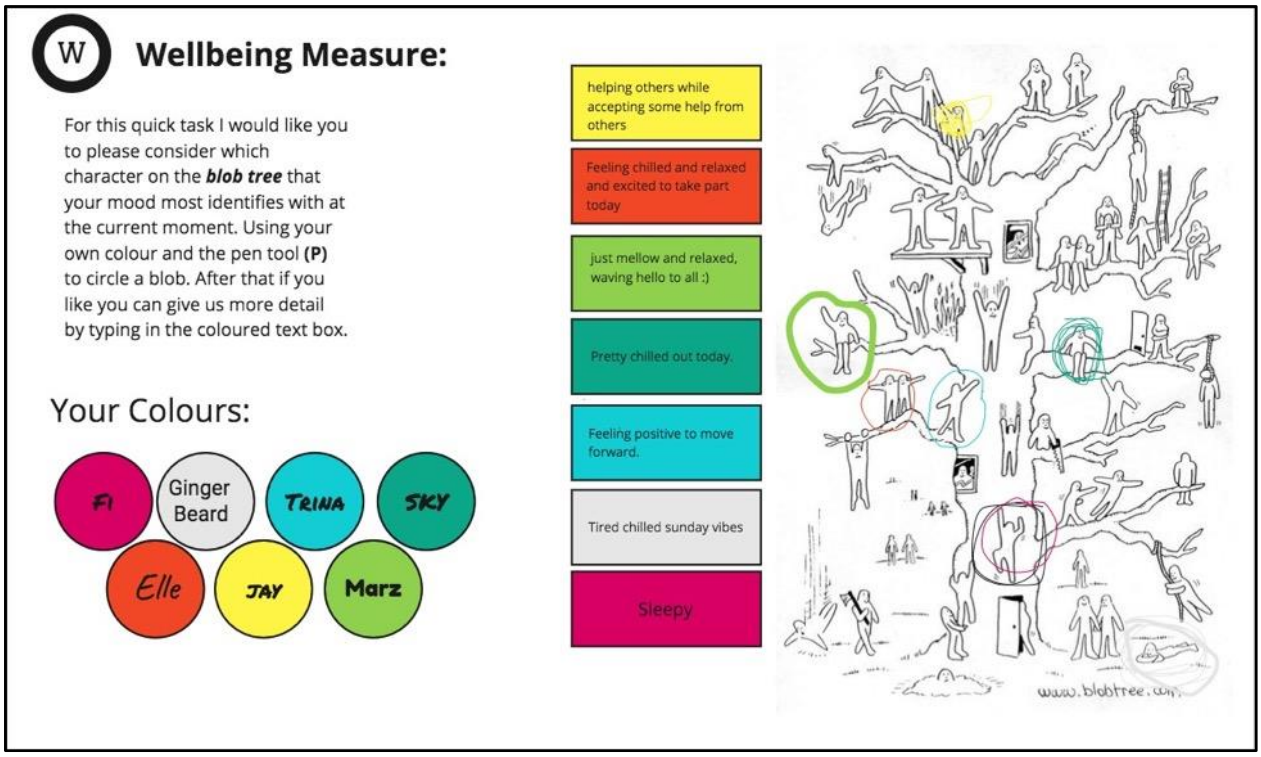
1. Visual representations of possible idealised art groups.
2. Exploration of principles for supporting wellbeing in the arts group (recorded).
3. 10 concrete principles for wellbeing.
4. Visual representations of principles and guidelines.
5. Comments on the workshop itself.
6. Qualitative wellbeing measure before and after.

Morning session.

11:00AM:

Description:

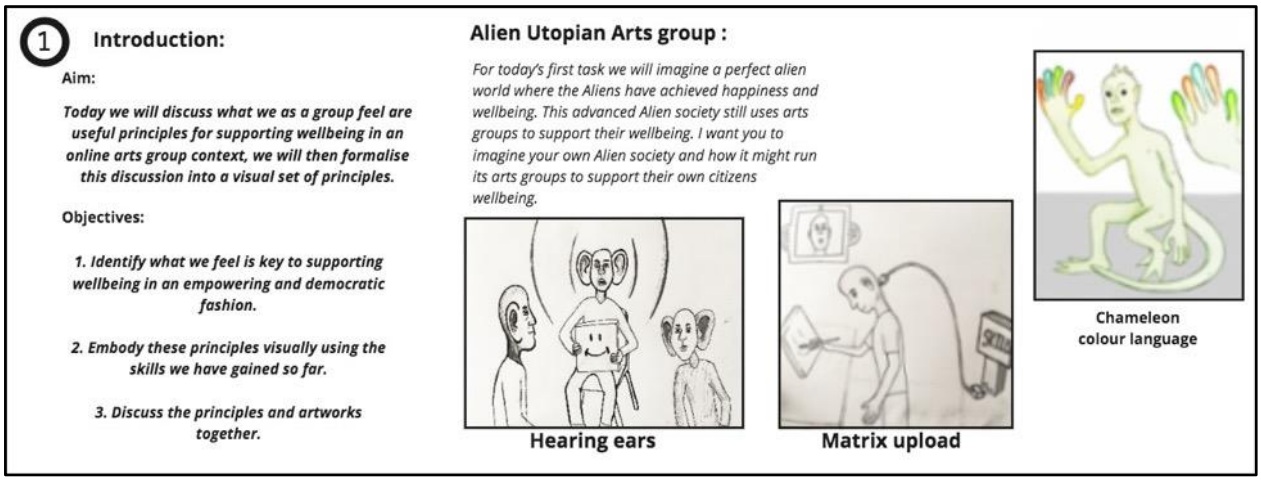
I started today a little tired as I had work commitments the night before and only got home at about 00:00 AM. Luckily at this point in the project I was very comfortable with the group and we were all a little sleepy that morning. I started the zoom call after a cup of green tea and a little meditation. I said hi to everyone and sent a link to the Miro board.



Description:

I reminded participants of how the Wellbeing Indicator worked. We all considered and shared our wellbeing using the blob tree and the comments box to elaborate on the tree.

Board 1:



Description:

Mark described the first task to the participants where we were to imagine an alien world where wellbeing is regulated through group arts and then describe this imaginary world using visual imagery. Mark then shared some prior examples that I had created beforehand these included the race of large eared people who listen more than they speak, the race of super technologically advanced people who plug skills directly into their mind and the final race of chameleon aliens who communicate with art by changing the colour of their skin. Participants where then given 20 minutes to create their alien race.

Conclusion:

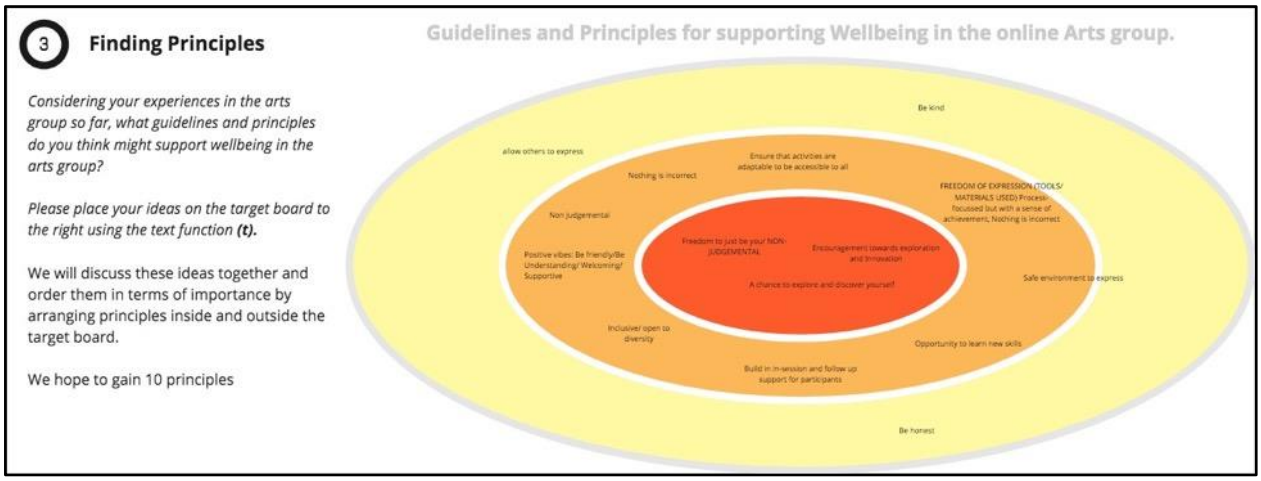
This primer to get our imagination going around a topic of interest is super useful, it allowed participants to be not only expressive but use this expression to imagine how to improve the arts group.

Board 2:

Description:

Participants then shared their artworks on the Miro board and then one by one explained what we created and received comments back from the other participants, there was a variety of interpretations but clearly some common themes. We went around the group asking participants to explain their work then we had a chance for the group to give comment s which they always did. The discussion was rich and was really priming us for the next task.

Board 3:



Description:

For the next task I asked participants to create 2 to 3 principles that they consider to be useful in supporting wellbeing in the online arts group. They then used the text function to share their principles on a target board that I had created beforehand. After they were done, we shared our principles 1 by 1. We then grouped principles based on their similarity using the circumference of the target board and if possible, we synthesised alike principles into one. Finally, I asked participants to use the rings in the target board to organise principles in terms of importance, I just asked them not to choose their own to make important, so we had no one only promoting their own ideas over others. Once this process was done, we had 10 principles.

Evaluation:

This went well partially due to the structure of the target board that really kept it together. The target board helped us in a collaborative fashion to organise, synthesise and rate in terms of importance the principles that we had come up with.

Analysis:

Using visual interactive tools such as the target board can really help participants to share their ideas in a collective and coherent way. To guard against one participants voice drowning out the others all participants were all instructed to share only a maximum of three principles. We then synthesised similar principles to further dilute more powerful voices. Finally, to create a sense of hierarchy within the principles, participants were asked to move the principle they thought was most important to the centre of the target board but only on the condition that it wasn't one of theirs.

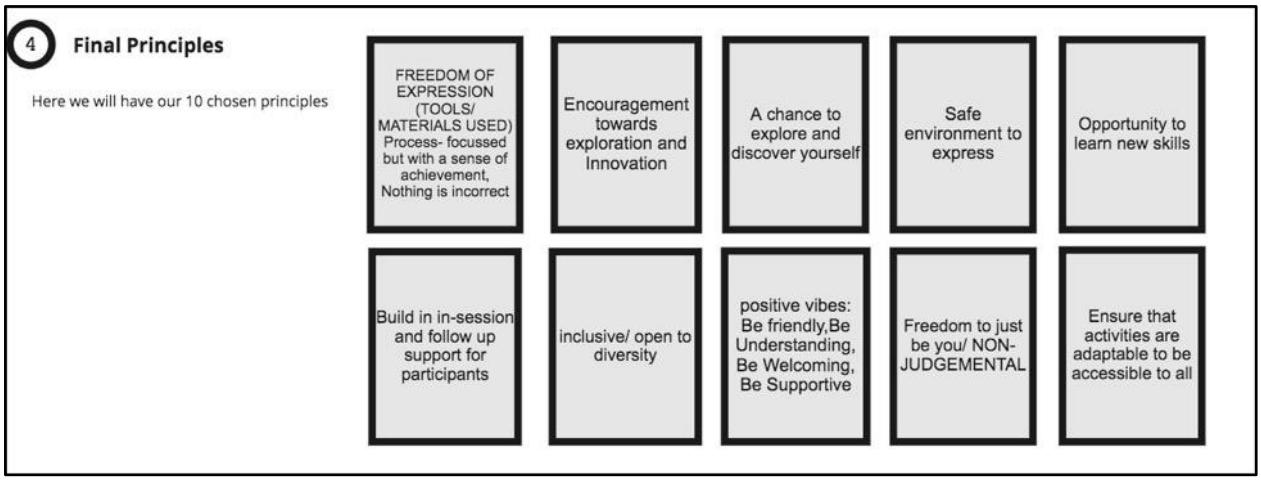
Conclusion:

It's important to lead your participants through difficult tasks using as many tools as you can to pave the way, often these aspects of research need to be made as clear and easy to accomplish as possible.

Allowing an opportunity for conversation between participants as well as between participants and yourself is so important as this gives an element of consensus rather than just a blind democracy to the knowledge that you create.

Consider that there are often quieter participants present whose ideas are not heard. We can even out this power imbalance, by systematically designing the workshop to empower these quieter voices. In all groups some participants are more vocal than others, so building in a structure that supports equity can improve the equality of voices in the project as well as diversify and enrich the data gathered.

Board 4:



Description:

I copied and pasted the principles into the final board so we could see them in their entirety (they would be used later on again). After this I thanked the participants for their time and we went for our break.

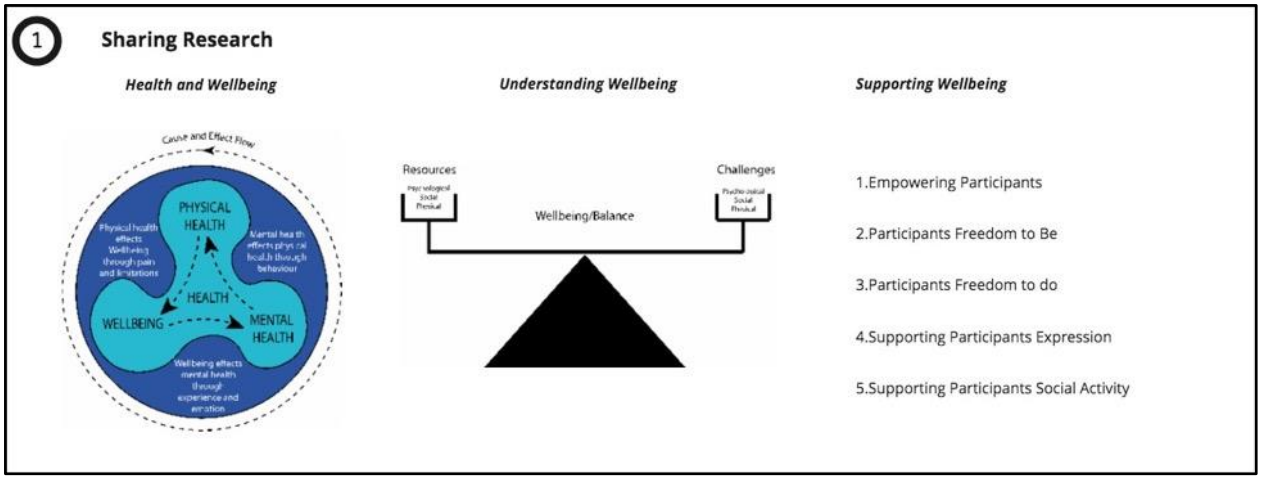
12:30 PM:

Break

Afternoon session.

14:00 PM:

Board 1:



Description:

We gathered again on zoom and I shared the afternoon workshop Miro boards on the zoom chat. We then all accessed the Miro boards, the first board had some images highlighting my research thus far. I explained 2 key concepts; firstly, of how mental health physical health and wellbeing are all deeply connected, secondly, I shared how wellbeing could be understood as a balance between the resources and challenges that we face. I then shared Ideas on how we through the online arts group, could not only support social and psychological resources but also provide social and phycological challenges in the safe environment of the arts group so to stimulate our growth. I then invited participants to comment on, what I shared, this sparked some great conversation in the group and gave participants a chance to have their voices heard. Some participants then also asked me more so about my research.

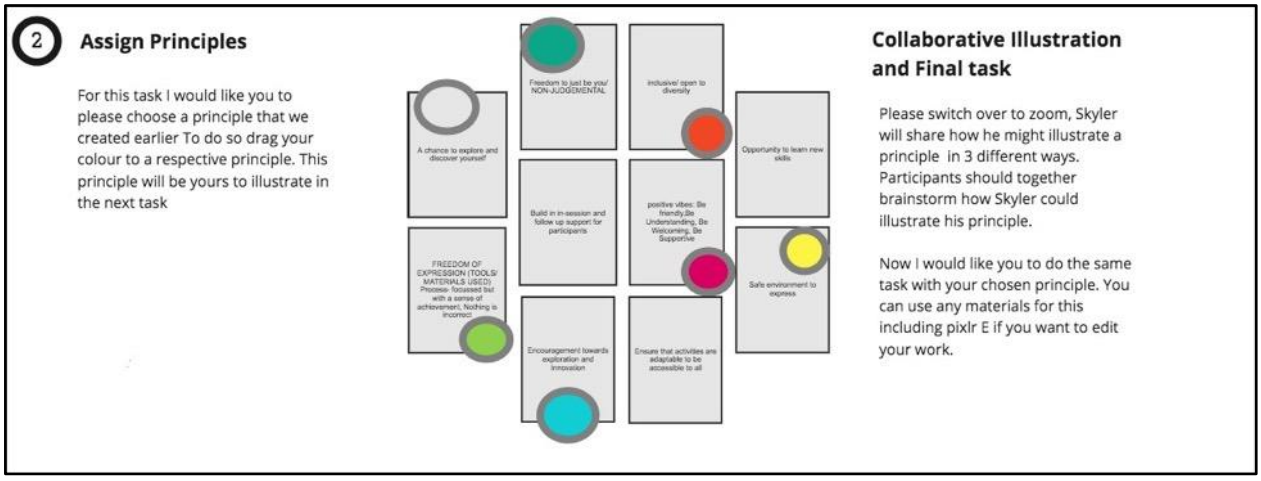
Evaluation:

I shared this only after the participants came up with their own principles on purpose because I did not want to alter their ideas before they got to express them, this made this data collection more successful as participants did not just cater to what I wanted them to say, instead their voices had been empowered in a less so persuasive manner.

Conclusion:

Allow your participants to share their ideas first, after you should share your understandings on that topic, the understandings that you the researcher have gained from the literature. Hopefully after both participants and researcher/arts group provider should feel all the richer for this shared and understanding information. Also be careful not to taint your participants inputs, this is why the order in which information is shared is so important.

Board 2:



Description:

Here I revealed the main task for the afternoon. Beforehand I placed our 10 chosen principles on a Miro board, alongside were circles of our participants colours, participants were asked to drag their circle over to the principle that they wanted to create and illustration of. After this was done, I asked participants to switch over to zoom so I could share my drawing with them. Then using the principle that I had chosen, we together brain stormed as I drew, considering how we might illustrate this principle through formal means as well as symbolic ones. After this was done participants began on their works, I gave them 40 minutes to do this.

Feelings:

I felt like the group had reached a critical point of understanding each other, this made me feel at ease when doing something that would normally be quite stressful. Especially being that I had to not only draw live but draw using the suggestions of my group. Regardless I felt at ease, in fact one participant even said how relaxing it was to watch me draw, which made me feel even more relaxed. I then continued my drawing after I sent participants to start theirs and thoroughly enjoyed myself.

Analysis:

the aspects that made this all go so well was the open dialogue between myself and the group and the calm atmosphere in the group in the end we had cultivated over the last few weeks. I was also happy that we had made something that was more than the sum of its parts using my drawing and participants ideas. The task itself was a good one as it got participants to mull over what they really understood about the principle.

Conclusion:

Having experiences in the workshop where you actively collaborate with your participants is a great way to solidify a bond between yourself and the members of the arts group.Having participants communicate ideas through the arts that they are learning serves two purpose; one, it allows for participants to be creative and two, it really lets participants think about the principle they have chosen so they can share those insights later on.

Board 3:

Description:

We shared our visual embodiments of the principles that we had created. We used the colour system to order which participants were to explain their work and then receive comments from the group.

Evaluation:

This went well as this discussion held some gems in it. Participants gave much richer descriptions of what the principles they had chosen meant to them. This was very successful data collection.

Analysis:

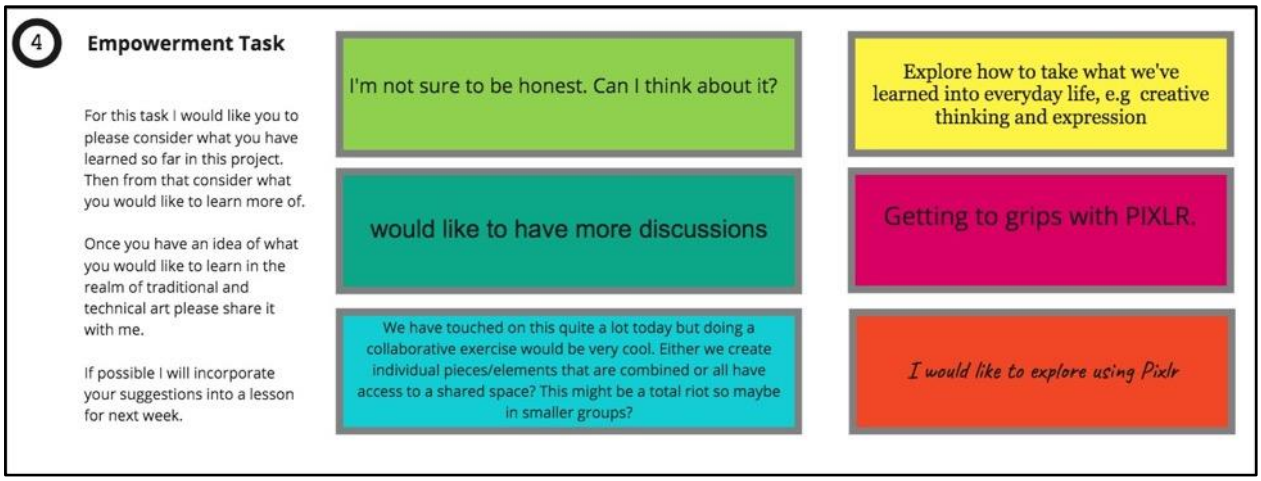
This discussion was so rich that there was no way to take it all in at once luckily, I had recorded it so instead of worrying too much about documentation I was able to participate in the conversation wholeheartedly, while being careful not to push my ideas but rather to help participants to elaborate in their own ideas by asking questions with the intention to clarify my understanding of their principles

Conclusion:

Discussion is one of the most valuable parts of these workshops not only because it allows for new ideas to emerge (especially in this case as the arts group had been turned in on itself to consider how it itself could be better) but also because they provide much of the essential enjoyment of the group itself, in a way they provide a resolution to the work that is put into the art itself.

It is important as a arts group provider and researcher to not merely facilitate the workshop but to also to use this power to delve into participants understandings to ultimately empower their understandings.

Board 4:



Description:

For this task we asked participants to comment in their coloured box what they might enjoy in next week's session. This was so we could maybe build it in next week.

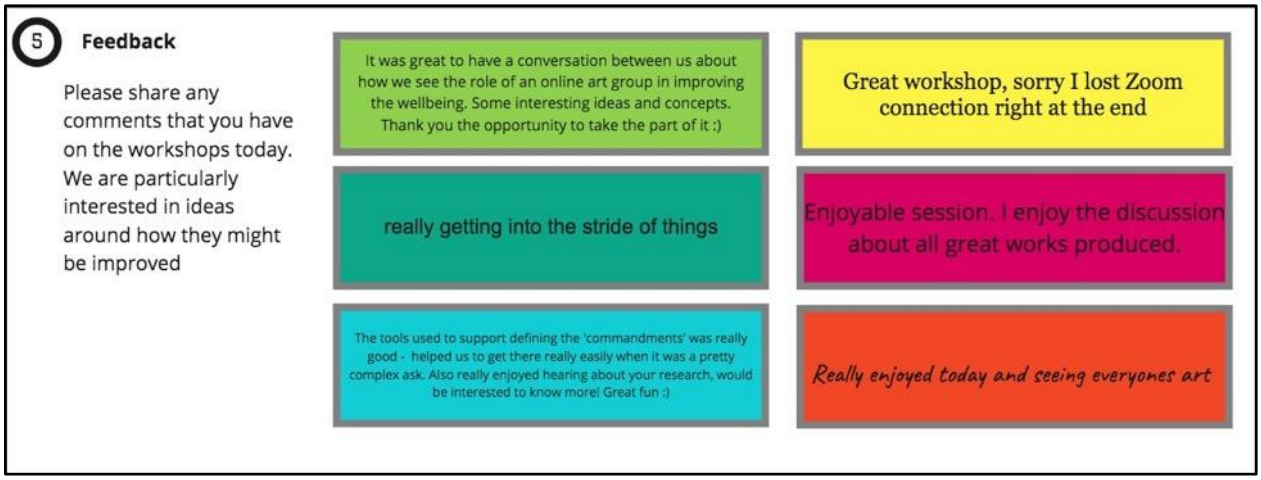
Analysis:

This I think is a good thing to have and really gave participants a voice, although this may have been better incorporated into an earlier stage of the workshop. If this had been the case though maybe there would have been problems surrounding a huge variance of desires, the fact that this was done so late on meant that participants ideas of the workshop where more concrete and thus less variant and easier to manage. I think in retrospect this would be best suited to week 2.

Conclusion:

In the workshops power and its associated responsibility is always in a dynamic flux between the two types of stakeholders involved in this work ie. Participants and practitioners. If I as a arts group provider had handed over power to participants too early the responsibility of directing the group would have been too much for them but in doing this too late and it can become somewhat meaningless as little is change from it.

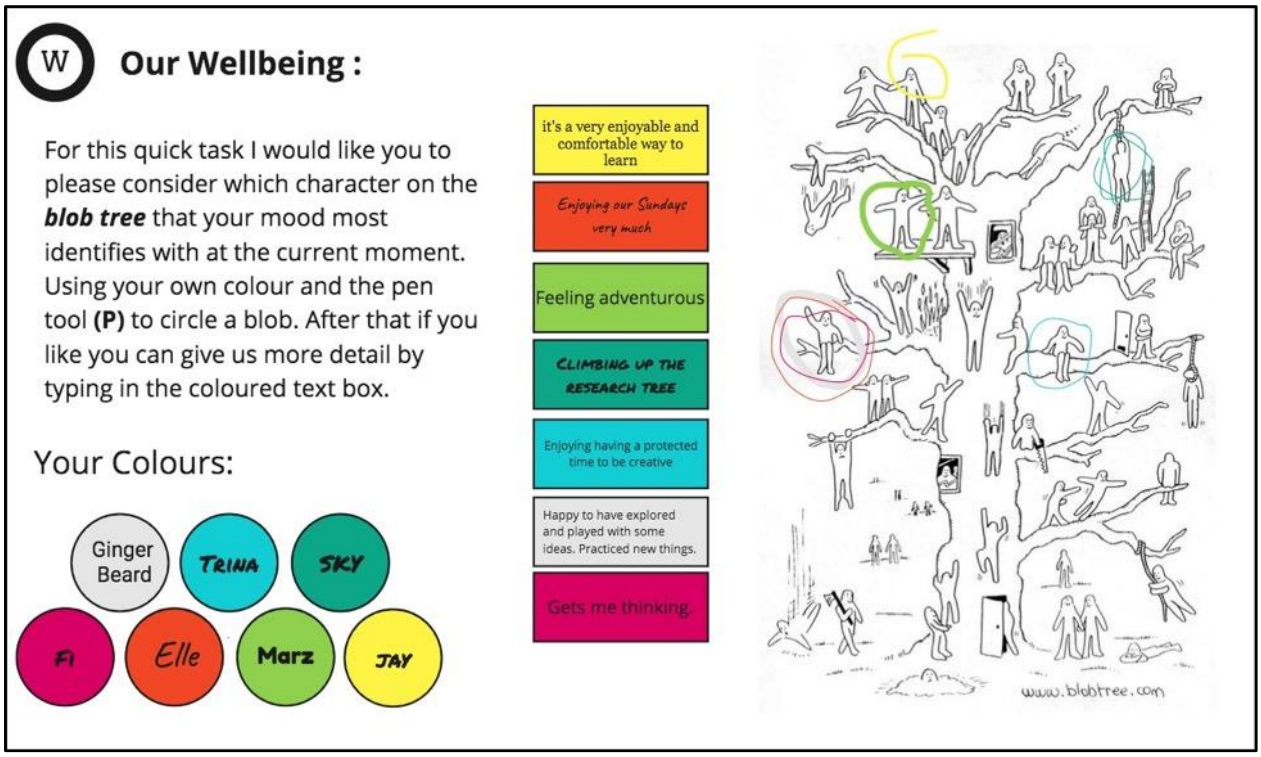
Board 5:



Description:

For this I asked participants to share their feedback on the workshops in their coloured box.

Afternoon Wellbeing Indicator:



Description:

I asked participants so use the Wellbeing Indicators once more.

Final conclusions:

1. Priming participants using short creative activities to get their imagination started around a topic of interest is very useful, it allows participants to not only express themselves but also use that expression to start thinking.

2. **Leading participants through difficult tasks can be made easier with a variety of tools, including interactive visual diagrams as well as chat within the session. Often some aspects of research need to be made as clear and easy to accomplish as possible.**

3. **Encouraging conversation within the group of participants as well as between yourself and participants is very important as this allows for knowledge to be created through consensus rather than a blind democracy. The knowledge created is as a result more holistic in nature rather than merely a collection of many fragmented points of view.**

4. **Considering that there are often quieter participants present whose ideas are not heard. We can even out this power imbalance, by systematically designing our workshops to empower these quieter voices. In all groups some participants are more vocal than others, so building in a structure that supports equity can improve the equality of voices in the project as well as diversify and enrich the data gathered.**

5. When investigating a topic with participants, allow your participants to share their ideas first, after you should share your understandings on that topic, these could be understandings that you the researcher have gained from the literature. Hopefully after both parties (participants and researcher/practitioners) should feel all the richer for this shared understanding of the topic. Although you should be careful not to taint your participants inputs, this is why the order in which information is shared is so important, as by sharing too much before participants speak you may lead your participants to tell you the answers you want to hear.

6. Having experiences in the workshop where you actively collaborate with your participants is a great way to solidify a bond between yourself and the members of the arts group.

7. Having participants communicate ideas through the arts that they are learning serves two purposes; one, it allows for participants to be creative and two, it really lets participants think about the topic so they can share those insights later on.

8. Discussion is one of the most valuable parts of workshops not only because it allows for new ideas to emerge (especially in this case as the arts group had been turned in on itself to consider how it itself could be better) but also because they provide much of the essential enjoyment of the group itself, in a way they provide a resolution to the work that is put into the art.

9. It is important as a arts group provider and researcher to not merely facilitate the workshop but to also use this power to delve into participants understandings and ultimately empower their beliefs around the topic of investigation. This should be done by listening intently and asking elaborative questions to clarify what participants are saying.

10. **In the workshops power and its associated responsibility is always in a dynamic flux between the two types of stakeholders involved (Participants and practitioners/Researchers). If a arts group provider hands over too much power and responsibility to participants too early the responsibility of directing the group**

would have been too much for them. Conversely in sharing power too late it could be rendered meaningless as participants have no time to make meaningful choices that will affect the group.

11. **Celebrate your achievements**

Action Plan:

1. Act on the empowerment task, listening to participants suggestions to plan the next workshop.

2. Actively try to Empower participants in the next workshop by giving them a sense of ownership over their insights.

3. Give participants useful resources to help understand the difficult photo editing software we use.

Workshop 4 Reflections, 26/7/2020

Aim: Today we will review the project as a whole, while creating artworks to represent the group and group experience that we embarked on.

Objective 1: Review the project and offer feedback.

Objective 2: Using the skills learned thus far create a final artwork, that gives us as a group some closure and a memento to remember the project by.

Data Collected:

1. Co-operative iteration of the 10 concrete principles for wellbeing.
2. Abstract visual representations of other participants in the group.
3. Experience of creating collaboratively.
4. Visual embodiment of the group.
5. Comments on the workshop itself and the workshops as a series.
6. Qualitative wellbeing measure before and after.

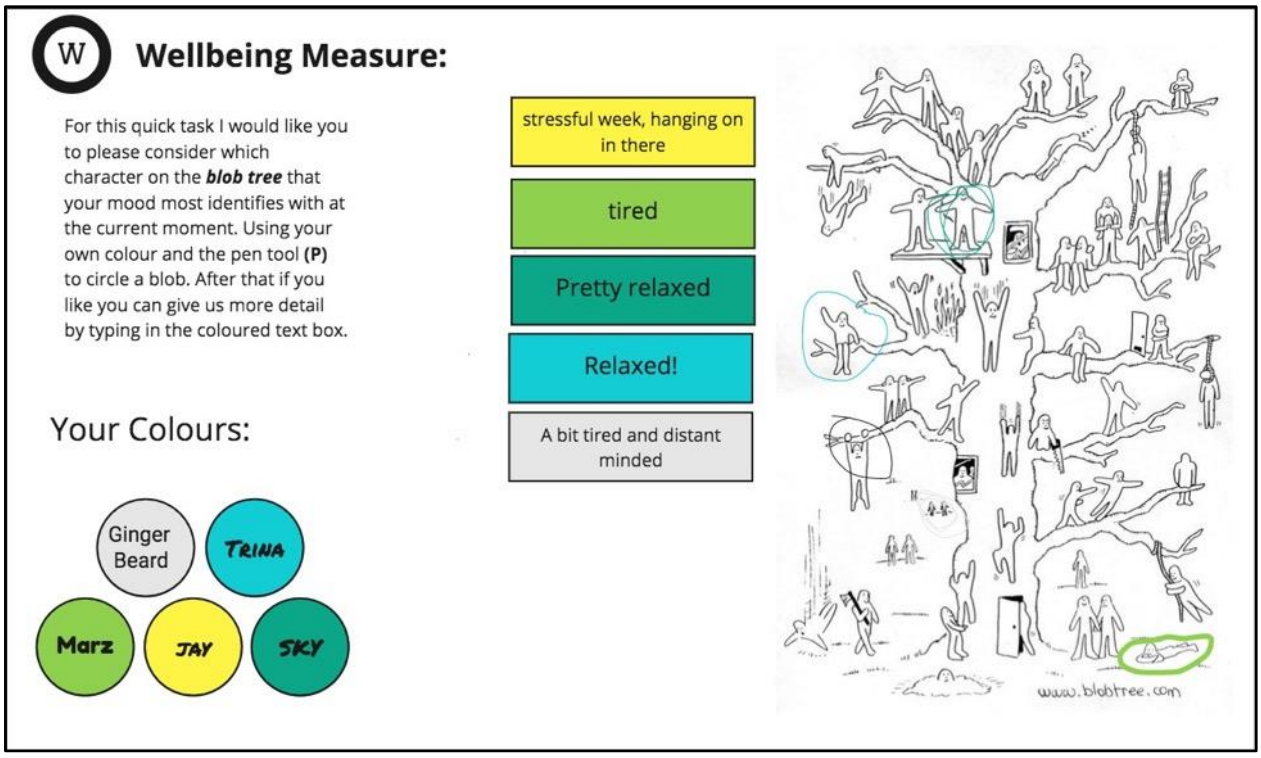
Morning session.

11:00AM:

Description:

Luckily, I had no work this week so I had the whole week to prepare and the previous night to get a good night's sleep. I started the zoom call and the three participants gradually joined. We all said hi and caught up with each other about how our weeks were. I then asked participants to access the Miro boards for the morning workshop.

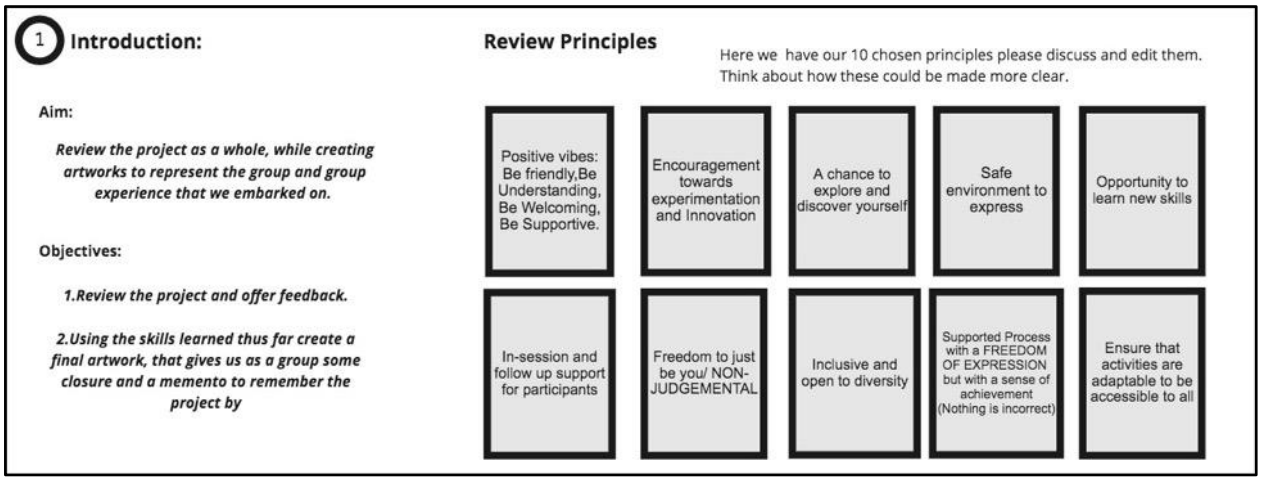
Morning Wellbeing Indicator:



Description:

I reminded participants of how the Wellbeing Indicator worked. We all considered and shared our wellbeing using the blob tree and the comments box to elaborate on the tree.

Board 1:



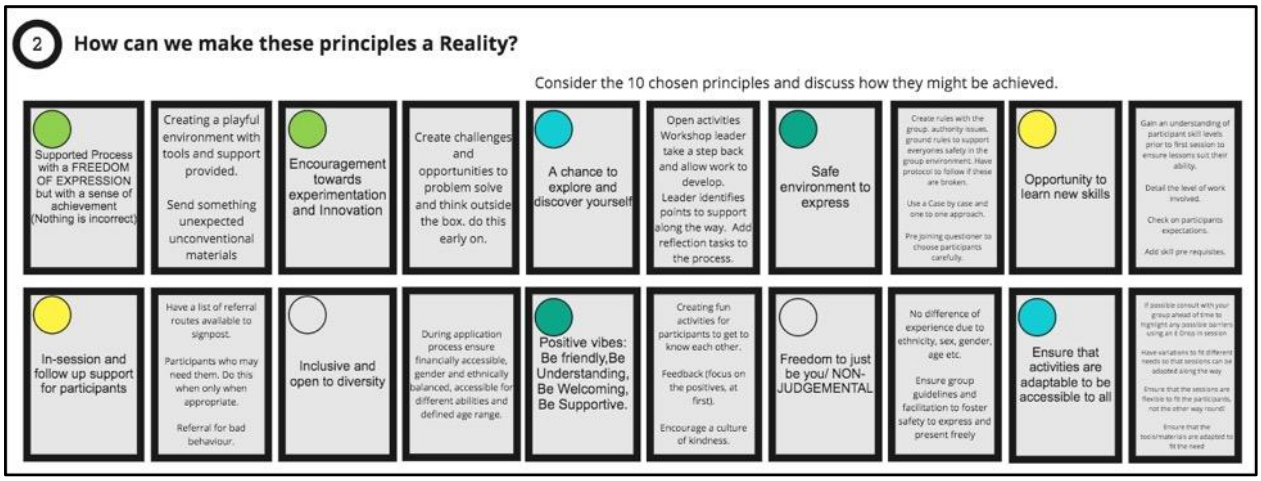
Description:

I shared my aim and objectives for the workshop, we then went on with achieving our first objective, we went through all the principles that were created last week one by one, clarifying what we meant and altering the principles accordingly. This also yielded some discussion but more importantly it clarified what we had previously created.

Conclusion:

Giving participants the opportunity to reconsider their outputs is a great way to refine your insights.

Board 2:



Description:

In this task we all were provided with the ten principles again and were asked to select two principles by dragging the circles of our respective colours onto the principles of our choice, then we did our best to consider and document how these principles might be achieved ? We put this in the box to the right of the selected principle. We then went around the principles asking participants to explain their how's then we opened up to group discussion. During discussion I would edit these how explanations to reflect on what the group said.

Evaluation:

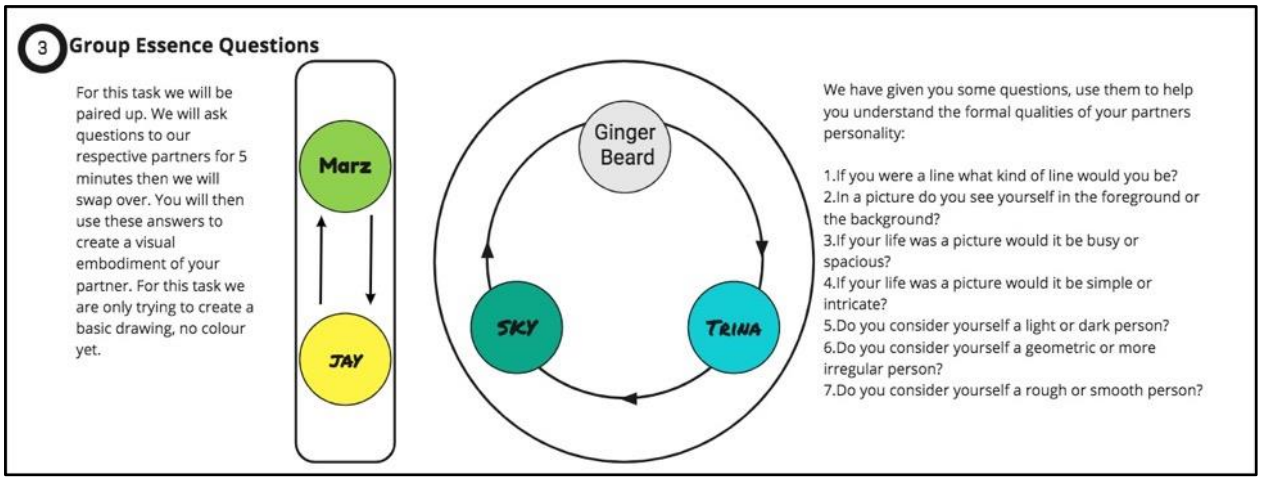
This went very well; I think what gave it such strength was the value I as the facilitator had placed in my participants ideas, I listened to all their ideas intently and helped participants to describe them in detail by asking questions to help them elaborate.

The open discussion also added a lot to refining our outcomes leading us to a consensus in considering how we might achieve our principles.

Conclusion:

As a facilitator listening then asking participants to elaborate on their ideas is essential to gaining a clear understanding of the topics in question. Open discussion in the group is incredibly important for the quality of your insights. Document any disagreements or nuances in the ideas discussed these views are just as important as the ideas of the majority.

Board 3:



Description:

Here we started the first creative task of the workshop, I explained that participants would be paired up but due to the odd number of us we had to do one group of three as seen in the diagram on board 3. The person that a participant was assigned to would be interviewed by that participant. The interview was meant to surround the making of an abstract portrait of the persons essence. Asking participants what formal visual elements that they identify with most, I realised this may be difficult so I created suggested questions seen on the right of the Miro board. I used the breakout room to split participants into two groups, then we commenced the task for ten minutes. We all met again after the ten minutes, and with our interview notes I asked participants to create their abstract artworks. I realised we were

running short on time as we only had 15 mins until the break, so I asked if participants could upload their work to the final Miro board before 2pm and we would meet back on board 4 after the break. This allowed participants extra time to complete their abstract portraits.

Conclusion:

When you break the group into sub groups make sure there is someone in the group able to facilitate your task.

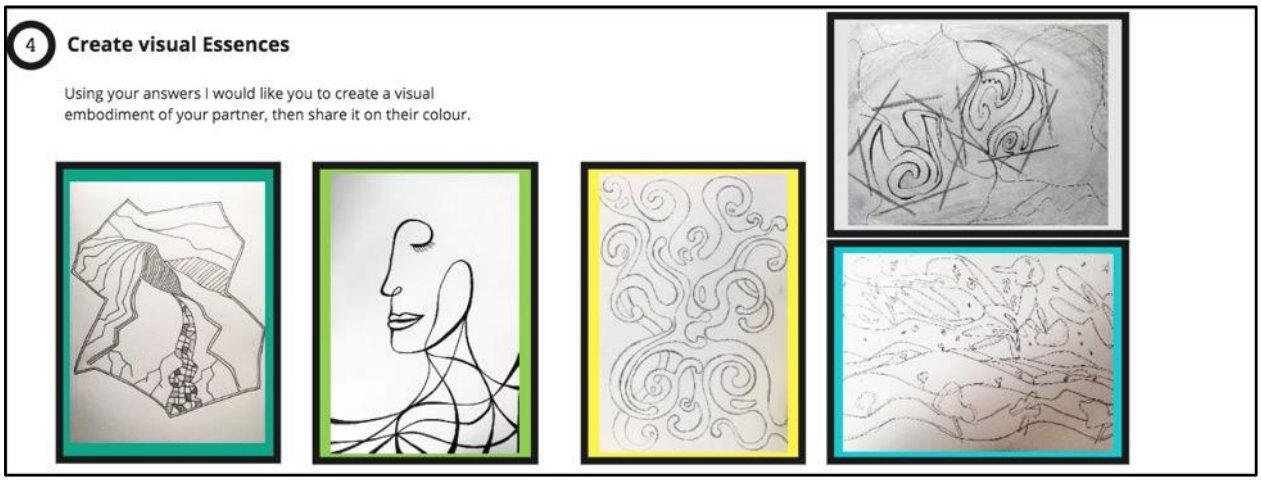
12:30 PM:

Break

Afternoon session.

14:00 PM:

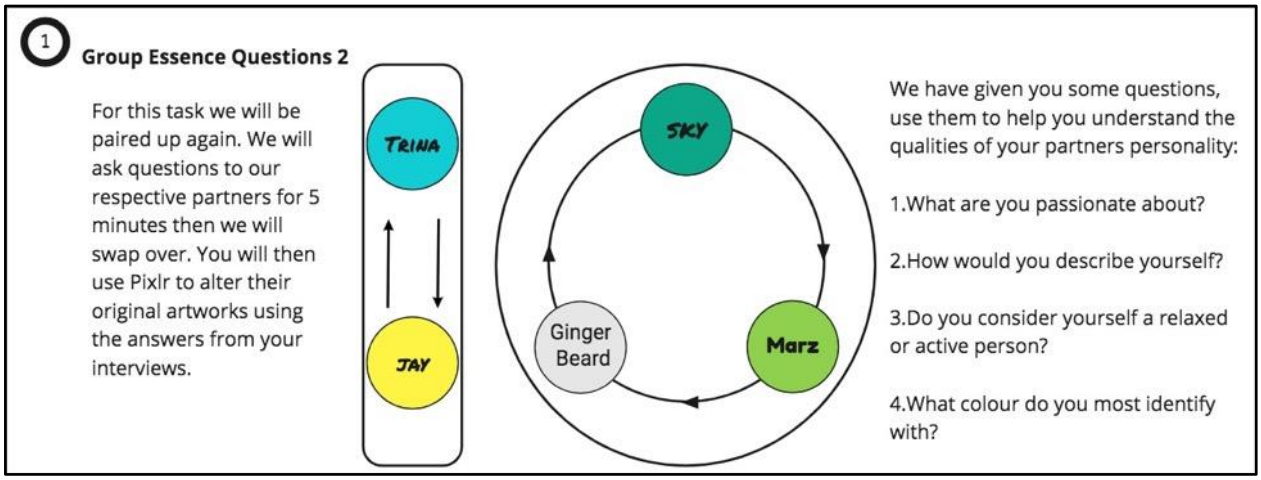
Board 4:



Description:

We met back on zoom and our final Miro board at 2pm, We discussed our works one by one explaining how our interviews informed the work that we had created about the other person, we also had time for comments afterwards.

Board 1:



Description:

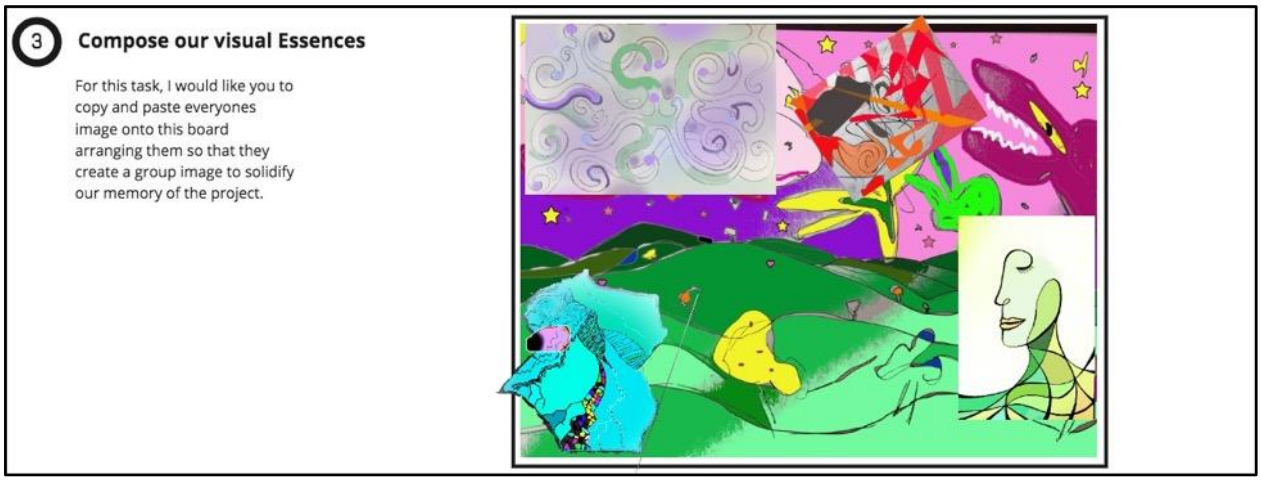
We then moved onto technically the first Miro board of the afternoon session. This board mirrored Miro board 3 from the morning session, although our partners had been swapped so no one was working on the same person as before. We then repeated the interview process but this time asked questions directed less abstractly towards the participants lives, although I asked participants not to get into anything too deep surrounding participants lives. I reiterated the task and separated the groups into breakout rooms using Zoom. After 10 minutes we joined together again just as Mark was finishing asking me his questions. We finished up and moved onto the next task.

Board 2:

Description:

Participants were asked to download the images of their new partner from the board, meaning that they were working on another members creation. They then were asked to edit these artworks using the photo editing software that we used in week 2, we spent 40 minutes on this task, participants would occasionally ask me a question around using the software but besides that we were all quite happy playing around with the software to be creative. After 40 minutes had elapsed, I asked participants to upload their work and they all did. We then did as we always did and went around the group asking participants to describe their artwork with an opportunity for the group to comment. After this was done, we moved onto the next task.

Board 3:



Description:

For this task we were to create a group collage that would in a sense embody a group photo. This group Image was created to embody our shared experience over the last 4 weeks. We had a lot of fun doing this, as the laughter showed. We collaboratively decided on how we might organise this image to make a somewhat sensible picture. This opened room for a lot of group discussion and collaboration which I think was really well received. Some participants had asked at this point if they could download the representations of themselves and the group as a keepsake, I said that this was fine by me, I also explained that I planned to collate this work and publish it as a document that I would send out to participants.

Board 4:

Description:

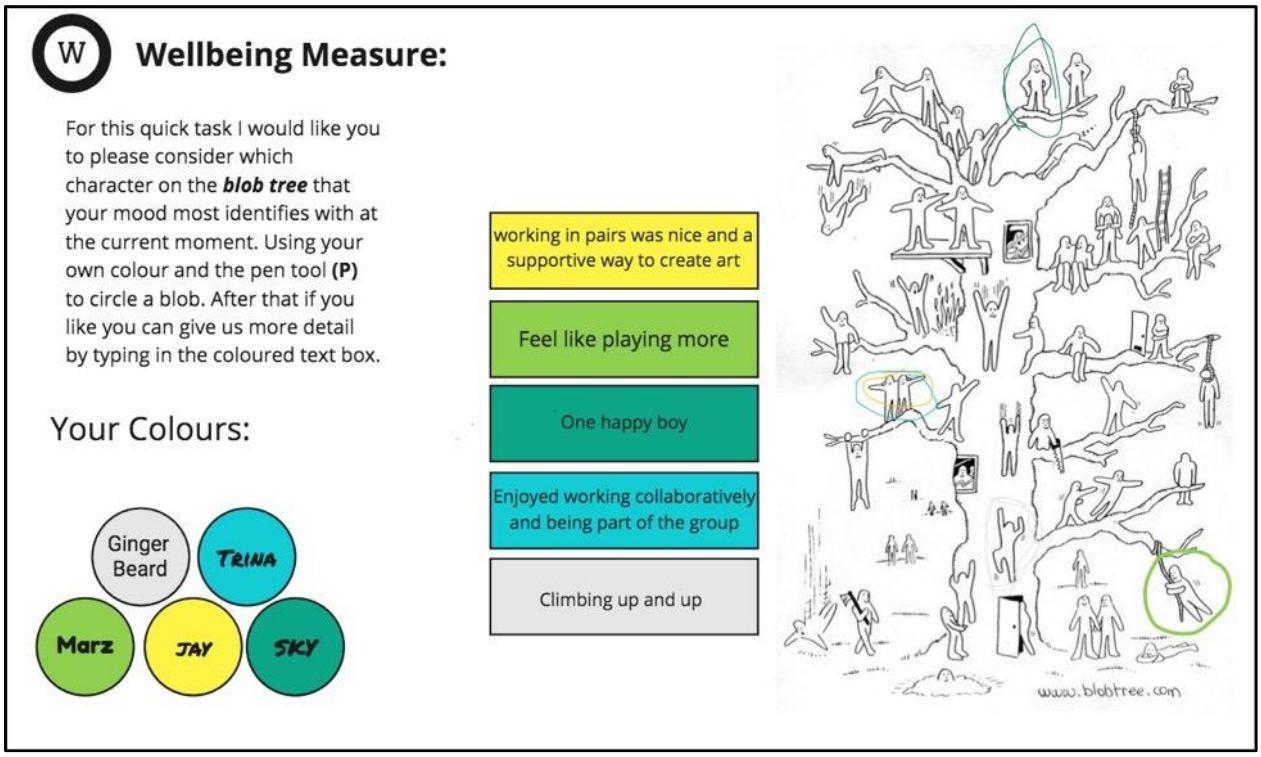
I asked participants to give me some feedback on today's session in particular. They did this with no problems.

Board 5:

Description:

I asked participants to give me some feedback on the project as a whole. They did this with no problems.

Afternoon Wellbeing Indicator:



Description:

Finally, we finished by doing the final wellbeing measure, participants also did this with no problems. I thanked participants sincerely for their time in the project and wished them all the best for the future. I also explained that though this was bye for now, I would be in touch in the coming months with the research insights I had gathered from the group. Participants also thanked me for my time and we parted ways.

Final conclusions:

1. Giving participants the opportunity to reconsider their outputs is a great way to refine your insights.

2. **As a facilitator listening then asking participants to elaborate on their ideas is essential to gaining a clear understanding of the topics in question.**

3. **Open discussion in the group is incredibly important for the quality of your insights.**

4. **Document any** disagreements or nuances in the ideas discussed these views are just as important as the ideas of the majority.

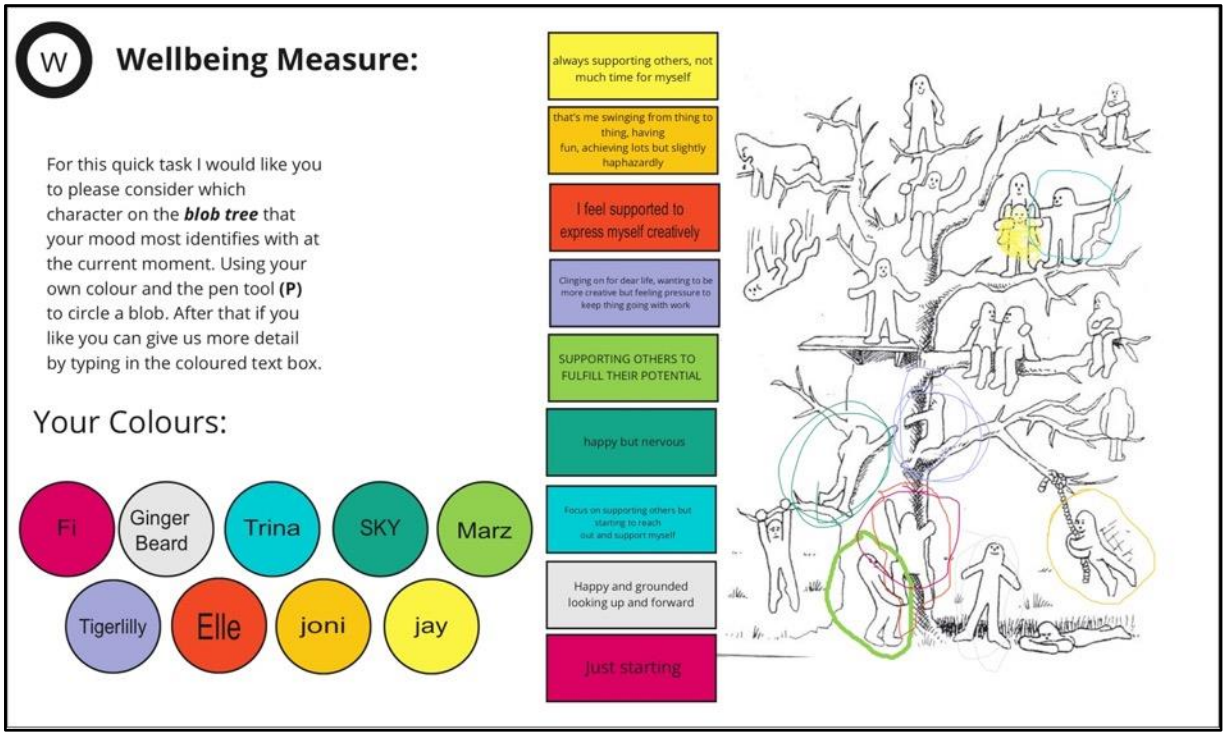
5. **When you breaking the group into sub groups make sure there is someone in the group able to facilitate your task.**

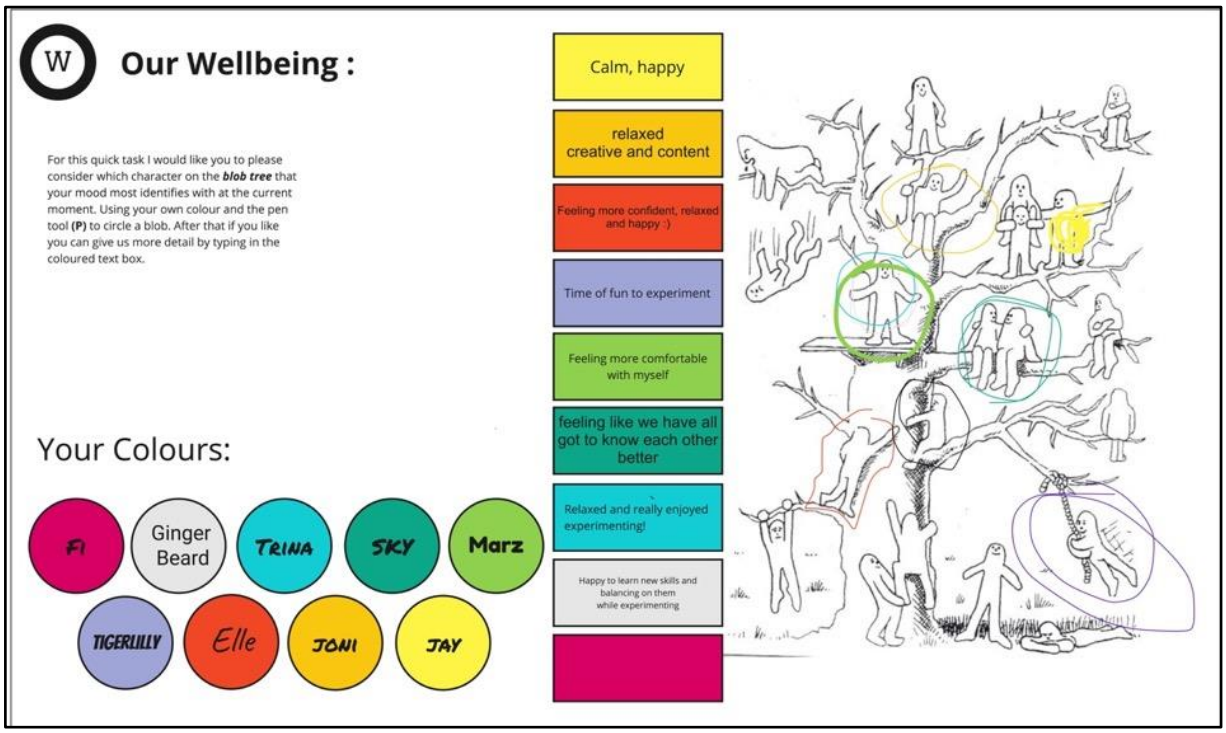
6. Trying to consider technical issues before they arise is important.

7. Minimising anxiety of tasks is important, while my group was more than capable of dealing with the challenged of this task others may have found this more difficult.

Wellbeing Indicators

Workshop 2





Workshop 3

Wellbeing Measure:

For this quick task I would like you to please consider which character on the ***blob tree*** that your mood most identifies with at the current moment. Using your own colour and the pen tool **(P)** to circle a blob. After that if you like you can give us more detail by typing in the coloured text box.

Your Colours:

helping others while accepting some help from others

Feeling chilled and relaxed and excited to take part today

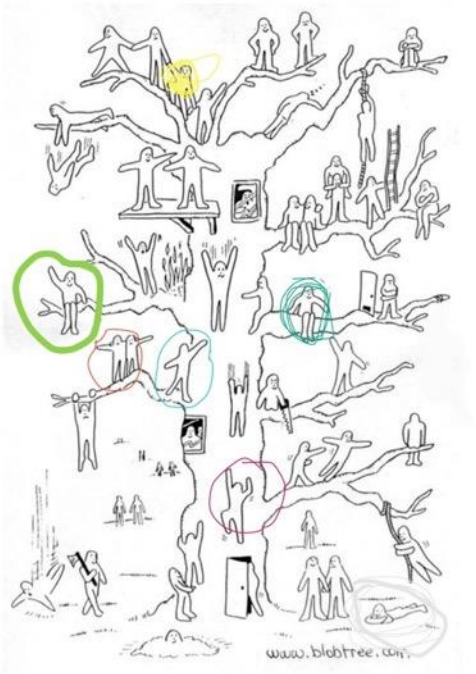
just mellow and relaxed, waving hello to all :)

Pretty chilled out today.

Feeling positive to move forward.

Tired chilled sunday vibes

Sleepy



Our Wellbeing :

For this quick task I would like you to please consider which character on the ***blob tree*** that your mood most identifies with at the current moment. Using your own colour and the pen tool **(P)** to circle a blob. After that if you like you can give us more detail by typing in the coloured text box.

Your Colours:

it's a very enjoyable and comfortable way to learn

Enjoying our Sundays very much

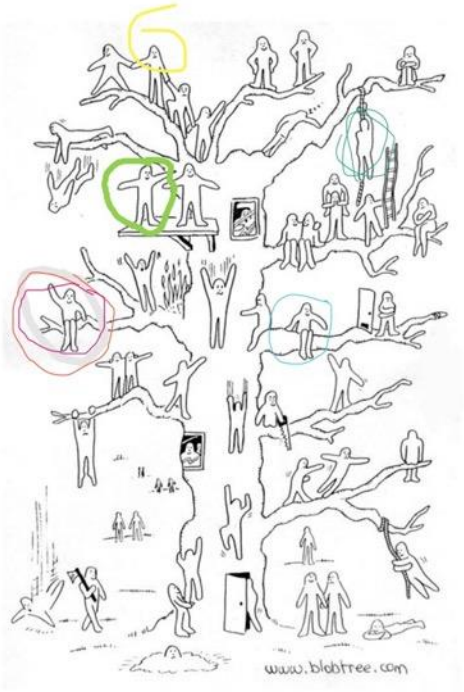
Feeling adventurous

Climbing up the research tree

Enjoying having a protected time to be creative

Happy to have explored and played with some ideas. Practiced new things.

Gets me thinking.



Workshop 4

Wellbeing Measure:

For this quick task I would like you to please consider which character on the ***blob tree*** that your mood most identifies with at the current moment. Using your own colour and the pen tool **(P)** to circle a blob. After that if you like you can give us more detail by typing in the coloured text box.

Your Colours:

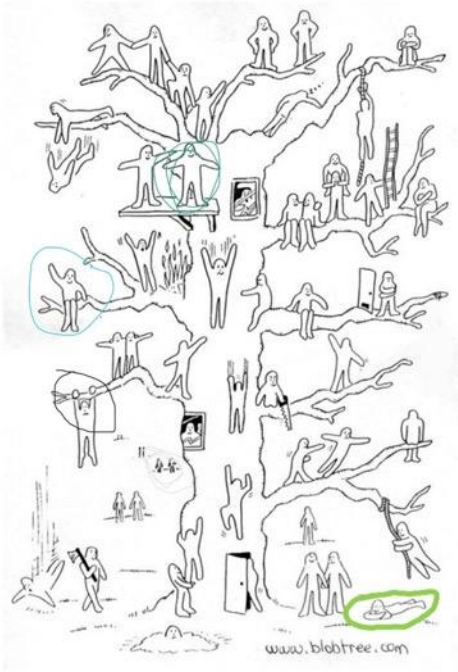
stressful week, hanging on in there

tired

Pretty relaxed

Relaxed!

A bit tired and distant minded



Wellbeing Measure:

For this quick task I would like you to please consider which character on the ***blob tree*** that your mood most identifies with at the current moment. Using your own colour and the pen tool **(P)** to circle a blob. After that if you like you can give us more detail by typing in the coloured text box.

Your Colours:

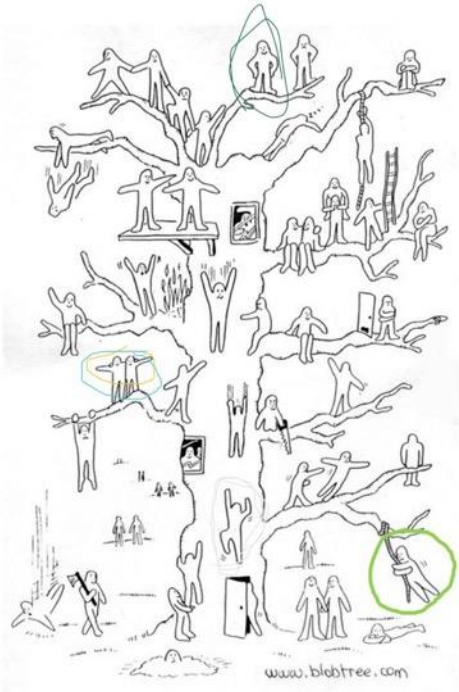
working in pairs was nice and a supportive way to create art

Feel like playing more

One happy boy

Enjoyed working collaboratively and being part of the group

Climbing up and up



Workshop Feedback

Participants Comments: Workshop 1-2

Workshop 1:

Joni: Enjoyed today's session. A little more structure around the workshop part would be useful

Jay: All good so far. Break in the middle could be shorter

Marz: I loved how it evolved but found it a little confusing to start with. I had a lot of fun towards the end though. Maybe giving a choice of different media rather than just a pencil could be even more fun. Well done, looking forward to next week.

Trina: Enjoyed the starting point with different outcomes. Maybe some drawing warm-ups before larger exercise, scaffolding towards the final outcome.

SKY (Skyler): Need to structure practical lessons a bit better.

Ginger beard (Mark): Shorter lunch break, We can make the icebreakers more for next one?

Workshop 2:

Marz: I enjoyed experimenting, had fun sharing and seeing what others are working on.

Trina: Really interesting discussions, I felt more relaxed with the creative tasks than last week! Good pacing I thought.

Fi: Maybe more to read before the workshop so we can try things out. Enjoyed it.

SKY(Skyler): technical issues need to be checked before I start.

Jay: All good apart from my internet connections

Elle: Perhaps handouts with the explanation and tips for the tools on Pixlr - something to refer too. Otherwise loved it today, thank you :)

Tigerlily: Really good fun to play about, given food for thought for next week. Know this was edited from last week, for me the lunch slot could be shorter than the an hour, just a thought.

Joni: Great fun, enjoyed the empathy task in particular and the layering approach with the painted peices into the editing software

Participants Comments: Workshop 3-4

Workshop 3:

Marz: It was great to have a conversation between us about how we see the role of an online art group in improving the wellbeing. Some interesting ideas and concepts. Thank you, the opportunity, to take the part of it :)

Skyler: really getting into the stride of things

Trina: The tools used to support defining the 'commandments' was really good - helped us to get there really easily when it was a pretty complex ask. Also really enjoyed hearing about your research, would be interested to know more! Great fun:)

Jay: Great workshop, sorry I lost Zoom connection right at the end

Fi: Enjoyable session. I enjoy the discussion about all the great works produced.

Elle: Really enjoyed today and seeing everyone's art.

Workshop 4:

Marz: It was super fun and insightful. I feel like I know you all so much better through this exercise. It was a very bonding experience, thank you.

Skyler: Really enjoyed the small workshop today gave lots of room for chat

Trian: Although quite challenging concepts, the session felt very manageable and lots of fun! Really enjoyed getting to know everybody in the group through these activities.

Mark: Enjoyed the small group and the interactive collab task. Great chance to get to know each other and not be too precious about our work, sharing it around a bit.

Jay: Great fun, we definitely mastered the positive vibes principle

Participants Comments:
Empowerment task and Overall comments

Empowerment task:

Marz: I'm not sure, to be honest. Can I think about it?

Skyler: would like to have more discussions

Trina: We have touched on this quite a lot today but doing a collaborative exercise would be very cool. Either we create individual pieces/elements that are combined or all have access to a shared space? This might be a total riot so maybe in smaller groups?

Elle: I would like to explore using Pixlr

Fi: Getting to grips with PIXLR.

Jay: Explore how to take what we've learned into everyday life, e.g creative thinking and expression

Overall Comments:

Marz: It wasn't quite what I initially expected to be but I absolutely loved the journey and it gave me so many creative ideas and made me feel like I was a part of the collaborative project which was great.

Skyler: I had so much fun and am super grateful to everyone who helped out

Trina: Fascinating experience and really enjoyed being a part of it. The process of visualising specific yet abstract concepts was a really positive challenge. I would be really interested to read the final outcome! Thank you for having me!

Mark: Great fun, loved meeting everyone for the first time, explored loads of new skills I haven't before and enjoyed being free to play with them.

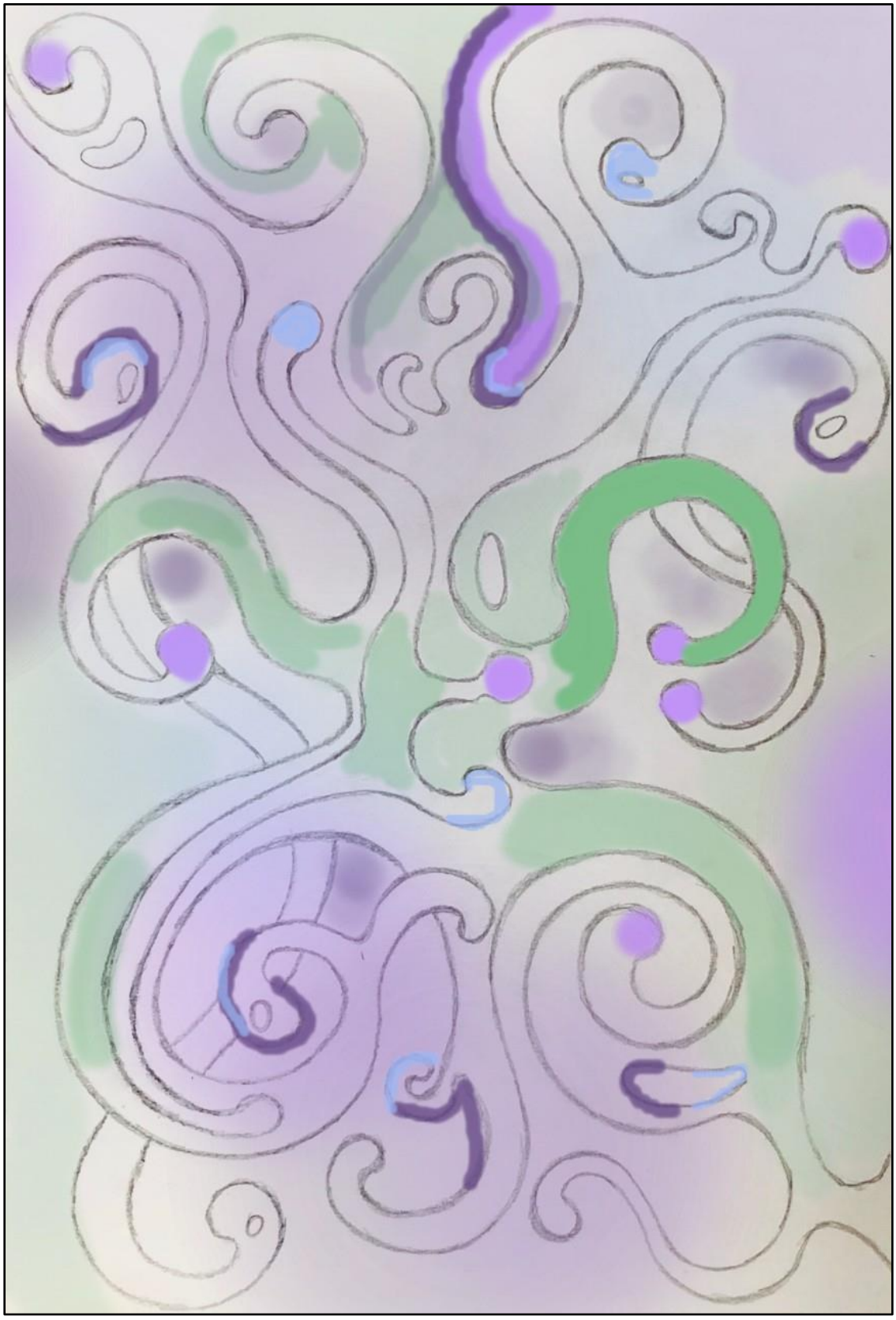
Jay: I've really enjoyed every session, it's a very relaxed and comfortable way to conduct an arts and wellbeing workshop. Thank you for the experience!

Individual and Group Essence

Description: In the final workshop participants created abstract visual representations of one another, these were finally collated and joined together to embody the idea of us as a group. This final image can be seen below.

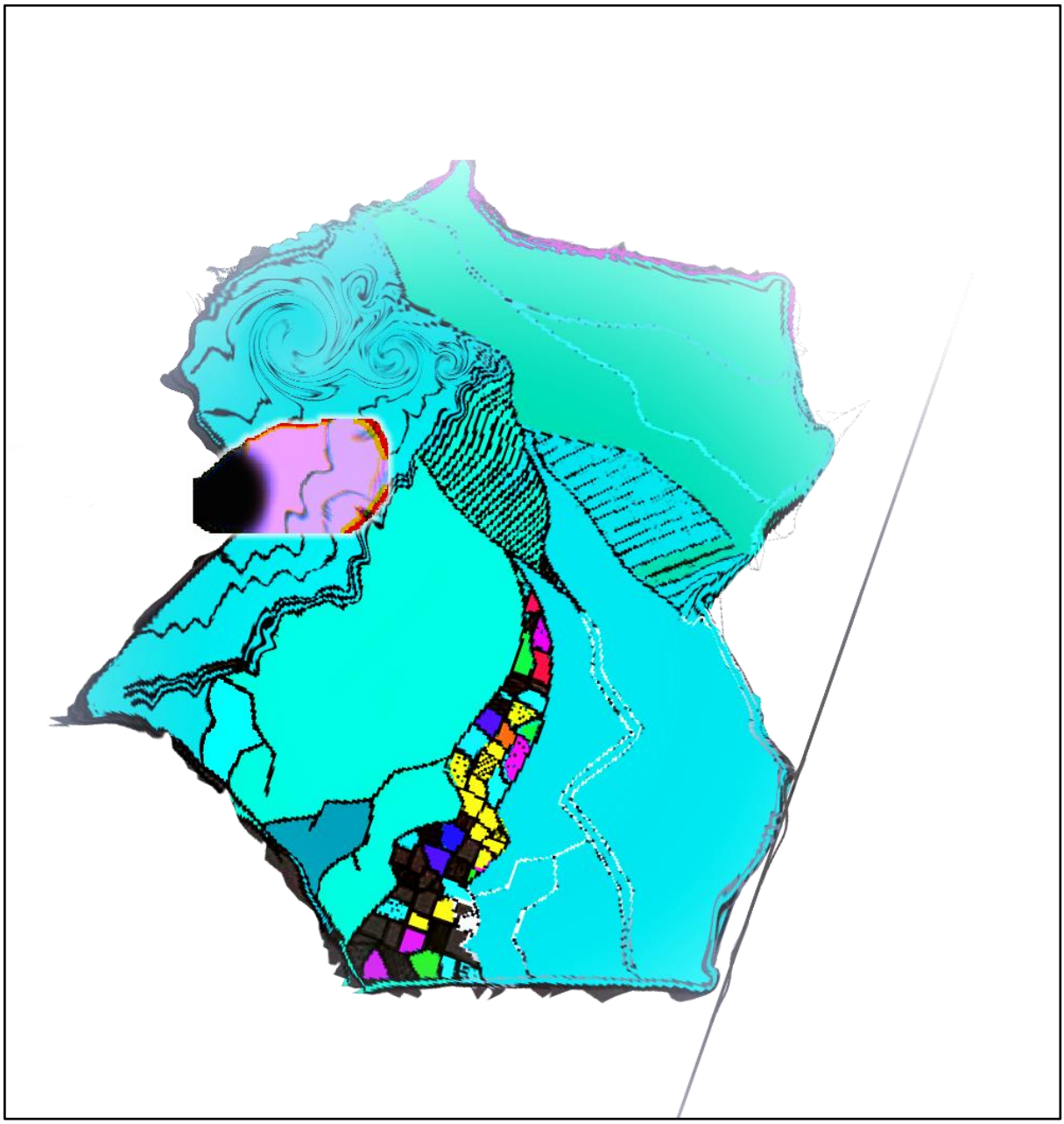
Trina’s essence artwork

Mark’s essence artwork



Jay’s essence artwork

Marz’s essence artwork



SKY’s essence artwork

Group essence artwork

Appendix 3: Transcripts and Data Analysis

Artwork Discussion Transcript

The transcript below contains a body of text detailing the discussions from the four workshops. A helpful key has been provided showing how I initially categorised the emerging codes by highlighting useful and interesting parts of discussions. On the right side of the table my understanding of highlighted segments of discussions meanings are shared through codes.

Key:

Emotion

Expression, Humour

Humans

Individual, Group, Social, inclusivity personal-meaning

Tools and skills

Technique, Materials, Visual Understandings

Workshops

Limitations, Time, Structure, Freedom

Ideas

Possibilities, Interpretations, Meaning

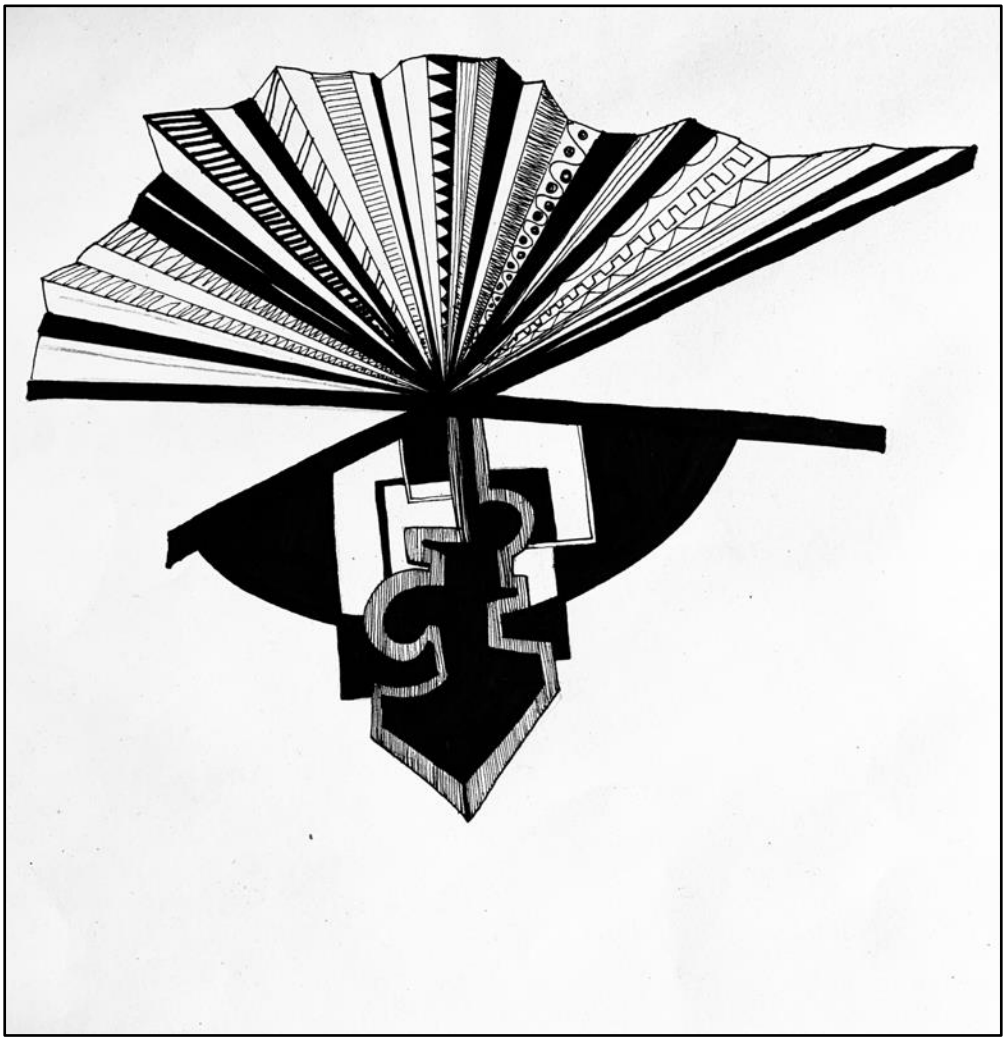
Miscellaneous

Current climate, Outside Influences

Workshop 1 Aim Artworks Discussion

Description: Participants were asked to share their aims for the project which they then transformed into artistic visual embodiments so to further uncover and understand their personal reasons for participation in the online research and arts group. Below the discussion of these artworks is documented.

Joni's Aim: Create, learn, meet new people, inform my own work in this area working with others.



Data	Codes
SKY(Skyler): Joni would you like to start and explain your work? Joni: The middle point is like the kind of workshop kinda thing and then everything else coming out from that is all the opportunities that can create, artworks, you can learn. The abstract figures down here (uses	Many potential outcomes Skill Learning

curser to point at bottom half) are supposed to be people joining together, and this (uses curser to point at top half) is supposed to be representative of a book up the top, then it just turned into a pattern I didn't really carry on with that theme at all.	Social activity Skill Learning Techniques
SKY(Skyler): It's really lovely.	Praise
Jay: It's really good.	Praise
SKY(Skyler): Does anyone have anything they would like to say about it?	Democratic Space
Jay: I'm amazed you done that in that much time.	Praise Time constraints
Trina: you really captured a lot of energy in it.	Energy
Ginger beard(Mark): Yep, I would put that on my wall its amazing.	Praise
Marz: what did you draw with? Ink? Marker?	Materials
Joni: eeh I've got a fine liner and a sharpie.	Materials
Marz: Okay, I didn't know that was allowed.	Perceived rules
Joni: Ahh cheating hahah	Rules broken Humour
Marz: see that's what I wanted to do because I like black. I don't like pencils either. They freak me out.	Freedom Individual preference Materials

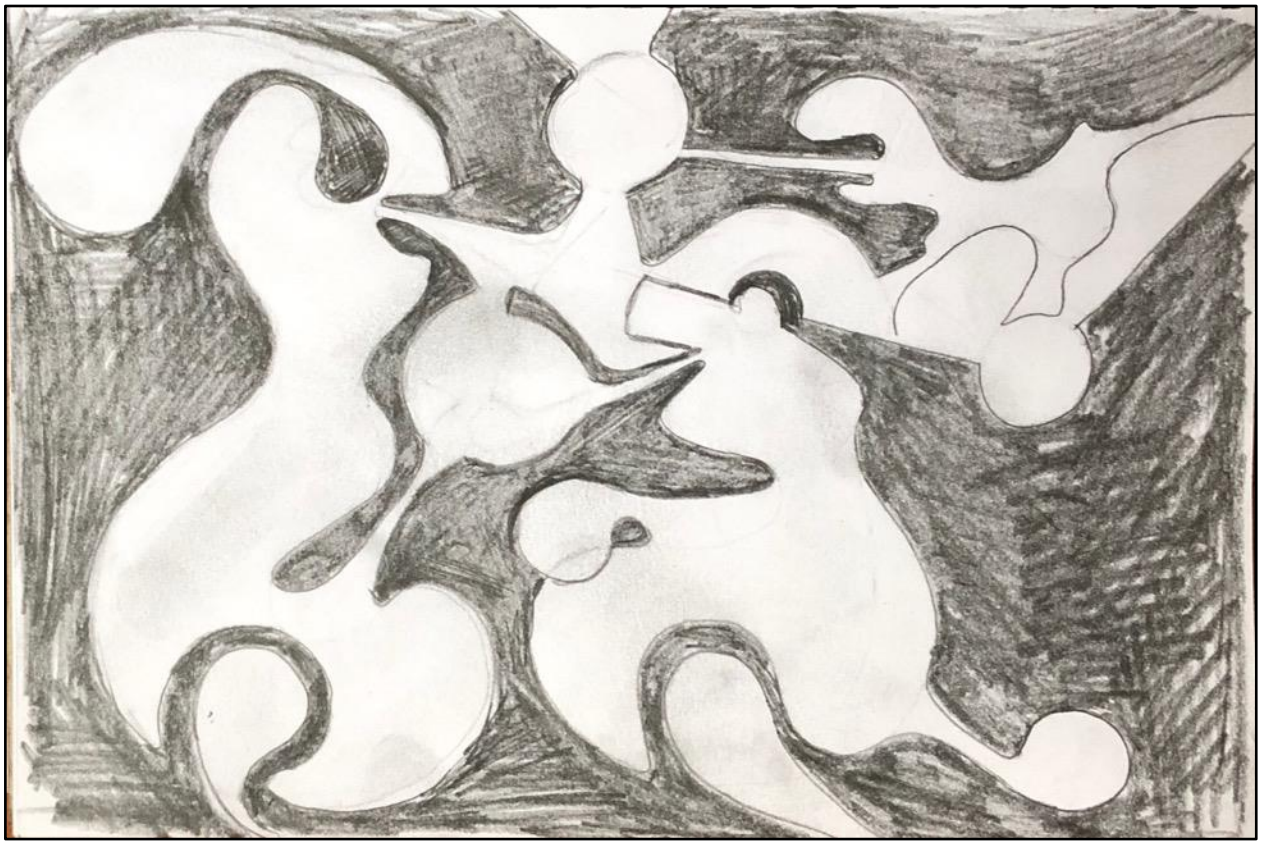
SKY(Skyler): Sorry I should have been clearer, I guess I should have just said the pencils are a suggestion. Also, if anybody has anything, they want to put on the Miro board then go for it there is a comments box just there, remember you a can use the text function by pressing T and you can type what you like, But you can do that now after or not at all, whatever you want. Shall we go onto the next one.	Communication Materials Freedom vs structure Democratic Space Explaining technology Freedom vs structure Time constraints

Jay's Aim: Create me time.

Data	Codes
Jay: That's me, emm it was kind of just about emm switching off from real life and letting my imagination run free, so I can get lost in the creativity and art. That's why the portrait, because my day job, I do work in an arts centre in a development role so it's all about statistics and writing to funders and all that boring stuff. I don't get to get in touch with my creative side very often. There's a line between that and this I guess, this gave me an opportunity to get back in touch with a more creative side, I have a degree within design, which I haven't used at all since I gained it so. SKY(Skyler): What kind of design did you do?	Reenergise Escape from responsibilities potential outcomes Freedom Exploration Escape from work Individual finding creative self Barrier to creativity Freedom Individual finding creative self Old Skills

Jay: Product Design.	Skills
SKY(Skyler): Ahh I see. It's really lovely, I love the jawline on her, it's a strong jaw.	Praise
Jay: hahah, it's a post lockdown chin hahah	Current Climate
SKY(Skyler): hahah	
Jay: I'll need to get rid of a few double chins.	Awareness of wellbeing
SKY(Skyler): I mean that's happened to us all. Alright thank you very much. Marz do you…	Social group
Ginger Beard (Mark): Love it.	Praise
SKY(Skyler): aahh sorry go on	
Ginger Beard (Mark): sorry just wanted to say I absolutely love it,I really love the juxtaposition of the two, the below and the above you know the skull of creativity it's great.	Praise Reenergise through creativity
SKY(Skyler): I really love the style though.	Praise Praise
Ginger Beard (Mark): Yeah its quite stylistic.	Praise
SKY(Skyler): Brilliant, alright Marz do you want to go next?	Time constraints

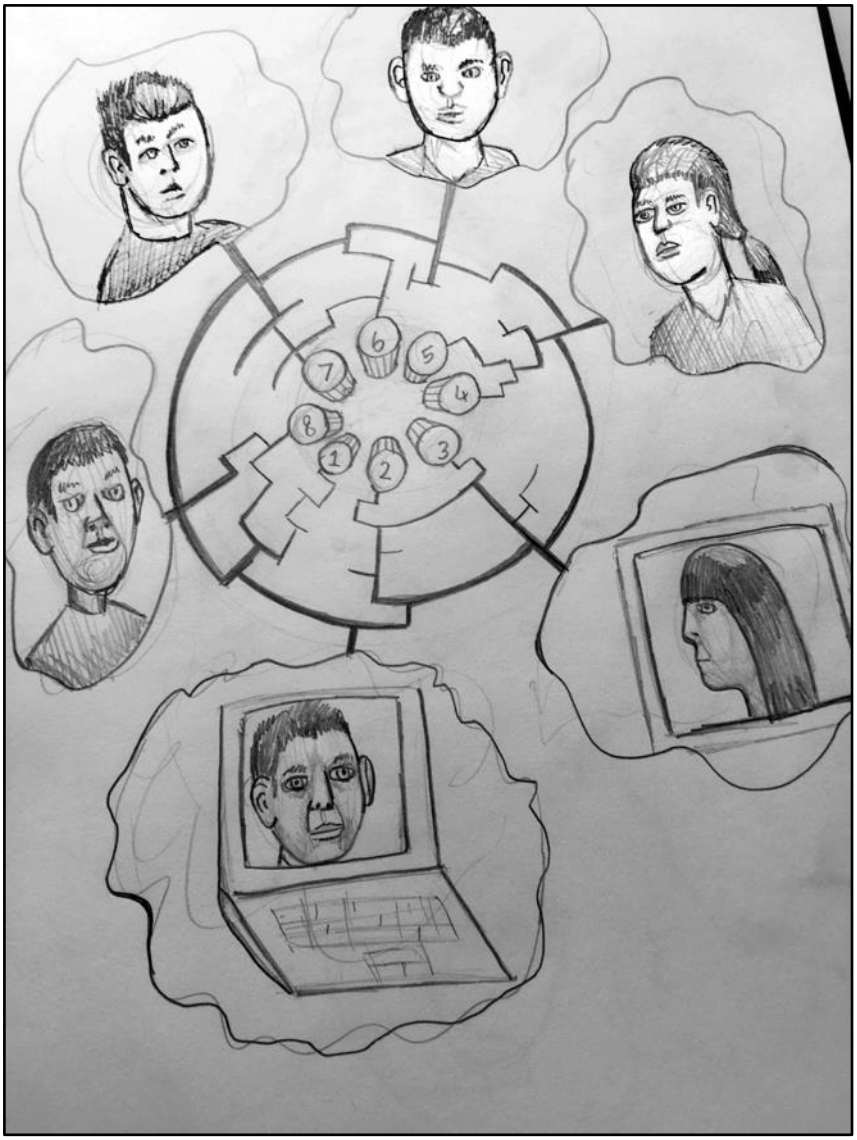
Marz's Aim: Create time and space to do something fun.



Data	Codes
Marz: umm yeah so I kind of took this thing as about group work and collaboration so I started to sketch like really simple figures kinda chatting, then I tried to join them with speech bubbles and tried to connect them somehow and from then on I tried to delete some lines to try see the overall bigger picture. It's nowhere near finished. Now I know I can use the marker haha	Social activity Skills Individual Communication Connection Erase barriers to social action through Technique Time constraints Freedom Materials
SKY(Skyler): hahah Marz: hahah but yeah you get the idea of exchanging ideas in a kinda abstract fun way, then yeah we can share between one another and it's kinda fun and playful.	Enjoyment Communication Shared knowledge Community Enjoyment

SKY(Skyler): It reminds me of something but I can't think what. Jay: it's a bit kind of dream-like Ginger Beard (Mark): I can see like rabbits and birds and eagles all at play like. I love how they kinda morph into each other. Jay: hahah Marz: Yeah that's where it all comes from a connection between different thoughts. Ginger Beard (Mark): It's great when you do something kinda abstract like that. When it's an abstract shape and the human mind projects forms on it. Jay: Everyone sees something different as well. Ginger Beard (Mark): it's like clouds isn't it, its great. Trina: There's a wonderful fluidity about it and now you speak about it I kind of read it as like a conversation. Marz: Yeah SKY(Skyler): that's awesome	Thought provoking Exploration Many interpretations Enjoyment Community Enjoyment Community Thought provoking Many potential interpretations Praise Praise Formal techniques Communication Praise

SKY's (Skyler's) Aim: To have fun, understand practices and co create principles to help support wellbeing in the arts group context



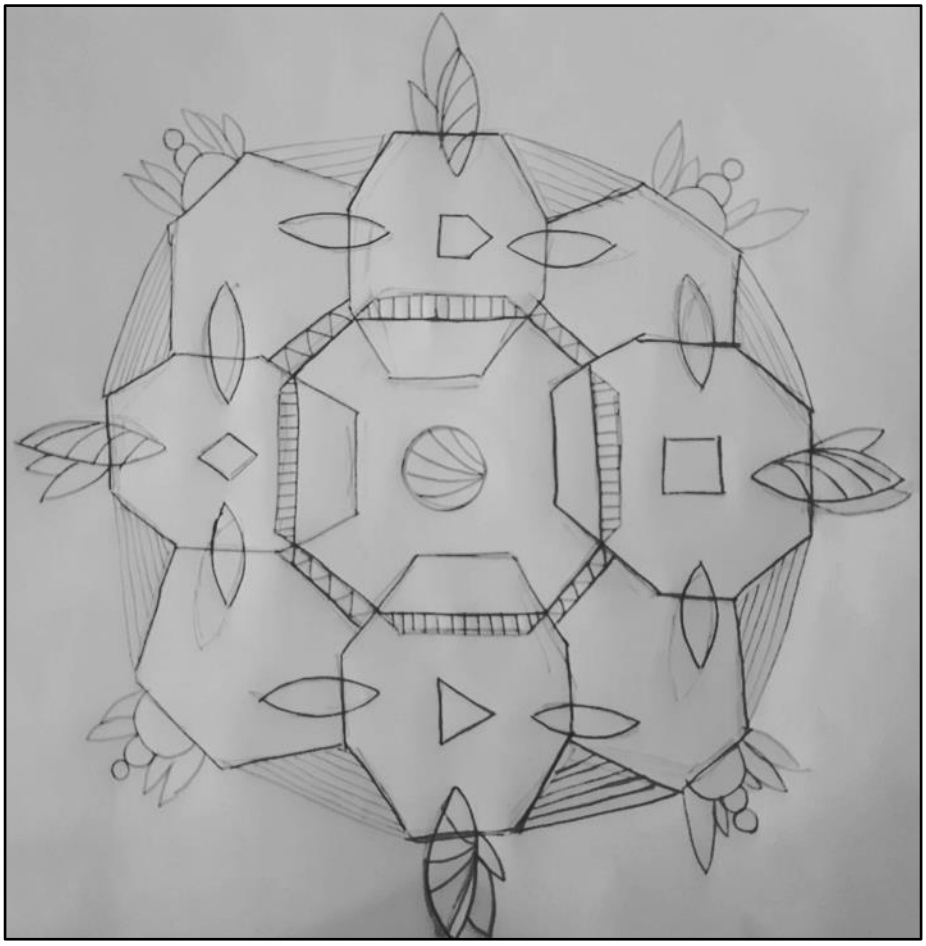
Data	Codes
SKY(Skyler): So mine is literally a symbolic representation of what we're doing. Uuuuh So here is the wires all connecting people together and making the circle, and then each bubble is different persons on their laptop, sharing their ideas and thoughts, and hopefully together we will create something that will help people to do this in the future and that's symbolised by the columns in the centre. Ginger Beard (Mark): great	Connection Individual Technology Shared knowledge Community Legacy

Joni: I like how it's like a maze in the middle, because like you don't know quite what the solution will be and you're all working away at it.	Inquiry Process Many potential outcomes Co-researching
SKY(Skyler): And I wanted to kinda and join these bits up because its all of us collaborating and even though maybe one of us will create one thing its always gonna be with each other and we are gonna have to build these things together.	Community research Individual outcomes Many potential outcomes
Joni: yep	
Jay: you've kinda captured that zoom blank facial expression.	Technology, current climate
SKY(Skyler):hahahah	
Jay: The screen freezes and everyone is like …(pulls a face)	Technology fails
All: hahahah	Group enjoyment
SKY(Skyler): I see this a lot like when I was recording you guy's consent, I saw myself looking totally gormless. That's probably where the inspiration is from. See that guy up there right at the front that must be me.	Technological sense of self humour as social prop Individual group dichotomy
Ginger Beard (Mark): From the outside we're all separate in our clouds or bubbles but the point is as we get into it more and more into the centre of the maze we kinda	Research process Co-research

come together I guess. So nice how we come together even in our little boxes. SKY(Skyler): Trina do you wanna talk about yours.	

Trina's Aim: To have the opportunity and space to create and explore within a group.

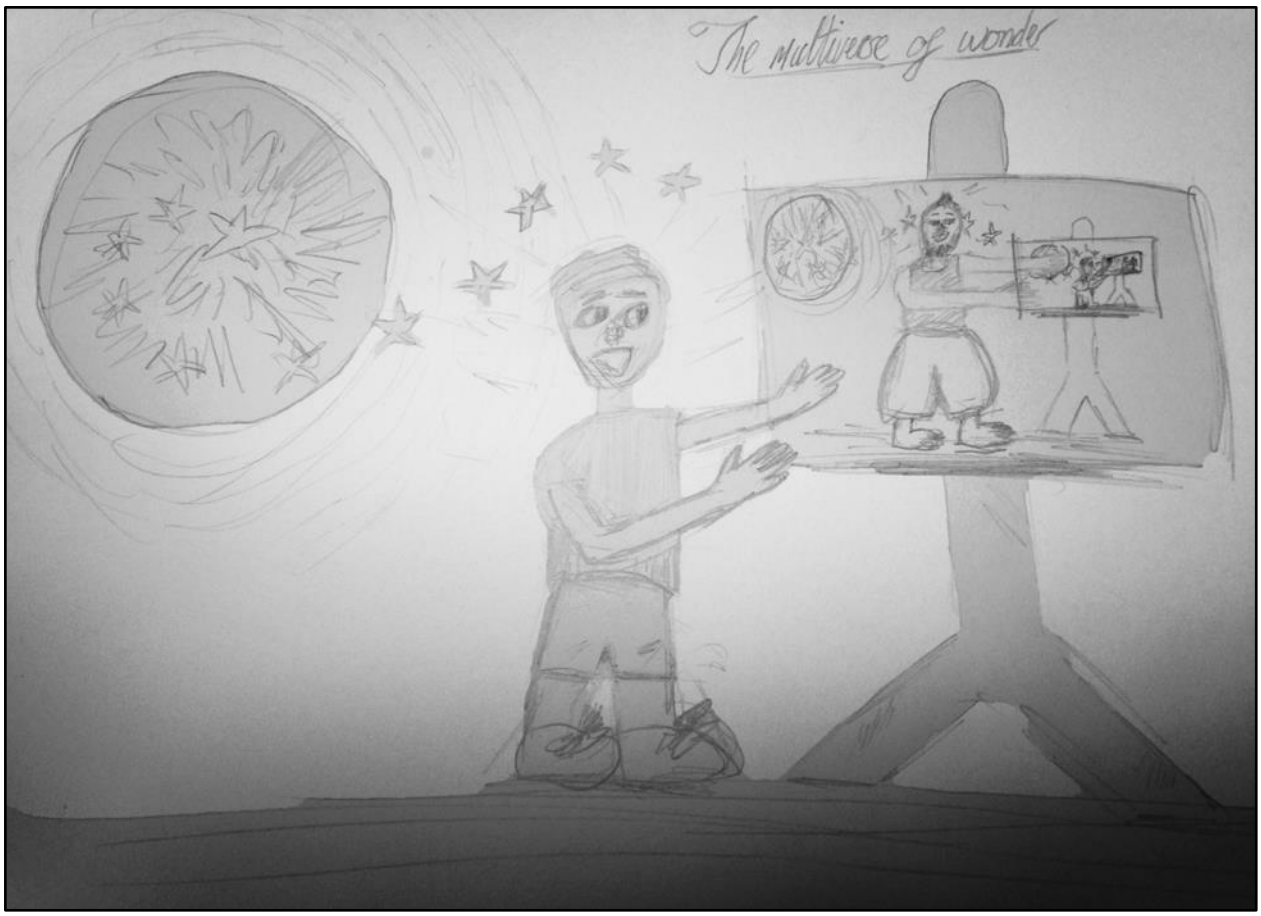
Even though my work centres around art, I very rarely do my own work.



Data	Codes
Trina: I started right in the centre because I was thinking about any interaction like a workshop or session like this. Where it has to be person centred and individual centred there is no one way of doing it. So, I wanted to think about each individual within their own little space. Slightly different slightly wonky but they all interconnect but those interconnections they make new things. Hopefully that's something that would come out of this and I was thinking about building structures where you've got your own space to do your building and see what comes out at the end, that's what I was kinda thinking.	Workshops participant centred Individual. Multiple methods for workshops. Uniqueness of individual and thus workshop. Emergent group outcomes Expectation bespoke structure for individuals Individual structures for freedom

SKY(Skyler): Make a lot of sense.	Freedom for outcome Praise
Ginger Beard (Mark): Brilliant, to me it looks like, ehh as if, so there's 8 structures around the outside and there's 8 of us. Which is quite a geometric shape it's quite formal and everything from that is kinda nature and organic shapes.	Individual in community Natural
Jay: Yeah that's how I see a flower some kinda botanic style.	Natural
Ginger Beard (Mark): Kinda looks like emergent, like the natural and emergent like you can formalise a group but you've got this emergent nature that comes from the interaction. It's cool I like it.	Natural emergent group outcomes Structure Community naturally emerging
SKY(Skyler): Lovely,Markdo you wanna have chat about yours.	

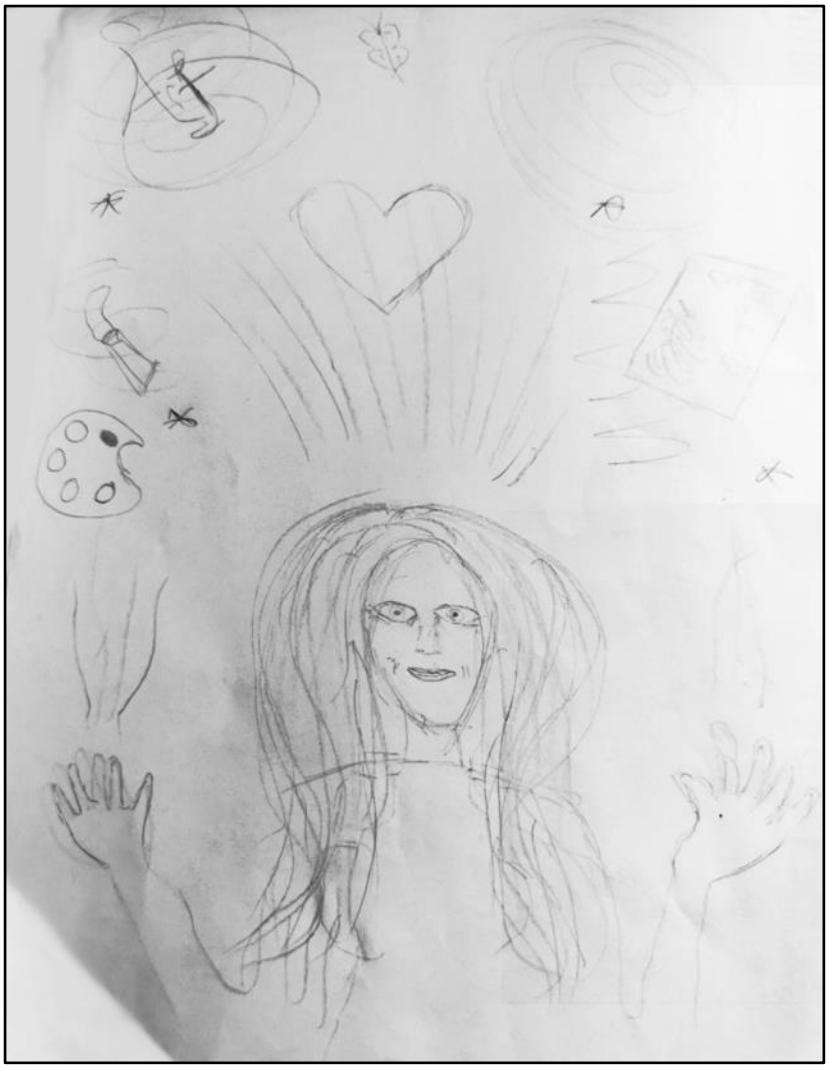
Ginger Beard's Aim: Explore a part of me untouched since I was a kid.



Data	Codes
Ginger Beard (Mark): Ehhh Yeah so I wrote that ummm I wanted to rediscover something that I hadn't really played with i.e. drawing since I was a kid. So I took it quite literally so I drew myself as a kid drawing myself now drawing myself as a kid.	Individual finding creative self Understanding self through creation
All: hahahah	Group enjoyment
SKY(Skyler): I see that now wow haha	
Ginger Beard(Mark): Yeah every phase of it is me as a kid drawing me as an adult drawing me as a kid drawing me as an adult.	Understanding the changing self

Jay: I worked in a theatre and in the dressing rooms we'd get mirrors on either wall and its like that endless picture.	Sharing identity
Ginger Beard (Mark): Trippy, is that when you're doing your makeup before you go on theatre?	
Jay: Yes aha hahaha	Enjoyment
SKY(Skyler): That makes sense, lovely, whats the ball to your...	Curiosity
Ginger Beard(Mark): ohh yeah so that was like the ahhh, so that was inspired by the physics and the Salvador Dali thing kinda and I was having a little bit of a cosmic feeling about it like how inspiration and wonder is timeless maybe your inspired by the past maybe your inspired by the future hence the reflection. So the ball I guess is a wormhole of inspiration opening up and ehh sprinkling some stardust on us all, on me, in the past and the future and the connections going through it all.	Creativity as human A portal through time to inspiration
SKY(Skyler): Lovely	
Ginger Beard(Mark): Yeah so the wormhole is joining my past self with my present self and I guess my future self.	Inspiration and creativity as the vehicle of change

Elle's Aim: Confidence to be creative, a way to express myself creatively, to have fun.



(Elle could not attend this part of the workshop but sent me a photography of her aim)

Workshop 2 Emotion Discussion

Description: Participants were asked to choose an emotion that they would like to explore visually. They then created artworks exploring their chosen emotion and finally shared and discussed them. Below the discussion of these artworks is documented.

Fi's Emotion: Calm

Data	Codes
SKY(Skyler): Right is that us all on the Miro board? Fi: We missing one? SKY(Skyler): Nope I think that's us now. Ginger beard (Mark): think that's us.	Coordinating group

SKY(Skyler): Awesome sine your first Fi do you wanna talk, about your piece, just say what emotion it was and why you did what you did.	Chosen emotion
Fi: ahhh okay the emotion was calm, I am just feeling content and I didn't want any imagery because I think imagery in a calm state can lead you off in a story so I just left it peaceful very warm colours and a hint of nature hahah, that's it really my first thought to be honest.	Story as not calm Technique Nature as calm
SKY(Skyler): it's that the green in the middle?	
Fi: Aye	Horizontal as calming
SKY(Skyler): I also think what really is calming, and you've done it with the green there, is that horizontal, like horizontals always make us feel more relaxed because there is ground. Does anyone have anything else to share.	Safety on solid ground
Trina: its really beautiful	Praise
Ginger beard (Mark): it is, reminds me of a very calm Martian landscape.	Multiple interpretations
Jay: I thought a kind of Spanish vineyard with the sun setting.	Multiple interpretations
Fi: hmm	Formal qualities

Ginger beard (Mark): yeah, it's the pink, it's the pink sky isn't it. I dunno if it's meant to be a sky but…	accepting interpretations of others
Fi: it wasn't really meant to be a sky but it comes out like a landscape in the end doesn't it.	Multiple interpretations
	Passions
Tigerlily: Maybe like the inside of a slushy like the kinda graded colours. I love a slushy, it's been my speciality during lockdown, I've been doing adult slush puppies that's basically involves blitzing	Sharing self Humour
Fi: So whats that pink grapefruit and lime?	Rapport
Tigerlily: Sounds delicious, I'll be there next time you make one	
Fi: it's okay I'll share hahahaha	

SKY's Emotion: Anger/Frustration

Data	Codes
SKY(Skyler): So I'll move onto my one just to the right of Fi's, there's a slight story behind this, last week… for my day job well I work at a small supermarket store and it can be pretty infuriating sometimes so the emotion for this is anger but more so than anger frustration that's why the rings are there kinds holding in this tension and the tension is symbolised by the red angular kind of lines. So last week I was working and drunk man comes up and	Sharing self Sharing emotion Suppression of emotion in life

tries to buy more alcohol, so I explain to him that they are already too drunk, so he starts liking my screen, my protective screen.	Expression of emotion in arts group
Marz: ahhhhhh	
Fi: Oh my god, Awful	Empathy
SKY(Skyler): Yeah hahahah	Comradery
Fi: Did you have to call the police?	Appeal to power
SKY(Skyler): No we just told him to get out, and he did.	
Fi: its interesting you know because I thought it was an iris like a wide eye with an iris with panic.	Multiple interpretations
Jay: like bloodshot eyes	Emotion
Tigerlily: yeah like conjunctivitis vibes hahahah	Humour
All: hahahah	
Tigerlily: I also was thinking it like a child's decorated a doughnut with icing everywhere, though I do also feel your tension if you compare that and the one before they convey quite different messages though similar colour pallets similar tones of warmth.	Multiple interpretations
Fi: were you angry as you did it were you reliving it?	Using emotion to express

SKY(Skyler): I wasn't too angry; it probably would have helped if I got a little more in the zone Fi: yeah, or maybe not just get as far away from that as possible. SKY(Skyler): end up breaking the canvas Tigerlily: Method painting Fi: Maybe you've just left it behind you SKY(Skyler): You've got to otherwise you will just turn into a ball of rage. Ginger beard (Mark): For me it's kind of the red lines are kind of like the blood veins that's constricting the anger from getting out because you're in a professionally environment. Jay: you have to control it. Ginger beard (Mark): Your withholding your true emotions SKY(Skyler): That's was precisely what it was hahahaha Fi: The next painting can be about what you wanted to do SKY(Skyler): hahaha	Use artwork to distance self from emotion Physical embodiment of anger Using emotion to express Art helps moving forward Need for emotional release consequence of emotional blockage Multiple interpretations Suppression of emotion in life Rules of conduct in society Suppression Suppression of emotion in life Arts group as place to be yourself Arts as relief from suppressed emotion

Ginger beard (Mark): Was it the touch screen he licked or your screen? SKY(Skyler): No It was the barrier the Covid barrier. Ginger beard (Mark): hahaha Fi: hmmm I wonder if he's caught anything? SKY(Skyler): who knows… Fi: That's scary though. Trina: show that painting to your manager and say: "this is what this job does to me" All: hahaha Ginger beard (Mark): anti-alcohol commercial "this is your mind on alcohol" SKY(Skyler): Awesome shall we move to the next painting, I think that's Tigerlily.	Humour Current climate Justice Current climate fear Catharsis understanding form others desire to alter world

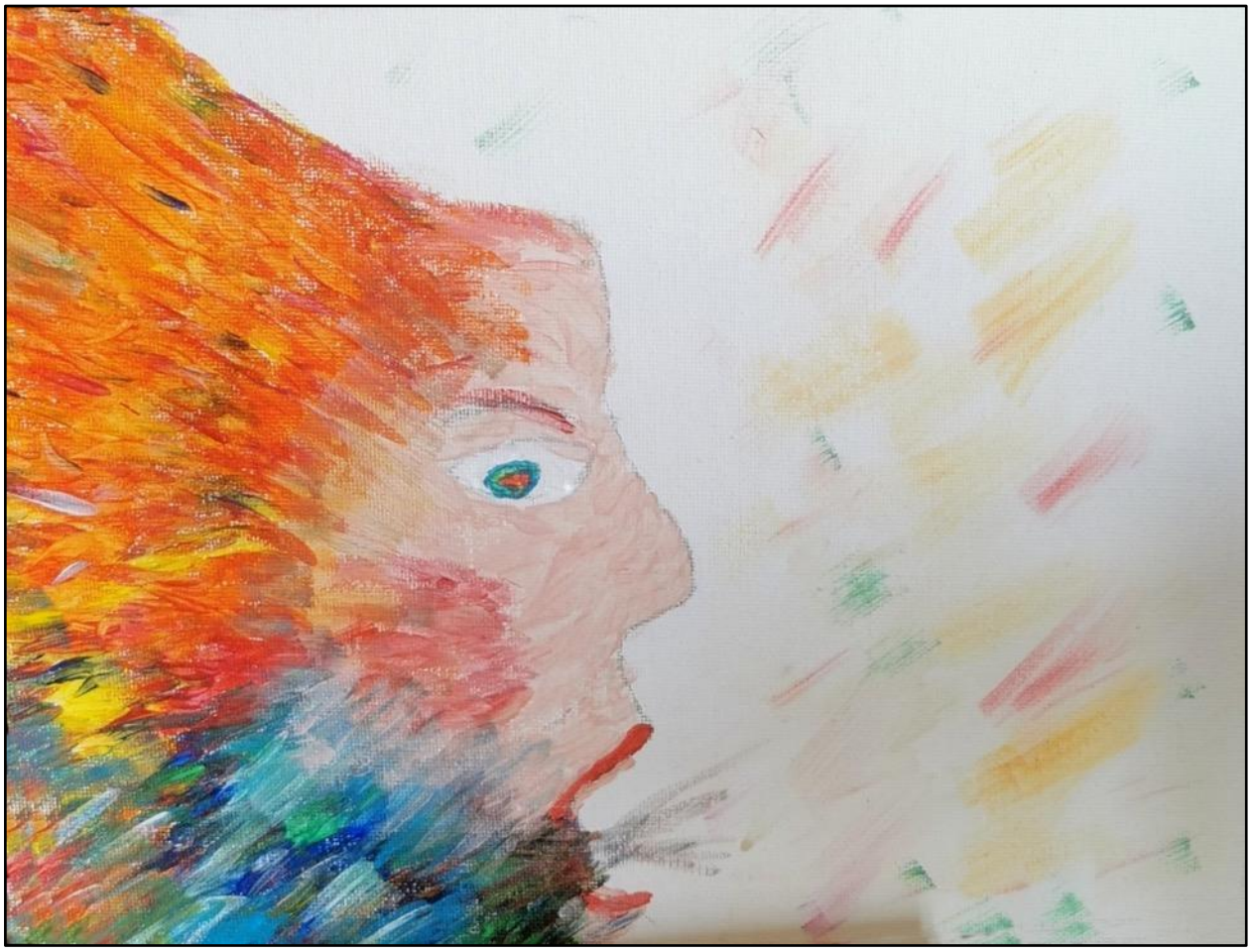
Tigerlily's Emotion: Joy

Data	Codes
Tigerlily: I feel like it doesn't translate that well, when I'm looking at it now from what I was imagining. Emm so mine was umm joy. Now the reason it's a bit more pictorial than some of the other expressions of emotion. I was trying to think, like for me, joy and happiness don't necessarily have to coincide like you can still have joy even when your not experiencing something happy in your life, you can still choose to find joy. So I was trying to think of what brings me true joy and usually it's like been on some kind of adventure. So this is the picture, the orange is actually a rib boat like a rib on a loch, and there's a figure in the middle she's got curly hair, which was my hair when it was a bit longer and I absolutely love being at the bow of a shape or boat and feeling like	Justifying artwork Expectations vs reality Emotion Unique conception Considers happiness as long term condition Coping with life with joy Personal sense of joy Adventure as escape Story and symbol as technique Sharing self

I'm in the waves and your like rocking and bouncing and I love when its choppy and rough, I love raw elements and so it's quite a raw thing and I suppose I kinda painted myself into the bottom of the ship, in the kind of sense of that when you're in that bit you feel at like you're at one with it, you're not fighting against the rockiness of the water that's spraying up everywhere. And I kinda love the really stark colour of ribs ships the boats that are usually bright orange or bright red. Its maybe looks a little angry but yeah.	Nature as healing Being one with world Letting go Visual language Worry of misinterpretation
Fi: I like it in the sea because it almost looks like there's kind of little boats and figures from the paler marks.	Praise Pleasurable marks
Ginger beard (Mark): Yeah, I love the sea as well its really well done looks really deep and makes me want to jump in.	Praise Being one with world
SKY(Skyler): I love how you describe you feel at one with the boat and then one with the sea, that's a really nice metaphor.	Being one with world
Tigerlily: I always feel quite at home, I think it's because I grew up in nature, I grew up beside the water. I always feel like the rawness of nature is quite centring. That's one thing I really miss now that I live in the city and it wasn't possible for me to be in lockdown in the country. It's so much better than been stuck in a wee flat with no garden.	Home as nature Nature as healing City as less healing

Fi: its great	Praise
Jay: when I looked at it I thought that it was about grief because the figure is so dark in it, almost like the shadow of a person.	Contradictory interpretation Symbolic reading
Tigerlily: I think the thing with joy like you can still find joy even if you are grieving. I think joy is a really interesting thing because we can still express things even if you're in grief or lamenting or whatever it is, there is still...	Joy as lifeline during suffering
Jay: Things of beauty.	Shared understanding
Tigerlily: Yeah for sure. Like my friend had a really tragic situation someone really close to her died like in a really horrific way and she felt really guilty about laughing because she was so sad and I said like that's okay, you can still laugh and be in a really deep sense of mourning. We're complex beings we can be more than one thing at once.	Personal example Useful grief coping skill Complexity of human life Simultaneity of emotion
SKY(Skyler): Absolutely	
Tigerlily: I like the ginger dream that feels like the next one.	Humour as tools for supressing awkwardness
SKY(Skyler): shall we move onto Elle's then?	

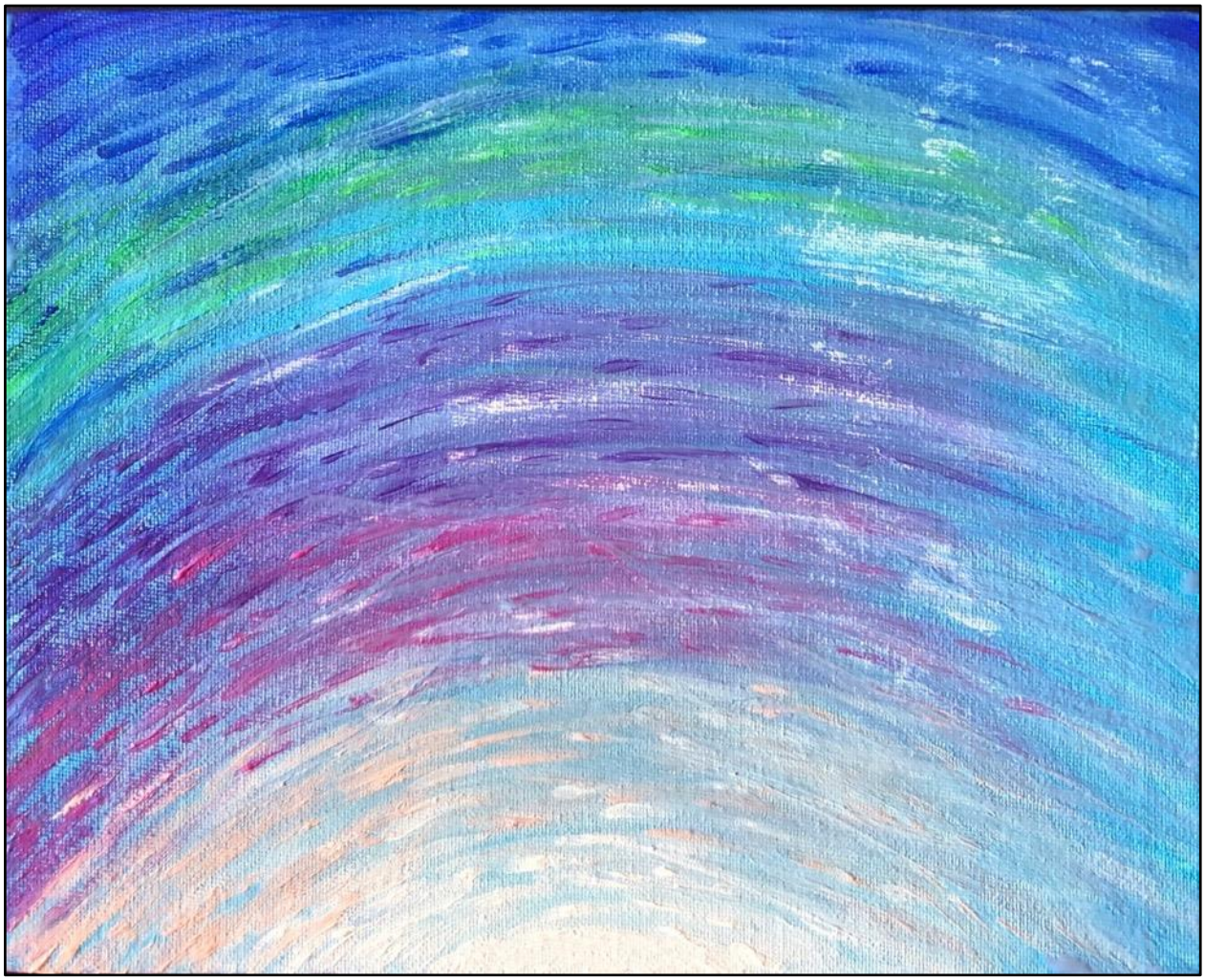
Elle's Emotion: Frustration



Data	Codes
Elle: Yeah umm so mine was frustration, emmm I was kinda like how, how you can have so much to be frustrated at, at being unable to express or have so much there and not be able to bring it out the way it's in your head. I think that's very much what I was feeling a wee bit while doing it as well, so umm yeah. Fi: Its great I love it, it's like a human parrot, like you know so it's like what you were saying, there's words coming out but it's not really what the human in the parrot wants to say. I Love the colours.	Emotion Barriers to expression Dashed expectations Challenges in expression Loss of meaning in communication Praise

(SKY) Skyler: It's really cool, I love how you're expressing about expression, that that's just very meta and awesome.	Praise
Elle: yeah	
Tigerlily: I like the brush strokes on it they're lovely and thick use of paint application's lovely.	Technique
Fi: Aha	
Elle: I was learning very much while I was doing that so I was like ooohh if I do this then that happens so I was quite a journey in learning how you use the brushes. Because it is all very new to me so it was good fun.	Learning skills Hard work Enjoyment
Fi: And you did it on the canvas as well yeah?	Materials
Elle: yeah, it's on the canvas.	
Fi: Ahh nice.	
Joni: Nice to see an influence from your other art piece in it as well you know that kinda colour and the blending of the brushstrokes as well, it's good.	Building on prior skills Technique
Skyler: Nice shall we move onto Jay then.	

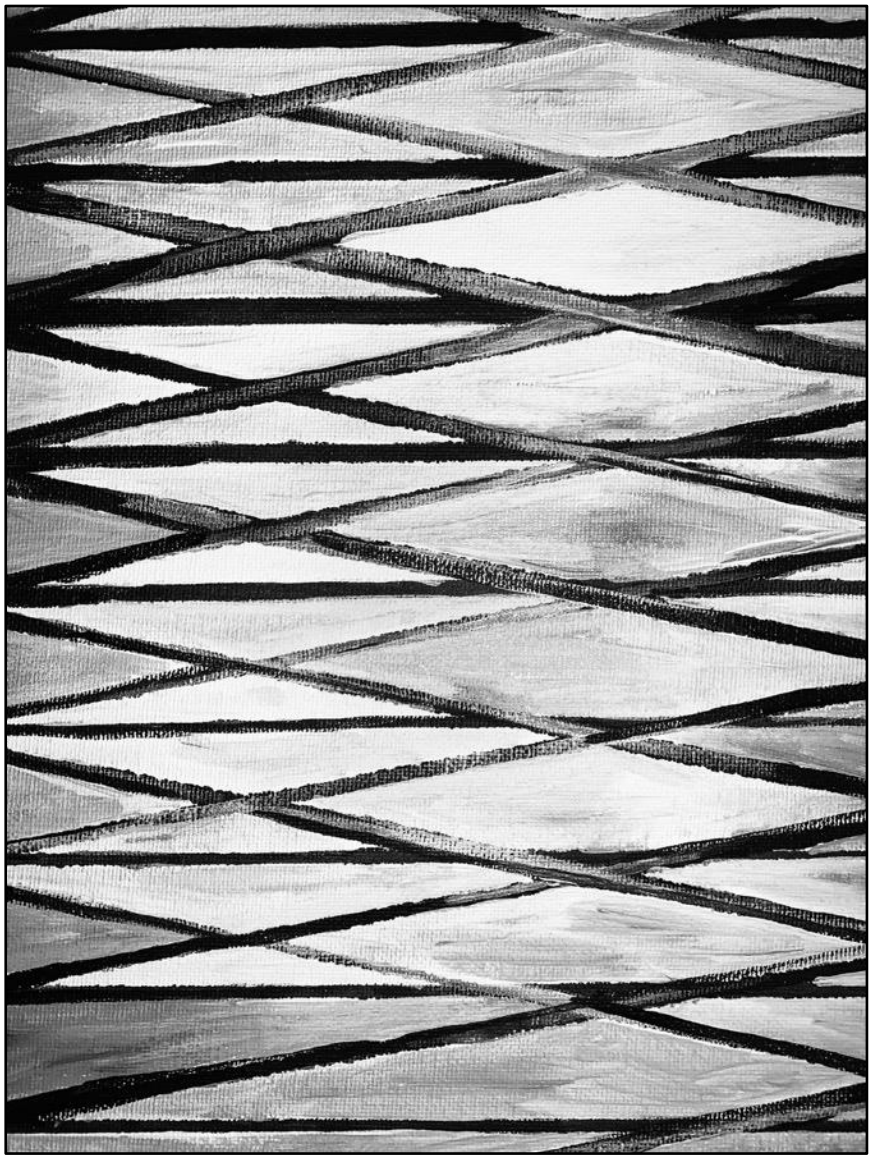
Jay's Emotion: Calm



Data	Codes
Jay: emm my feeling was calm and I was trying to create a sense of calm while I painted it, and it did actually, it was quite effective, quite therapeutic emm it was, I was trying to capture like kinda water flowing, or like droplets of water, kinda ripples of water but also like that calm aura some people have about them, I wanna be one of them people, I was trying to capture that.	Emotion Art as calming experience Nature as calming Observing calmness of others Self-reinvention
Fi: hahahahah	Creation as tool for change Empathy/enjoyment
Jay: I'm quite a worrier I've definitely not got that aura yet but I'm working on it. But painting it was actually	Self-reinvention

very therapeutic it was very calming just kinda putting the movement on the page and blending the colours together.	Creation as tool for change Techniques
Elle: I love the colours on there.	
Fi: It reminds me of like if it was much bigger, it filled the screen, it the room, as far as your vision could go its like Monet, same kinda colours and mood.	Appeal to authority Praise
Ginger beard (Mark): You got the water effect very well as well you got the kinda ripples. The deep ripple effect is nice.	Praise
Fi: Yeah the sense of calm I'm getting is nice	Affirmation of meaning
Trina: The glittering light as well is very beautiful, almost feels like its moving	Praise
Jay: Might put that above my bed to calm me down	Artworks legacy and function Idea generation humour
Fi: Just paint your wall.	
Ginger beard (Mark): Don't know if we gave you enough paints but we can send you some more.	Humour
All:hahahah	Humour
Jay: Keep me busy	Excess time Current climate
Skyler: Awesome shall we move onto Joni's. just below	Time constraints

Joni's Emotion: Calm



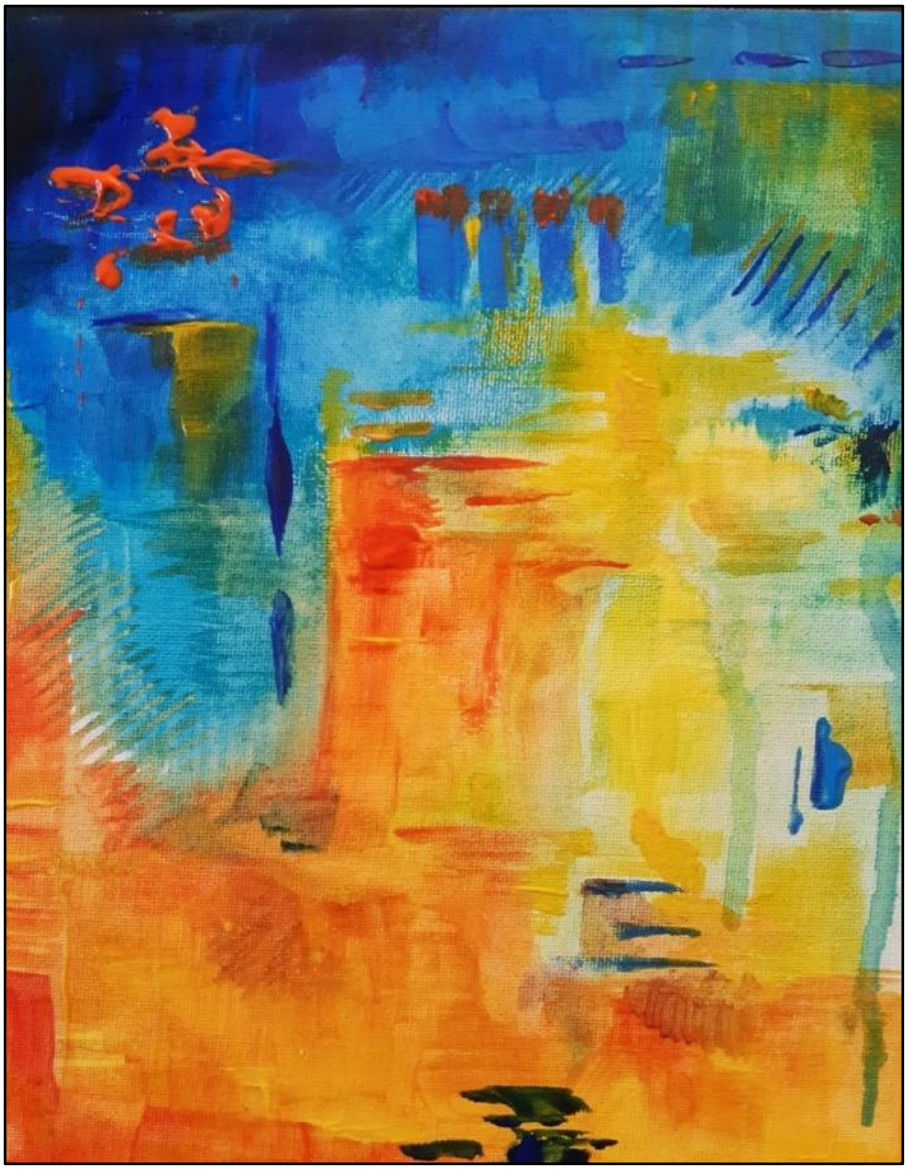
Data	Codes
Joni: Emmm yep so not really a colour person, emmm I'm much more drawn to black and white and shadow and things like that, emmm but I particularly like it when I find like a shadow that creates a geometric pattern so I've got tons and tons of photographs where light has created a pattern emm and I just find geometry and structure like that really really calming. So I just sort of painted one of my photographs that of got of a shadow, that I took a photograph of in Ikea I think. Much different	Individual difference unique preference Formal Visual tools Visual interest Unique yet understandable meaning Visual tools

to everybody else's translation of calm, I suppose it was not really about creating an aesthetic to make others feel calm it was more about what I find calming. So that's why that was. Tigerlily: Can I ask is it black and white because for me it looks kind of purple on this screen. SKY(Skyler): I think its just black and white, Joni you still there? Joni: yep Sorry everything froze for me there. SKY(Skyler): you were asked if it was all back and white of if it has a purple glaze. Tigerlily: For me it looks like it's a kinda mauve like a dark purple instead of a black but I don't know if that's just the way the photograph is coming up on my screen. Joni: No its just black and white. Marz: Okay looks lilac on mine as well Joni: Oh really. SKY (Skyler): That's quite strange. Joni: Nope it's just black and white.	Importance of divergent understandings shared meaning vs personal meaning shared emotion signifier "Calm" individual perception of emotion Technology issues Technology issues Unique perception due to tech Different tech different problems Authorial perspective Unique perception Shared tech issue

Fi: It reminds me of sort of stain glass window in some way. Ginger beard (Mark): Your eyes might be mixing, there's a purple square next to it maybe your eyes … Tigerlily: One too many drinks at lunch time hahahah Marz: Ohh when I click on it becomes black and white. Tigerlily: Ohh yeah now you've done that, it's done that for me too. Marz: I think it was highlighted, okay now it looks like its meant to. there's nothing wrong with us. Ginger beard (Mark): I really like your exploration of, and it's kinda what myself and Skyler were talking about when we were making this workshop. the distinction between the emotions of the artist, the perceived emotions of the viewer and I guess the perceived emotion of the piece itself, they can be completely separate and distinct and there's no need for them to correlate or for you as an artist to try to specifically convey. Because we've touched on it as well, in the first exercise we did there's certain perceived conventions of emotions in colour, in shape and in form even if that's not what you get yourself, you can still recognise it. I think it's very clever and admirable of you to do something that represents your emotion even though it doesn't necessarily conform to the norm.	Task falling off track Conversation being its own end Humour Participant tech solution Interpretations from many perspectives; authorial, cultural, experiential/formal Culturally determined meaning embodied in visual means to signify emotion Individually determined meaning Praise Value in deviation form the norm

Joni: Yeah	
SKY (Skyler): Absolutely	Structure as supportive
Trina: There's something really comforting in structure, you don't often get that in life do you?	Unpredictability of the world
All: hahahaha	Sharing self
Joni: I think it's because in every other element in my life everything's quite like you know erratic, like I work a couple of different jobs and things like that and I think because of that I have always been drawn to images that are nice and geometric and have a form and a repetition and things like that.	Aversion towards unpredictability fragmented responsibilities visual elements Structured as workshop as supportive Humour
Trina: I've never been that calm in Ikea.	
Fi: hahahaha	Sharing dislikes
Joni: The other day was pretty good because it wasn't rammed, it took us about a half an hour to get in, but it wasn't busy so actually it was quite calming. We did leave almost on a divorce though hahhaha	Calm in structure Humour Rapport
Jay: Many trips to ikea end in divorce hahaha	
SKY (Skyler): Lovely shall we move onto Trina's	

Trina's Emotion: Contentment/Hope

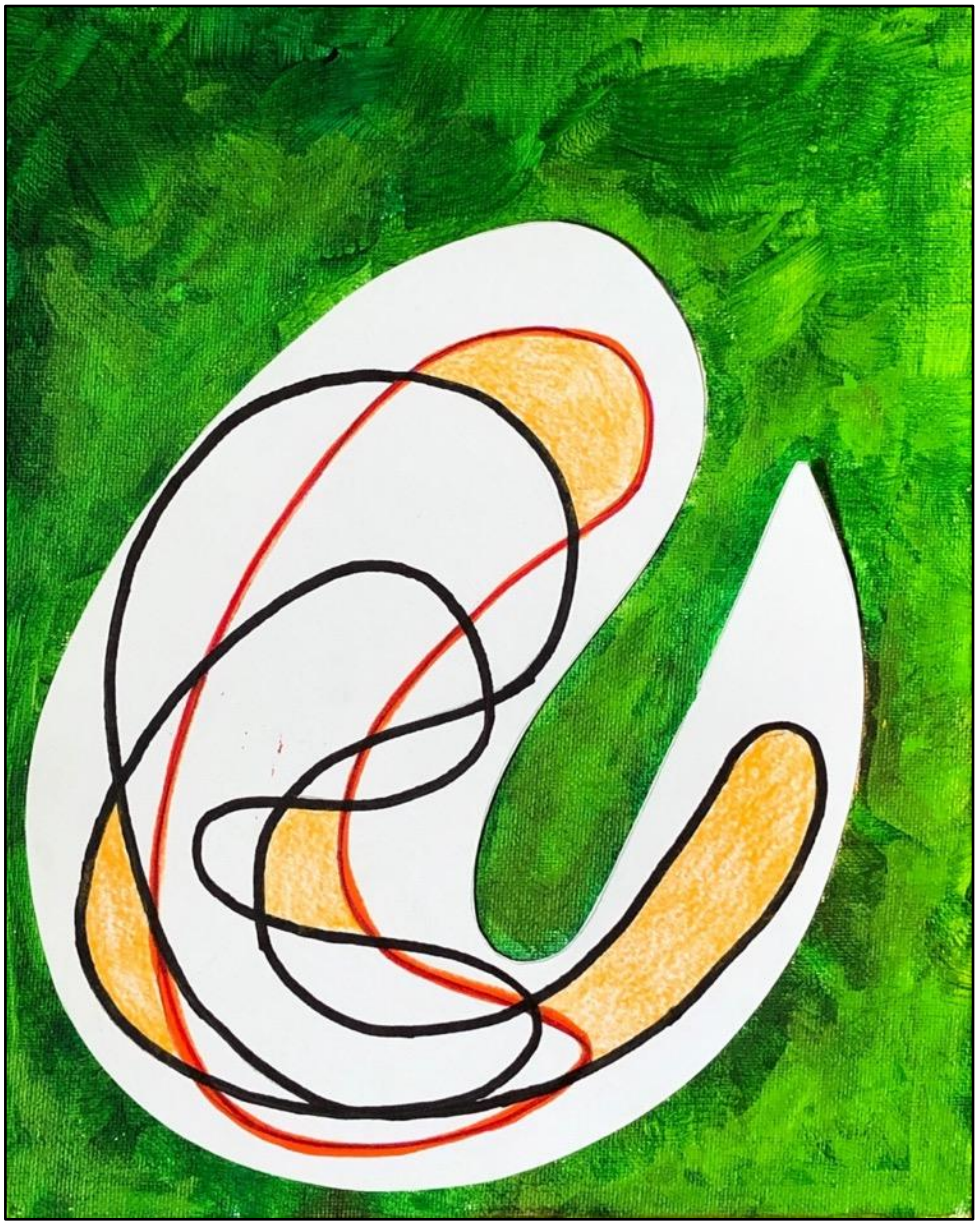


Data	Codes
Trina: Sure well I guess I, think I'm maybe the complete opposite because I'm a colour person and the only reason why there are any lines in it is because you gave me (dunno if you guys got the same), a flat head brush, so I think the materials and tools that I've got really informed what I was doing. I think I was going for, to begin with contentment and then like emm like looking forward like contentment and then a little bit of hope, because there is really a lot of things going on and	Individual Visual informed by tools Emotion Compositional technique

there's no real structure here really. So that's what I've gone for, I just really enjoyed colour mixing today. hahaha	Process as enjoyable
Fi: its got a real Mediterranean feel for me I just feel very Mediterranean	Symbolic use for holiday and a relaxed contentment
Joni: I thought that as well.	
Fi: And also that top little yellow/orange corner, if you don't zoom in its almost like you know there's gold fish you get in a pond.	Nature as relaxing
	Imagination
Ginger beard (Mark): I love it, I like the surrealness of it the surreal dreaminess of it. I like the texture of the big splashy goldfish as well the kind of thickness of them the line marks its very dreamscape like. What was your emotion again? what its contentment did you say?	Praise Visual techniques Imagination Emotion
Trina: Contentment slash hope.	
Ginger beard (Mark): yeah, I get that.	
Trina: Getting a complement on splashy goldfish though thanks for that hahahah I love that.	Rapport
Ginger beard (Mark): Daydreamy we will go with Daydreamy.	
SKY(Skyler): Did you mean to make those goldfish though because they really do resemble them?	

Trina: no, I just used the paint straight out the tube so I had little control over that. Fi: They sit really nicely on that background though you know with the dark kind of purply blue and all the other shades of blue there its quite powerful. Lovely shall we move onto Marz then?	Visual techniques

Marz's Emotion: Love



Data	Codes
Marz: Right so the emotion I was trying to I don't know portray was love, but what I did I wrote myself a list of words; belonging, acceptance all encompassing, protective, safe, restorative, absolute, ummm at some point it turned into a massive frustration because I am not comfortable with paints, so I did my background and I left that white thing and I was going to fill it with paints which I did at some point and then uploaded but I hated	Emotion Finding meaning of love Challenges emotional response Individual preferance Things going wrong

it so I took it out. The idea was that you've got those elements within one another some overlap but some are independent and you know kinda this whole thing you're working with a seed like a new love a new beginning, nature. I guess just lots of ideas that I put into the form. I always prefer to work with something that I can create a sharp line with. I like creating the texture of the background I really enjoyed that but I just didn't have the control over the brushes to make those kinda shapes that overlap and contain one another.	Worry for the View of group empathy and commonality Difference Social relations as grown through nurture plurality in meaning Formal qualities Challenge building new skils in different materials
Fi: What was the emotion again Marz?	
Marz: Love	
Fi: Love	
Marz: Yeah	
Tigerlily: I feel like it flows on quite well from your piece earlier. Like it feels like a progression and a development from friendship and exploring that theme further.	Continuity in workshop Eluding to her conception
Marz: I enjoyed that kinda soft form, and I enjoyed being in that feeling. I didn't want to go into anything kinda negative and disturbing. Also, there is a lot of people that I worry about that I love in my life and it's trying to express that. The worry is there and how so you actually love someone and protect someone when there is really so much anxiety involved.	enjoyment Visual enjoyment of love and socialisation cautious of negativity Love connected to fear Protecting loved ones

Jay: I like how you've shown different types of love and how its a big kinda tangle of different feelings. Marz: Yeah, it's just quite a complex emotion to express there is so much that goes to it. Tigerlily: yeah I think like the classic colour choice we choose for with love is red and I really like that's there's elements of that but the greens are a really impactful and powerful thing and I think that's probably more accurate because sometimes we limit ourselves, I think that because we only have one word for love in English and that's a really poor thing then we lump everything from platonic to erotic to romantic any form of love into it. I think its lovely because the green is so encompassing of different forms. Marz: Yeah, I think that it's more a compassionate love that I was trying to portray. Elle: Very nurturing, I love the texture in the green SKY(Skyler): Awesome its really beautiful Marz Joni: Yep Marz: You should have seen my frustration. All: hahahaha	Anxiety Conception of love and emotions as complex Praise Cultural visual Idea Value in unique conceptions Common definitions as limiting Language as limiting Loss of nuance Inclusivity Clarified emotion Difficulty in expression Compassion visual meaning Unexpected praise

Marz: I was trying to feel love but it turned into frustration, like have a look this is how it turned out (shows fully painted artwork on screen) Trina: That's amazing SKY(Skyler): I think that's quite cool too. Marz: So, I just covered it up, its mixed media hahaha (covers centre of painting with drawn on paper) quick cover up hahaha SKY(Skyler): Shall we go for yours there Mark.	Using emotion to create Unexpected outcomes causing frustrations Praise

Ginger Beard's (Mark's) Emotion: Excitement

Data	Codes
Ginger Beard(Mark): Ehh yeah so I was struggling with the paints as well, I haven't painted anything since I was at primary school probably, emm so, I forgot that you should probably do your background first but then how do you layer on top of your background so. Anyway, I started off trying to draw a rocket because my emotion is excitement, I guess it's an emotion I feel quite a lot so I was trying to show something fiery and so it became a bit sloppy and a bit all over the place but then I started	Challenges with materials Technique Reflection on technique Emotion Difficulty to express

just with a pen drawing some random squiggles on top of it and it formed this weird bird shape thing, so yeah it was fun. It wasn't what I intended, it's better, it's totally different than what I intended, umm but I suppose that's the fun of art isn't it, it can evolve itself. Fi: Aha. Ginger Beard (Mark): and I guess the eye thing as well represents the world of possibility. You know the meta kinda thing when you get sucked into a rabbit hole of excitement about something and you think about all of the what if's and the what ifs are almost like you're going into your soul, all the layers, as you get more and more excited. Tigerlily: it reminded me of that all foreseeing eye you that you get that Turkish things and sometimes a little bit of Greek. You know that blue eye, that I always find a little bit scary, its like a bit much. Also, it reminded me of like a rocket filled with fire. Ginger Beard(Mark): Yeah that's the idea Marz: The phoenix Ginger Beard (Mark): Yeah the phoenix Marz: It's got the beak.	Problem solving materials Enjoyment Challenges in workshop Going with arts emergent nature Many possible outcomes Flow of creativity Possibilities Self-discovery Symbolic meaning of eye

Elle: I didn't actually see the bird until I zoomed in there. I was like alright cool.	Navigating Miro
Fi: yeah	
Tigerlily: And the bit where you've painted on top of the background and the colours gone all muddy that's obviously on purpose to created depth and layers, that's what I thought that was for. Was that a purposive move?	Material use techniques Sarcasm Visual language
Ginger Beard (Mark): Absolutely, is anything not purposive in art?	Defence of choices
Tigerlily: Preach	
All: Hahaha	Humour
Fi: Love it	
Trina: There's so much energy in it it's amazing.	Arts infused with energy
Ginger Beard (Mark): I wasn't thinking about a bird at all but the album I'm writing just now is all about a fire bird	Sharing self
Fi: There you go its cover.	
Ginger Beard (Mark): Here's me trying to pay an artist to do my cover	Function of art
Fi: no no that'll do!	

Tigerlily: No support the artists All: hahahaha	Praise

Workshop 3 Alien Arts Groups

Description: Participants were asked to imagine a futuristic alien society that uses arts groups to support wellbeing. They then created artworks to describe how this futuristic alien society supported wellbeing. Below the discussion of these artworks is documented.

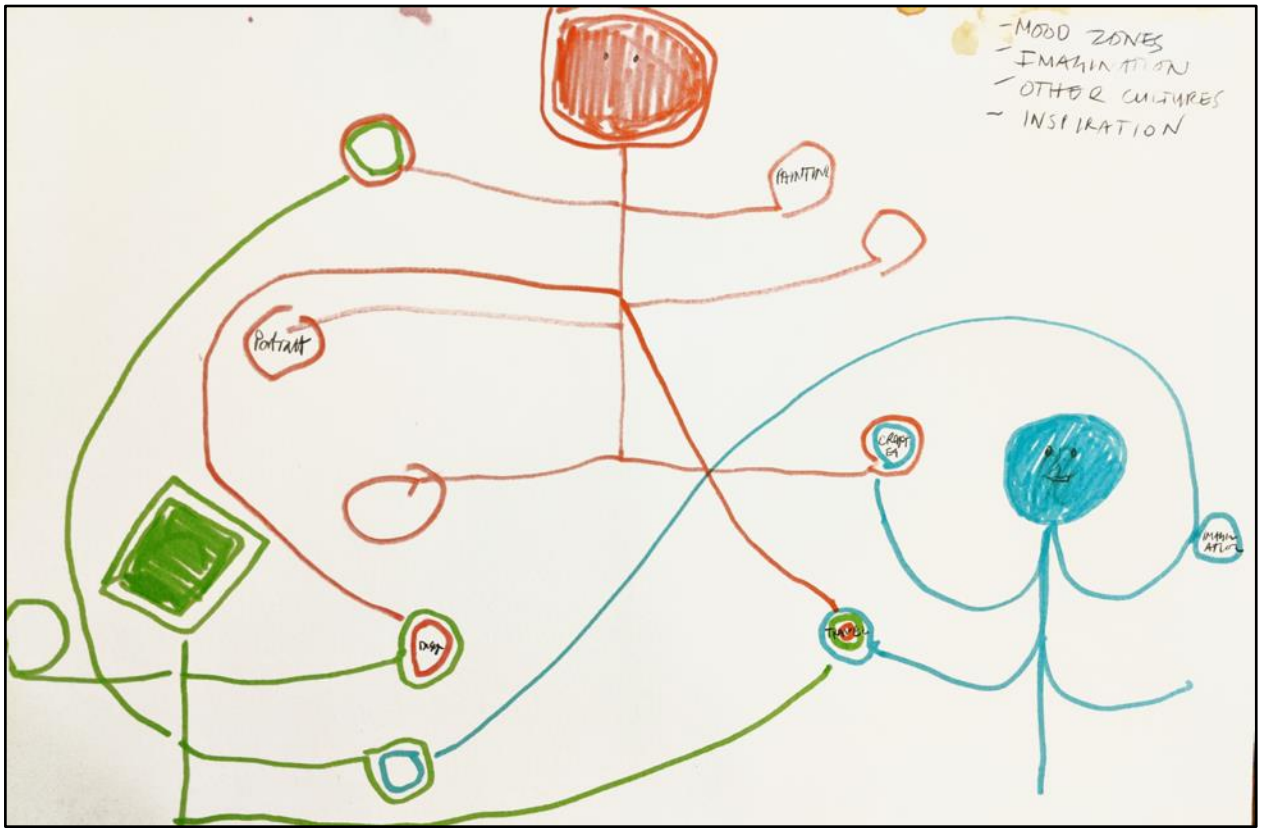
Ginger Beard's (Mark's)Artwork:

Data	Codes
SKY(Skyler): AlrightMarkdo you wanna kick off?	
Ginger Beard (Mark): Their having a kinda communal session, kinda similar to others by the looks of it, their connecting into the community campfire and their collaborating, co-creating this piece of art, this emergent piece of art, this ephemeral thing that's floating above us. I tried to make it look like eyes so they are kinda seeing through their collective experience, their seeing the world through each other's eyes while they are creating.	Importance of group Similarities in group reading Importance of co-creation Natural creative emergence Similar perceptions Joint creation
SKY(Skyler): lovely, I like the mad colourful mist up the top and that's where the eyes are.	

Ginger Beard (Mark): yep SKY(Skyler): and is the artwork at the bottom where they are all kinda sending their power into. Ginger Beard (Mark): Well the mist is the artwork, I could maybe frame it more to make it look a bit more like its … it's almost like the fire thing is the object, through that its creating this big voluminous art above them. SKY(Skyler): ahhh I've just noticed the eyebrows there their great. Ginger Beard (Mark): but my eyebrows would be joined in the middle a little bit. SKY(Skyler): Awesome, does anybody have any other comments? Fi: No It's interesting again sorta the central idea and then these group members are going towards that central idea, and then creating something? Ginger Beard (Mark): Other way around, more emergent so it's just that they are collaborating, it's kinda like the AR stuff that's coming out just now, you know augmented reality. Their making like an ephemeral piece of art, where they're all co-creators and its emergent an emergent piece of art. Something they wouldn't have created by themselves which is the benefit of holding it	Misreading A group tool for creative collaboration Humour Misreading Technology as creative tool Creative collaboration emergent outcome Power as group

collaboratively, is that they would have never created it individually but together they've created something far more beautiful, the sum is greater than its parts or something like that. Fi: Yeah yeah Jay: I think I've seen campfires just like, that late at night at some festivals and everyone is fighting over a song but they end up making a new song, which is much better than the original. SKY(Skyler): Lovely shall we move onto yours Fi	Value in group creation Creative collaboration emergent outcome

FI's Artwork:

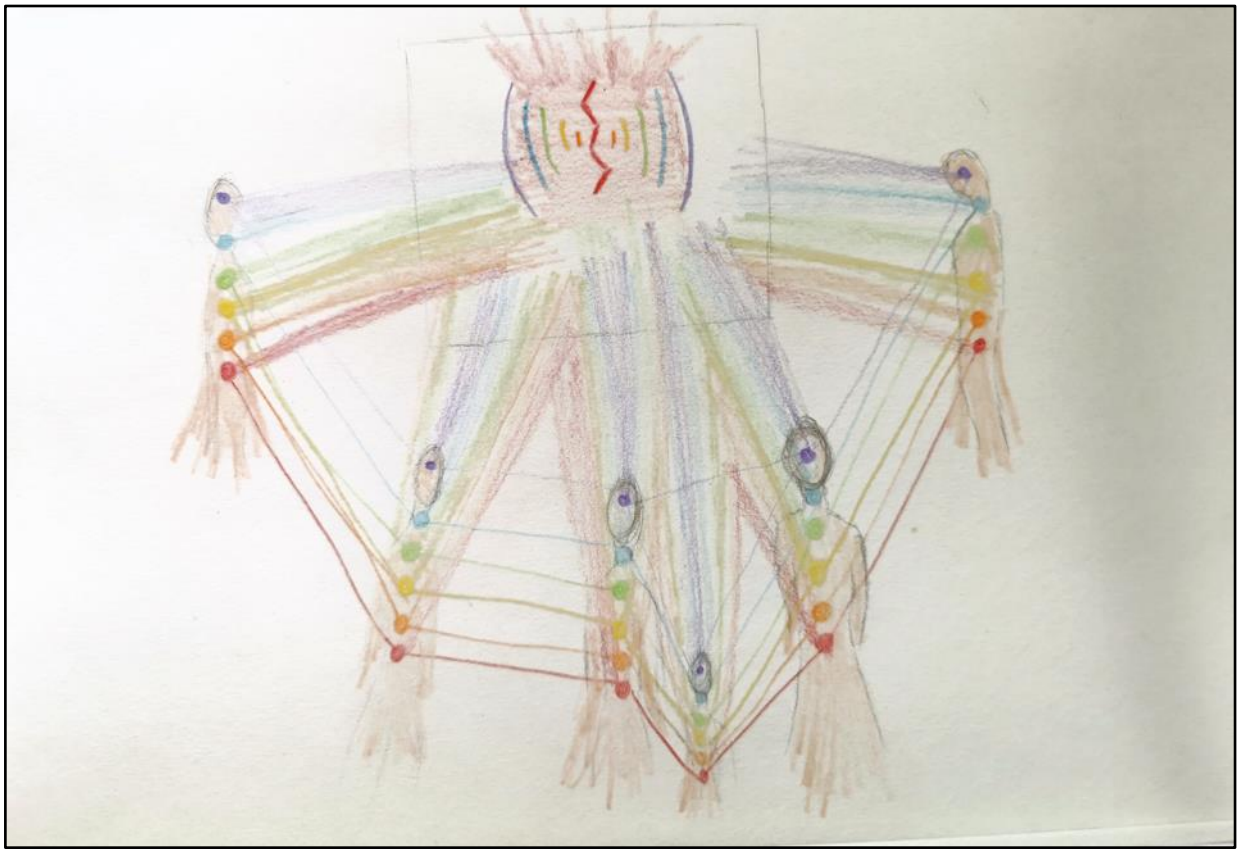


Data	Codes
Fi: Mine follows the same kinda feel, you know, although there is a group that folk go to, the group always changes because it depends on whose there, you know what thoughts are coming in, so it's always evolving and then things are created by those connections that people make, from what they bring to it. That's really what mines about so it's like, I started to think about areas where people have joined up like the little circle beside the blue, I don't know, it's like a sort of family map type thing really. You know family tree type thing so where they connect up, all three have managed to connect in one area whereas there might be two that connect in another and a different two that connect in another. Something that allowed them to tune in and out and then sorta create something.	Similar understanding complexity of individuals and their interaction using similarities and differences link to Marz love emotion interfacing socially Agreement individuality Emergent creation

SKY(Skyler): I really like that; I like the way they all connect. It reminds me a lot of a design map. Fi: Yeah well that's kinda what I thought of like a family tree, people are linked because of like well obviously their parents being there but does that really Marker? Through the other links that are created later. And it's changing all the time so it's quite similar to the others in that way. Again I didn't want to put a face in this because we get so drawn into associations, that I think they can be quite limiting. SKY(Skyler): Interesting Ginger Beard (Mark): I like the fact that you haven't made them connect on every level, so they're really still individuals. There's always overlap as well. Jay: but there's still some common ground Fi: Yeah, I'm not a fan personally of you know that idea of hierarchy I don't think there should be one you know. SKY(Skyler): Absolutely, I like how you've used these different shapes to symbolize the characters I like how the green is a diamond. Trina: there is a really beautiful balance to it even though it is offset. I dunno how you've managed to do that in	Relatedness/similarity as social bridge Social bond Ever evolving Trying to convey something abstract Acknowledging individual difference. Relatedness/similarity as social bridge Actively trying to negate hierarchy Individuality shown through technical visuality

like 20 mins. I really wanna make like a lino print out of it. Fi: hahah feel free to ahhahah. Its great seeing all the images though there's a lot, like it's a bit like that map there are so many similarities in thought but there are so many differences. SKY(Skyler): Awesome shall we move onto Elle	Formal technique Materials Mirror of artwork in arts group Shared understanding Different conceptions

Elle's Artwork:

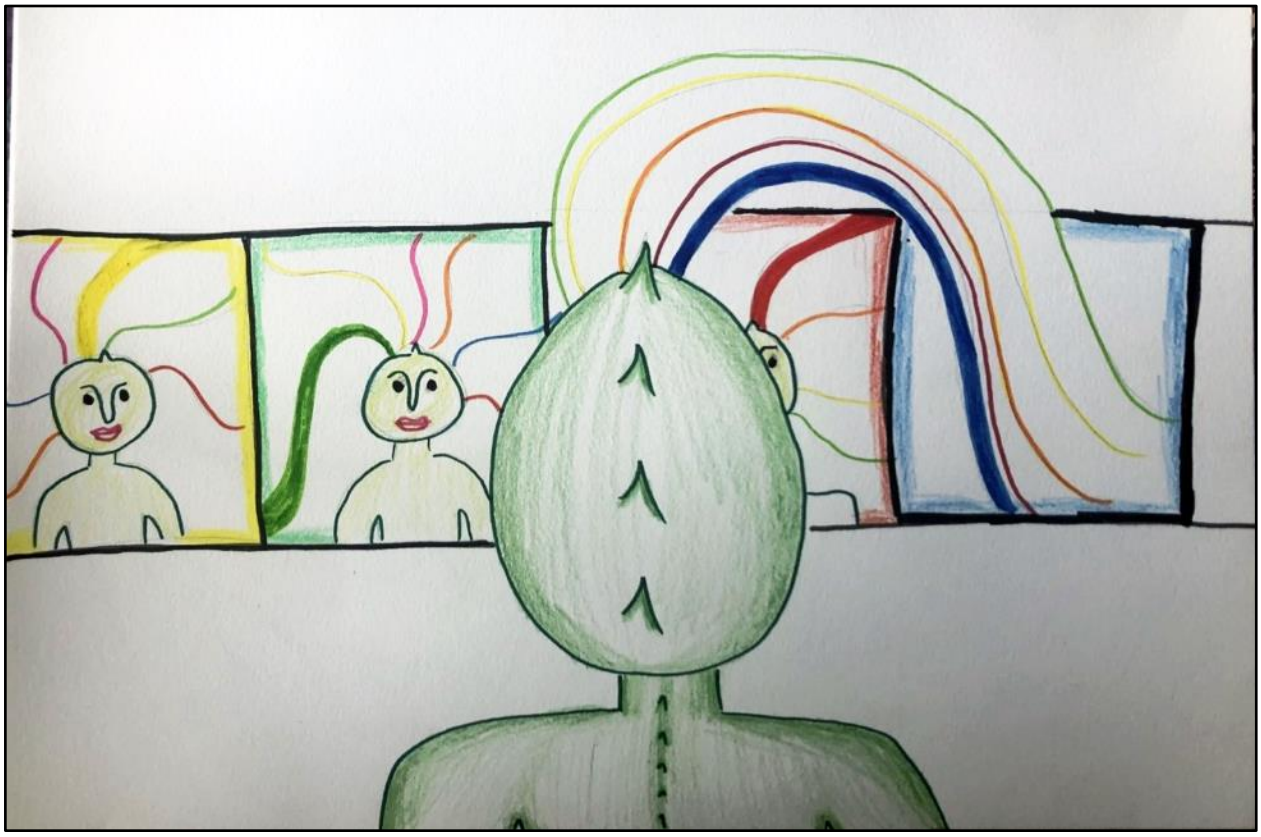


Data	Codes
Elle: Emm yeah so mines went along the same kinda things as well, we are all connected and we can connect to each other and then come together to bring all our ideas to the table so then they're creating this image together. Umm yep, I'd like to add another couple of lines and I will take a picture after that. SKY(Skyler): brilliant thank you. Yeah It reminds me of chakras, I used to be quite into those a few years back. Ginger beard (Mark): I love the alien characters as well with the tentacle feet.	Similarities in artworks Similarities in the group Individual opening ideas to group Time limits

Elle: Yeah, it was really yeah, it was good drawing because I started to draw people shapes then I realised I can do whatever I want here so hahah. Maybe if there was more time, I could have done some more you know to that.	Enjoyment Freedom Time constraints
Ginger beard (Mark): I suppose that's the point as well isn't it. Like through art and community we're aligning ourselves with our chakras, we're energising ourselves and I guess art is our true self. That's it we're energising our true selves and I guess art is our true self so that workshop should be a chance to express or energise your true self.	Arts as reenergising Art as tool towards self-discovery
SKY(Skyler): is there a little baby alien there next to the centre one?	Workshops as opportunity for self-expression
Jay: hahahaha	
Elle: that's where the lines are missing, so I forgot to do one between the two parent aliens.	
Trina: I like how that's the identity like how they formed within the group. I always find quite often the first part of a session like "tell us your name and what you do" and that's then like you. That looks a lot free the energy is kind of identifying them.	Identity within the group Criticism of fixed identity in group Freedom to create self
SKY(Skyler): Great, shall we go onto Jay's then.	

Ginger beard (Mark):Ummmm which ones that? SKY(Skyler):Just Underneath.	

Jay's artwork:



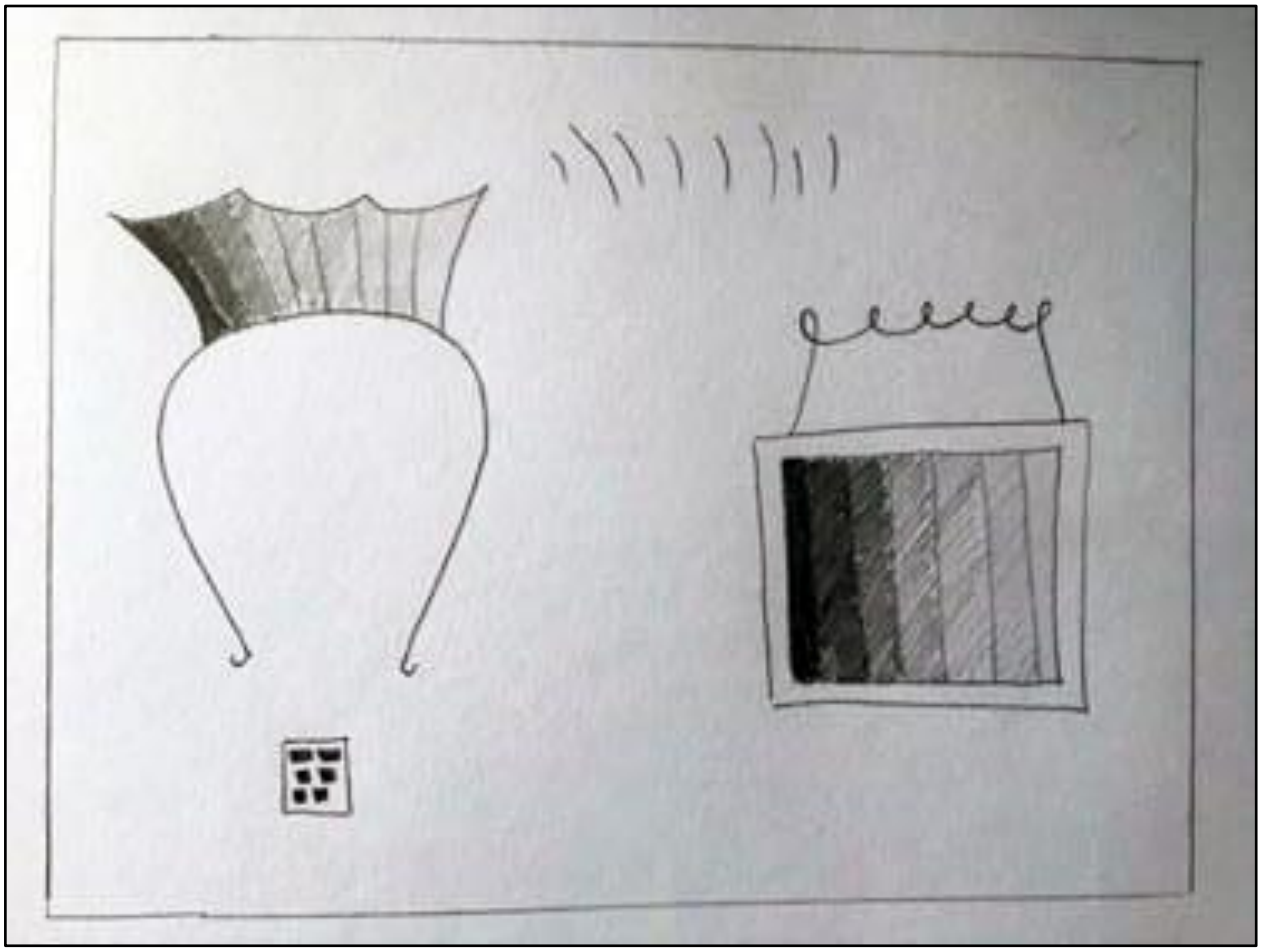
Data	Codes
Jay: Emm Mines was about how you like cant' like see emotions or feelings but the aliens have somehow managed to kind of work that out and show their feelings and emoitions its just it's a promenant colour that comes up, say Im feeling a bit red, I'm angery, you know hahaha and they're just able to share how they feel through a colour and without having to use any kind of language	Limits to empathy Using visual arts group to break barriers to empathy Desire for free expression Language as limiting
SKY(Skyler): How is he doing that thing on the page?	
Jay: It's coming straight out his head.	Communication instant and precise
SKY(Skyler): Nice	

Ginger beard (Mark): I like how his mohawk goes all the way down his back as well. I've got some back hair but not that much. All: hahahaha SKY(Skyler): I saw this baby yesterday at work and his mum must have given him a mowak over loackdown. All: hahahaha Ginger beard (Mark): Did you get the idea form something or did you come up with it? Jay: I was just kinda thinking about what we were talking about last week, tryna to visualise a feeling, it's not something you can see, so trying to get it on a bit of paper. Whereas the aliens have figured out how to show it without use any words to create interpretations of it. Ginger beard (Mark): Do you think that was a good purpose of art like that's a good outcome. Jay: Yeah you can visualise your feelings without using any words. Fi: Yeah Ginger beard (Mark): I'm coming back to it again but octopus octopi whatever their called they can change their colour right?	Humour Language as limiting Language as limiting

Fi: And squid as well Yeah and cutlet fish too Jay: maybe humans will evolve. Hahah Fi: can you imagine, seeing somebody's head is red from across the road, you're not gonna go for it are you? Jay: Sometimes I you do get a bit red inside and, in the face, hahaha Fi: Cause sometimes, I don't know. Normally you decide depending on how someone presents either if you want to approach someone or don't but you might be more tempted not to. Marz: it's like the red: don't approach, yellow: friendly but ask permission you know like a colour coded, so it's like if humans had a warning sign don't mess with me I'm upset today. All: hahahahha Ginger beard (Mark): "it's not just you, I hate everyone today." hahah All: hahahahha	A need for change Interaction with open emotion Explaining the real world of her correlate of emotive communication Highlighting problems with free emotional expression all the time Bad outcome Cultural meaning in colour language Good outcome Empathy

SKY(Skyler): I think communication would be a lot easier but it might cause so many other problems because we don't hold back our emotions or are polite when we need to be. Jay: I think people who know you can pick up your moods on your face but people who don't know you so well cant. Elle: Theses so many shades as well of emotions like anger is a wee bit like irritated. As opposed to bright red with the fumes coming out your ears angry. Fi: But we're never just one emotion anyway, though are we? That anger can be caused by multiple things. Jay: Sometimes anger gives you energy as well you can be angry and energised at the same time. Fi: Or you know what its like to be down and you see something that immediately lifts the mood so… Jay: Your colour changes hahaha Fi: Or at least part of your pinkie Hahahaha Lovely shall we go onto Trinas.	Enjoyment in empathy Pros and cons of free communication The journey to friendship Complexity of emotion and expression through visual means Complexity of emotion Some anger as healthy Potential for positive change in emotion from experiences

Trina's Artwork:

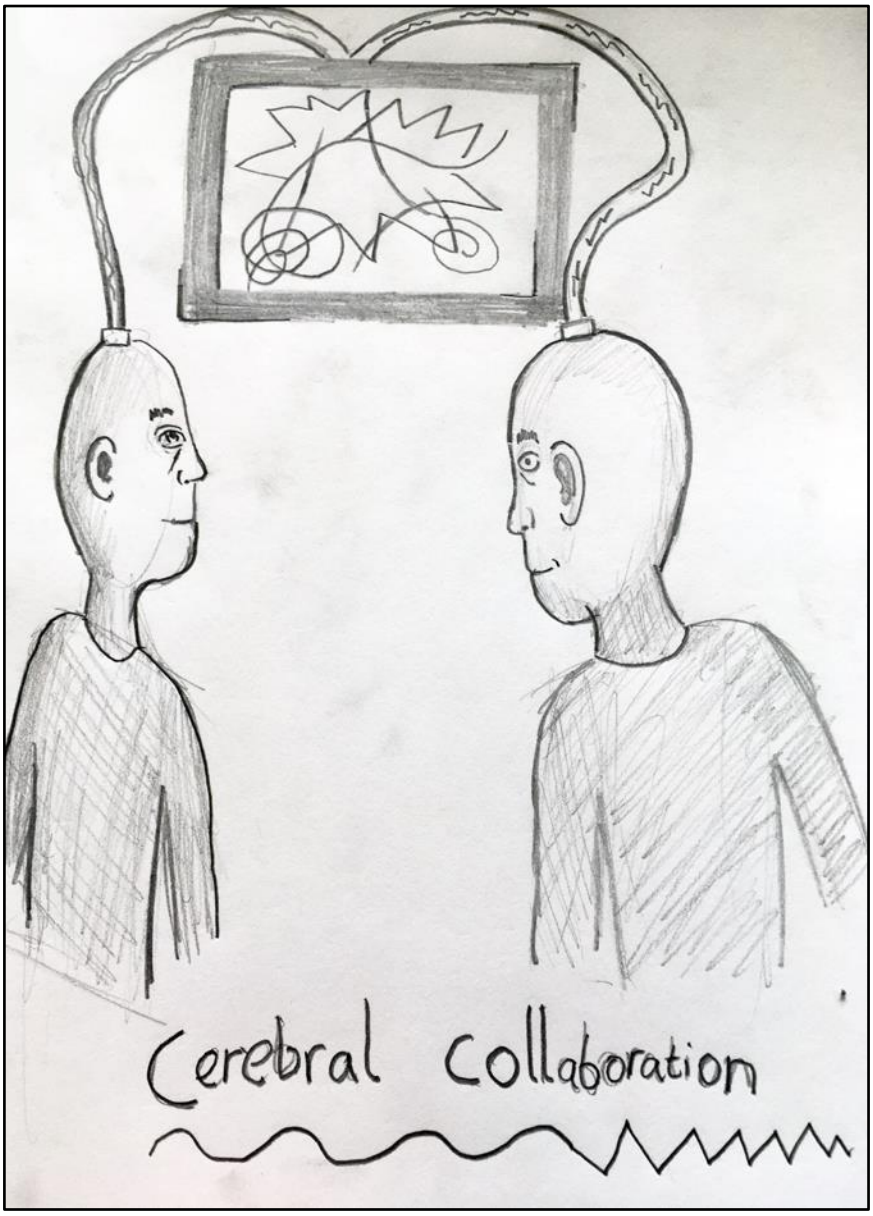


Data	Codes
Trina: I went for pretty much the same concept; I was thinking about it more in terms of art packs that get sent out where instead of focusing on like materials your focusing on wellbeing. So this is like a wee headset thing that kind of visually indicates wellbeing. I was kinda thinking that, it came to my mind when we were talking about the blob tree people, the ones that are kinda hanging. Within arts workshops people get so ideally comfortable that things can come out. So, what I thought is that the headsets would connect directly to a receiver so that something is actually giving a response to it like a disclosure or something like that. So it gives a kinda appropriate response. I always think that arts workshops	Physical wellbeing monitors Translates wellbeing into visuals understanding Wellbeing measure Arts group as space for free expression Communication instant and precise actions taken Sharing emotion Best way to help

can bring up so much for people and that there needs to be that safety in place, like what we spoke about at the very start of all this Skyler.	Safety measures bult into workshops
SKY(Skyler): Yeah yeah that's super interesting!	
Trina: yeah so kinda it's colours maybe indicating emotion or change in emotion, then I went down the rabbit hole of; do we even have the right to ask people to display that? So, I added a little handset then people could do whatever they felt comfortable with. That's way down that rabbit hole.	Colour as emotional communication Ethics around sharing feelings (it should always be a choice) controller determines what is shared Not causing harm by trying to help
SKY(Skyler): No that's really thinking deeply into the problem like for example in these workshops as I said at the start, people are welcome to leave, people are welcome to turn off their cameras. I think that's almost the same as having that control, if you're feeling a certain way that you don't want to share with the group you can keep that to yourself you know. If that's what you want.	Freedom (control over level of participation) using tools Freedom to not express
Ginger beard (Mark): Equally on the other side it gives us another form of expression if you want to, if things do come up and you feel comfortable to share it's a great way of expressing.	New communication Freedom to express Goal as expression
Jay: But there's a level of control on how much you share.	Tech as allowing you to choose level of participation

Fi: I think also because also you want to create that atmosphere where it is welcoming and safe you know where you can be really yourself and your not judged, but there will always need to be a backup, you've got to have something there, you've got to have people there to support, because you know you have a time limit and somebody like what we've got when Skyler's talking about our our drawings it could be at the end it triggers something in me and have left, I think it's really dangerous, when someone opens up in a group and you don't have sufficient time or resources so to delve a little deeper and consider that person entirely. SKY(Skyler): that's a really important point and something you should keep in mind for the next task. Fi: hahahah SKY(Skyler): That's really lovely thank you I'll just quickly talk about mine as time is going on.	Freedom to be self without judgment as consequence Back up as other MH/wellbeing organisations time limit may leave participants in difficult state Opening up leaves participants vulnerable importance of after care Complex uniqueness of person and limits of ars group

SKY's(Skyler's) Artwork:



Data	Codes
SKY(Skyler): So mine is very similar to Mark's, Fi's and Elle's as well here I was kind of riffing off the matrix idea and kind of imagining a technological future where we can think in colour and shape and texture and then also imagining if we could interface with computers in that way how could we collaborate, we could just let our thoughts of artworks literally embody themselves in a digital screen and if we could collaborate together doing	Similarities in understanding Using tech to imagine a better future visual communication Tech as tool for precise communication Tech as new opportunity for collaboration

that we could create very interesting multifaceted art. So that's what's going on there with these two guys who have been plugged in.	Harness uniqueness of everyone
Ginger beard (Mark): Interesting though because you're the, actually no maybe not. but I like I like the interface of technology its more obvious it's not just a bio thing it's not just an inherited evolved thing it's a kind of synergise with technology that's an interesting field for an art workshop because that what we're doing just now an arts workshop using technology so it's an interesting interface and how we can use that to develop health and wellbeing.	Technology used towards social and creative progress Research question
Trina: This would be useful in terms of motor skills. Some people have kind of their their barriers are very big because of the expectation's other set on them of what they can accomplish and what they can't and maybe that means that the tools have to change not the people. Have you guys ever seen that programme called eye gate. So, the main woman she talks using her eye and there is this tracking software that she draws the most beautiful paintings with it. If I can find it online, I'll send a link to the chat.	Physical inclusivity physical barriers in Inclusivity technology as bridge to participation
SKY(Skyler): Thank you	Technology used to overcome barriers in participation
Ginger beard (Mark): I saw a technology for people who are paraplegic to make music using just brainwaves.	

SKY(Skyler): and they had steven hawking using a similar technology using his cheek to communicate. Fi: Yeah that was also through vibration all that kind of thing, you need to harness all of it you know. SKY(Skyler): Alright shall we move onto Marz's.	

Marz's artwork:

Data	Codes
Marz: Yeah so Skyler gave me the idea, I was thinking more like a sensory communication almost like telepathic you know so these guys have different colours some of them have different numbers of fingers. So, it's very individual but they can communicate purely by just overlapping and putting hands together. But I think the idea behind it was kind of sensory experiences. I started just putting some finger prints with ink on the paper just being quite active about it again relating to non-verbal	Language through senses Individuality Connection as part of communication Sensory emphasis Highlighting uniqueness

different modes of communication. That can be understood by all sorts you know without expectations of motor skills or cognitives. I was doing it and I was like I'm just coping Skyler. Sometimes you see something and it sparks up an idea. And yeah again, its abut feeling safe in a group and expressing without judging just being able to bounce off and reflect all of these ideas among one another. I think that's really what I was trying to say.	Language as limiting exclusivity of language and skills worry towards ownership inspiration from each other inclusivity and safeguards value in sharing in the group
Fi: A thing I've noticed in this and some of the others, we'll all of them actually, are talking about taking away or getting rid of language but that shrinks your world	Language as a limiting but also liberating (importance of language)
SKY(Skyler): Aha	
JAY: It makes it a level playing ground as well though everyone is at the same level to begin with.	Desire to level hierarchies caused by language through visual communication
Fi: aha	
SKY(Skyler): My old art teacher when your saying you took inspiration, she used to say the best artists are thieves, so it's absolutely fine hahaha.	Reassuring participant that her contribution is important and valid
All: hahahaha	Humour
Trina: my old art teacher used to tell me that girls couldn't use scissors.	External systemic pedagogical injustices
SKY(Skyler): aww man hahah	

All: hahahaha	
Fi: Was he saying that as a phobia because he was scared of girls with scissors, he was worried they were coming after him.	Male domination of roles with power
Marz: That's some next level patriarchy right there.	
Jay: You'd have to get a boy to do your cutting out for you.	
Fi: That's so true about doing a piece of art though, you know like how we were saying about copying somebody's idea though, because everybody needs to be so "original" it doesn't really Matter.	Denial of art as merely novel and original
Marz: It doesn't, I mean you are original in the end of the day though because it's done by you, I mean I had someone say it's okay to copy other ideas at the start of a product or something, basically saying like in kickstarter it's okay to use someone else's work as inspiration and see where it takes you so I would find that you should stop controlling rather than doing thinking what is it. Like last week was awful, like drawing over the lunch like things were not happening. I was having a meltdown and I really didn't enjoy any of that, and why did it Marker you know, in a way we were trying to express love and all I came up with was frustration, it's really interesting you set yourself a goal and a purpose but you end up coming out with something completely different.	The impossibility of copying artwork Creativity as always built on the work of others Participant learned to allow art to happen rather than control it Anxiety around the challenge of art reflection on process Emotion as not something to be entirely controlled iterating idea of

Fi:Yeah Jay: aha Ginger beard (Mark): its emergent isn't it the emergence of art, who's in control? Are we in control? Marz: do you want to be in control that's another thing. I'm pretty much a control freak and letting go of control was something that was painful. SKY(Skyler): It's a hard thing to let go of. Marz: but if your controlling something nature has to happen sometimes you just have to let go. Mark : I love how you did the finger prints as well I never thought of doing that using. That's. really nice actually doing the colour with your finger prints that's a cool little. Marz: ahh yeah I love that, dipping your hands into something Jay: it's a little unique stamp on each thing. SKY(Skyler): Yeah in that sense it couldn't be any more original.	art as process rather than controlled outcome Emergence of art as not a process completely within artist's control Useful question Letting go of control as difficult experience A need to let go of cognitive control Sensual emphasis Uniqueness of individual Affirmation of originality

Marz: this is why I'm kinda saying its my style, I do like working with my hands. You know and I did photography as my first degree and I was like you know I like it but it's very far away from the tactility that I would have had , then working with glass again you can't touch it until the finishing stages because its damn hot. And I missed the tactility of interacting with a material in the most basic way Jay: Try some ceramics. Marz: I thought you know I should have done some ceramics why did I work with glass, because of colours you know. It's the colours it's the light that's why photography and glass. I like to touch things. Fi: With ceramics, its so hard with colour because you never know. Marz: Exactly Fi: Its disappointing Jay: You need a combination of ceramics and glass	Sensual emphasis Hand off art vs hand on art Love for visual colours Differences in new materials Sensual Difference in medium and materials

Workshop 3 Participant Practices

Description: After participants had created a set of ten principles for supporting wellbeing in the online arts group. They then chose one principle and created artworks to describe that principle. Below the discussion of these artworks is documented.

Ginger beard's (Mark's) Principle: A chance to explore and discover yourself

Data	Codes
Ginger Beard (Mark): I created this visual representation for my principle as a self-portrait that I cut up into parts allowing me to break from my normal position and explore with my whole body and mind new connections, new arrangements free from the constructs of physical reality. So I chucked it into pixlr and it kinda was working wasn't working and it turned out like that. It worked out in some weird and wonderful way, I don't quite know how, but.	Arts group as a way to recreate one's self through creative transformation. Freedom from reality Use of software to achieve creative freedom Unpredictability of new mediums

Sky (Skyler): yeah, its amazing, I like it I can see it now all the bits of bodies that are kind of disembodied I can see how	
Jay: looks like you're mid cartwheel.	
Sky (Skyler): What is the ...	
Ginger Beard (Mark): My head is in my bum, my bum is in my arm, my leg is in my arm and my arm is in my ear.	Humour
Fi: hahaha	
Trina: I like how you've used the wave tool as well, cuz even though it's from different bodies it doesn't look gruesome, I like the colours you've used as well.	Software as useful tool for expression Visual language as soft and assuring
Fi: Yeah the colours are really nice.	portraying process of reconstruction, a safe
Ginger Beard (Mark): Yeah I know what you mean the waves make it kinda less choppy.	
Jay: Did you draw it or paint it?	
Ginger Beard (Mark): I drew it, it was just a scribble on paper and then all the colouring was done on pixlr. The colour wasn't quite working it didn't do what I wanted it to do, going inside the lines and stuff but it made it get some weird shading stuff going on.	Sharing of techniques Happy accidents Allowing art to emerge

Sky (Skyler): shall we move onto Fi then.	

Principle: positive vibes: Be friendly,Be Understanding, Be Welcoming, Be Supportive

Data	Codes
Fi: Emm it was kinda, I found it quite difficult actually. It's supposed to be like umm colours of rainbow. Pastels got quite mixed and all muddy, it's got the heart, the soul, the pallet and then the hand all holding it carefully, umm shielding it, well that's that's it really. And then started to doodle in the background of different things. Umm can't really see there in pencil, just to start bringing other ideas, but then I stopped.	Challenge of workshop Symbol of inclusivity Individual as artistically created sensitivity of this individual under creative construction A fullness of phenomena as hard to reach
SKY (Skyler): I can see there's other hands and are those arrows or clocks?	Facilitator exploring meaning

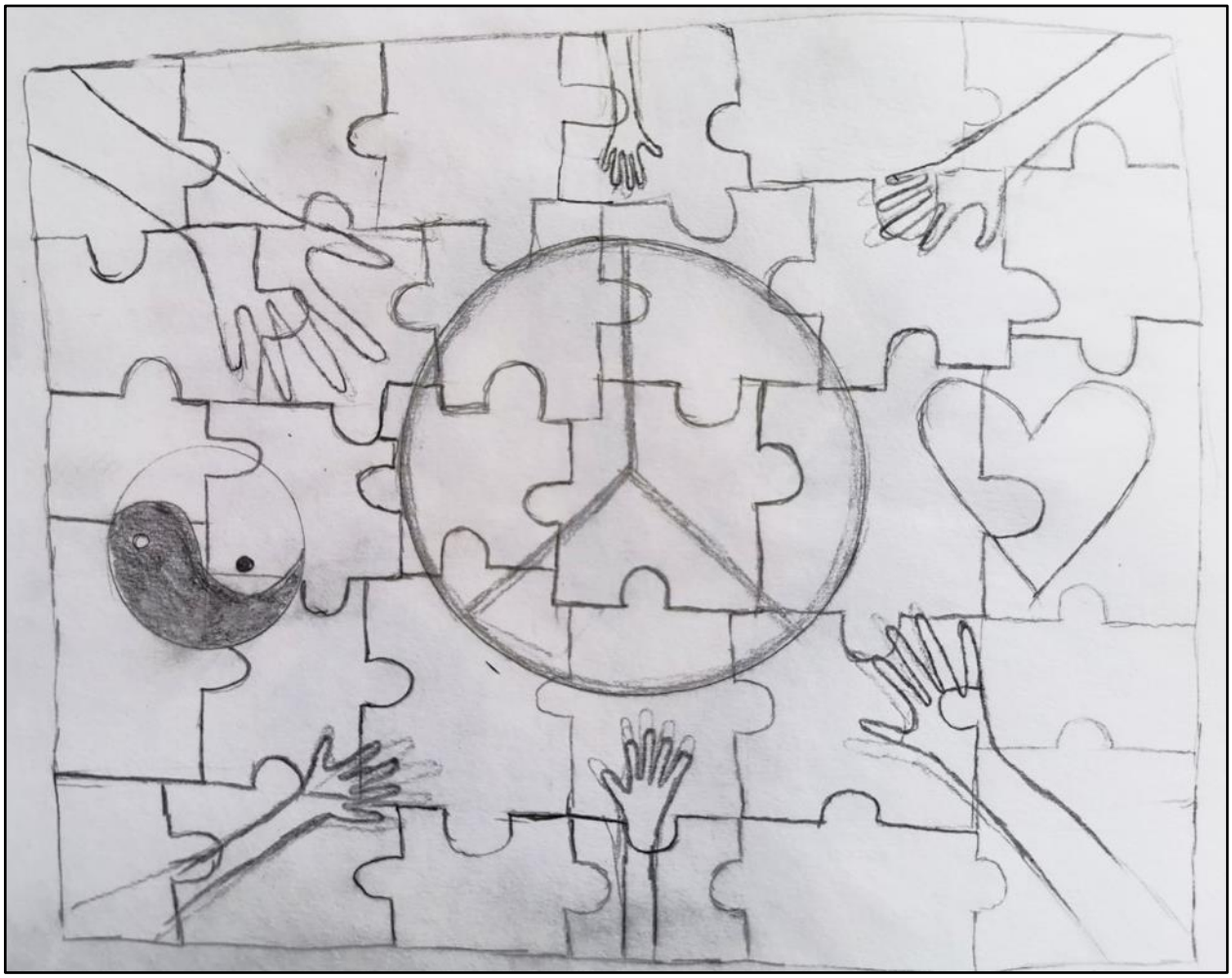
Fi: Yeah those are arrows and a clock. It's all I could think of bringing in time and what people would maybe think of, but I stopped there.	
SKY (Skyler): fair enough, I like the rainbow its kinda a culturally accepted idea of kindness is the rainbow	
Fi: Yeah yeah that's the idea	
Ginger Beard (Mark): it's a sign for inclusivity as well isn't it.	Symbol of inclusivity
SKY (Skyler): mm hmm	
Fi: Yeah how do you mean, the colour?	
Ginger Beard (Mark): just the rainbow	
Fi: yeah yeah aha, But then the rainbow has so many meanings these days, it can be for happiness, for the NHS, lots of uses, it's fun, it's life.	Multiple readings
SKY (Skyler): Alright shall we move onto Trina.	

Principle: Encouragement towards exploration and Innovation

Data	Codes
Trina: Right my one was encouragement towards exploration and innovation, ummm and I was kinda thinking of the role of the facilitator. emmm So maybe we start off all at maybe the same time or maybe with the same materials and kind of having quite a structured support to begin with and then letting each participant just go wherever they feel naturally inclined and I was kind of using line in like a broken way, like you let somebody go and then maybe they need some support later on, so you pick up with them, and I kinda had it in my head that all the lines, the colourful lines were like one facilitator and they were picking up with people at different points in their journey but the different colours where kinda, I dunno, you know how you would react to different people in different ways giving them different sorts of support. Help people and support them in the	Direction of insight Workshops being structured for support but also to allow for freedom Go back to participants Facilitator as responsive to unique participants Needs

best way you can with whatever they need at that point, is kinda what I was going for. SKY(Skyler): I think it's great, yeah. JAY: I like the way they're all leading to the end where they are all going towards a brightness, a brighter path. Ginger Beard (Mark): I like how you've conveyed quite an interesting concept quite abstractly aswell, when you explain it, it makes sense as well. Elle: yeah, I love the colours, it's very calming Fi: Yeah SKY(Skyler): Awesome shall we go onto Elle	Responsiveness as path to supporting wellbeing

Principle: inclusive/ open to diversity



Data	Codes
Elle: Emm So mine was like inclusive and open to diversity so I wanted to try and create an image of lots of different things coming together, so like a jigsaw kinda idea, maybe, emm but I would like it to be bright and colourful, and all the pieces being different colours and I was trying to do the peace symbol as coloured as well. SKY(Skyler) its impressive how much you got done in that time. If you do add colour feel free to send it to me because that would be lovely.	Individuals as parts of a whole Using visuals to describe unique individuals joined together Praise

Elle: Thank you, like in order for it to be whole everything needs to be together, everything fits together to make one.	Individuals fitting together as parts of a whole
Fi: Makes me want to colour it in, it does.	
Marz: absolutely yeah.	Desire to collaborate
Trian: you could make it into a colouring sheet and see how different people colour it in.	
Ginger Beard (Mark): A colouring in jigsaw.	
SKY(Skyler): You could run an arts workshop where we all as an ice breaker everyone makes the jigsaw and colours it in.	
Elle: yeah that could be quite fun where everyone colours in individual pieces and we put them all together.	Individuals fitting together as parts of a whole
SKY(Skyler): It's quite interesting, like kinda with the one that you all helped me to make, there was this interesting relationship between the group and the individual and I think with the puzzle pieces there you've done that same thing. There's that whole which is the group and all the pieces are made up of the individuals.	
Fi: aha	Individuals fitting together as parts of a whole
Jay: Looks like there's loads of wee pathways in between as well, like the different directions you can go in as well.	

SKY(Skyler): Jay do you wanna speak about yours	freedoms

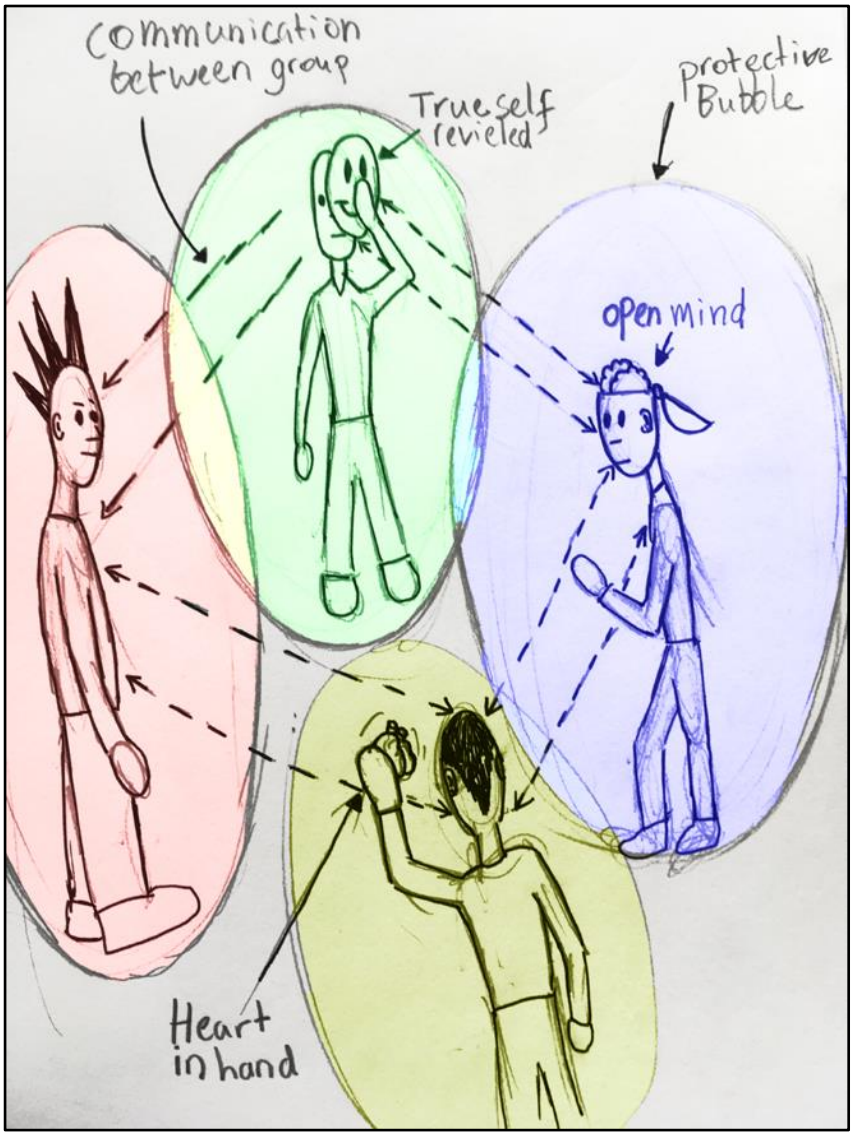
Principle: Safe environment to express

Data	Codes
Jay: Emm mine was a safe environment to express so I've been quite literal I suppose. It's the safe environment of the mother swan or duck with her wee ducklings kinda following behind. Emm I was actually at loch Lomond yesterday and I seen a mother duck with her wee ducklings behind, it's just lovely and they're totally fearless because they're following their mum, like they're following their leader for example. They'll go for a wee wander off, but they'll return to the path that the leader has kinda created for them. I started with quite calm sea behind but then thought I should aggravate it to add some challenge like we were talking about earlier with a balance of challenge, and the wee ducklings I added some colour to them to show that they are being creative. The wee one at the end has some funky tail	Leadership creating a safe structure that participants can follow as they wish Importance of freedom Importance of structure Importance of challenges Individuals creating themselves

feathers going on and the mother is showing all her colours. SKY(Skyler): Lovely, again you can see this kinda group and individual dichotomy going on here, so there's all these individual people and, yeah. Jay: yeah it gives them the freedom to express because it's you the leader who does these things. SKY(Skyler): I like how you've done the duck so abstractly as well, their almost just forms. Jay: yeah it's also a bit like calligraphy but then I kinda filled it in a wee bit. SKY(Skyler): I really like the leader duck its head, or lack of head, hahaha. Jay: hahaha Ginger Beard (Mark): what do you call a gang of ducks? Elle: Offal? Ginger Beard (Mark): Oh right, well whatever it's called, a big group of them. I heard that the wee runt it climbs onto the back of the mum to get a wee hitch up the road. Jay: hahaha a wee cokeyback.	Individuals fitting together as parts of a whole Freedom Techniques Extending metaphor to mean support for those in need

SKY(Skyler): lovely.	

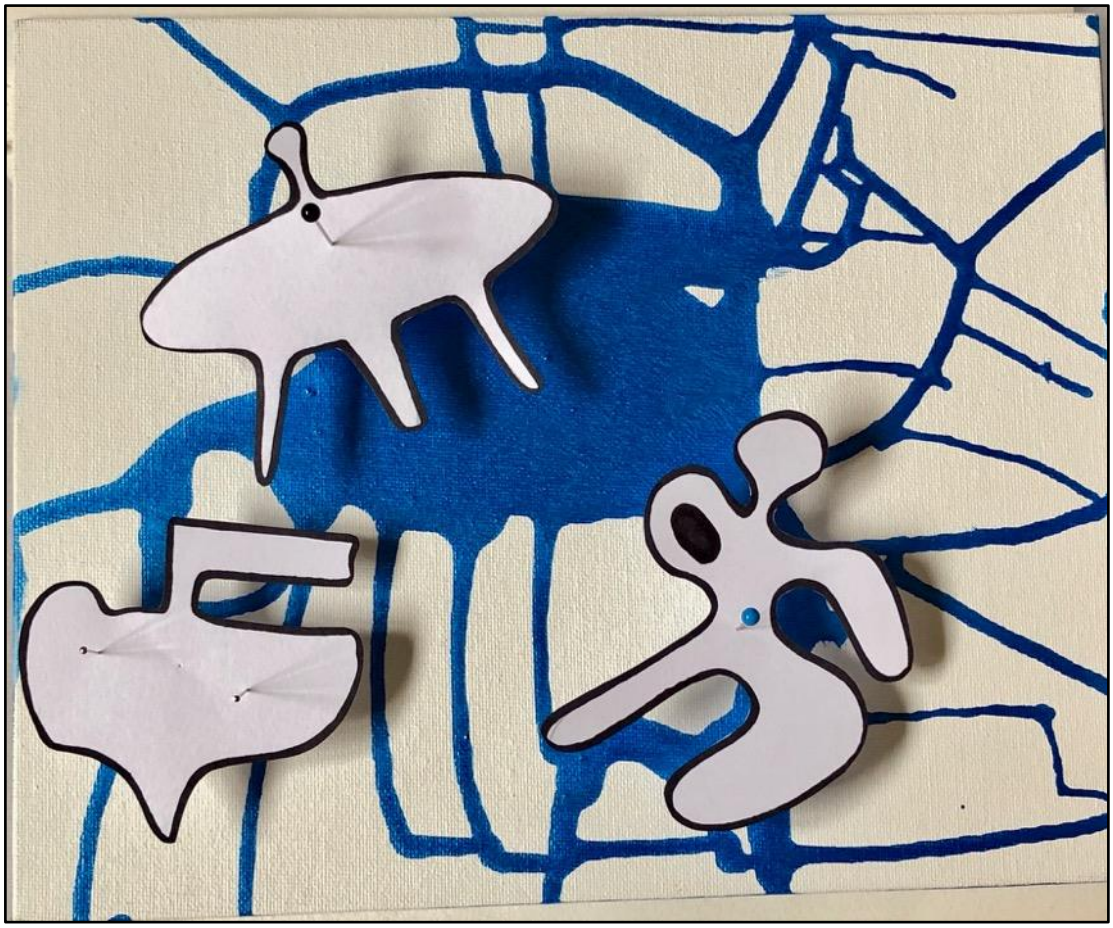
Principle: Freedom to just be you/ NON-JUDGEMENTAL



Data	Codes
SKY(Skyler): Well you guys all helped me to make this one but I will just quickly explain it again. So the true self is illustrated through the mask being taken off, there's are all these communication lines between the group, we all have our individual protective bubbles. There's a heart in a hand which you guys shared with me so we are all sharing our emotions, I also gave this guy a mohawk to show how he's proud to be who he is, and obviously the open mind to show that we are all accepting of each other.	Collaborative nature embodied A true self exposed in the group Connection and communication individualities, vulnrability Freedom to be yourself Acceptance of others

Marz: I really like it SKY(Skyler): thank you, (We ran short on time here so I cut my part short) do you wanna talk about yours Marz.	

Principle: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (TOOLS/ MATERIALS USED) Process- focussed but with a sense of achievement, Nothing is incorrect:



Data	Codes
Marz: umm Yeah so I kinda tried to do both I wanted to do the chance to explore discover yourself and there was the FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (TOOLS/ MATERIALS USED). so I thought I'll do it, by doing it. So, I started drawing shapes, kinda relating to exploration, ships and UFO's and exploration and discovery kinda involved. Then I cut things out, but I wanted something with a background so I poured some ink on it and I had a play with it, I quite like what happened with it. Again, this related to exploration and discovery with a little bit of subconscious drawing but then it was wet so I couldn't put the drawings on top so I thought I'll place them with	principles as co-dependent and intersecting meaning making through creative acts symbols of exploration exploring materials fun sensual exploration Emergence of self through emergence of art as process outside artist's control Ever changing self and artwork

pins and I can move them around. Nothing is set everything is very much in motion. Yeah I guess that's it. SKY(Skyler): It's really beautiful looking. Fi: I really like the idea it's got the pins on it and you can move that around. Anyone can do what they want with it really its always unique each time. Marz: Yeah that's the whole idea of exploration and discovery. It doesn't work, so now we can move it around, nothing is final. Trina: I love the material quality. The ink is great as it's made to be such an important part rather than just a start. Marz: I just realised it left a white spot in the middle, that didn't fill up with ink. Ginger Beard (Mark): it's like curiosity flowing through your veins. SKY(Skyler): Well awesome that's the end of that.	Ever changing self and artwork Ever changing Importance of uncontrolled creation

Expert Focus Group Transcript

In the following transcript, a large verbatim text is shared along with images of participants written feedback on Miro. On the right side of the table important quotes are highlighted

that were used to iterate the preliminary findings. Below is a helpful key that corresponds to the ways of being and themes, this is because Phase 4 was primarily used to iterate the preliminary findings.

Key:

Way of being 1: Devise rich social interactions.

Way of being 2: Facilitate an empowered freedom of expression.

Way of being 3: Support self-exploration and discovery through play.

Way of being 4: Safeguard both during and after the session.

Way of being 5: Adapt workshops to welcome and include everyone.

Themes: Structured Freedom and Reinventing Ourselves Together

Expert Ways of Being

Transcript	Meaning
Fiona Grant 00:00 So I've been I've been doing some online workshops with young people, and so then now it's been a read that more in person, so I've been going to community centres as well. And I've been doing workshops with young people during their summer breaks. But the kinds of workshops I've been doing, it's been a lot of collage based workshops. And more about like waiting to see what the young people make out of the	**Link to way of being 2.**

workshops so not actually having it fully sort of planned out as to what the outcome is going to be. But just sort of having the facilitation there so that they feel guided. And so yeah, thats kind of everything about mine, but I suppose my way of being I've put provide the activities and the setting, for a wellbeing to take place and to create a safe space for everyone. And then, from the online workshops, I noticed, that I had to be attentive to the space, and being aware of every individual, asking everyone how everyone was before actually going into what the workshop was going to be about. And then doing sort of small fun activities to try to try and like ease everyone. And thats me really.	**Link to way of being 4.** **Link to way of being 1.** **Link to Structured Freedom.**
Skyler Ridewood 01:43 Awesome. So your way of being was being an enabler of others self expression and development. So I was wondering if we could open up a dialogue about that, what do we think is important about this way of being? And if we could kind of just use post it notes on this empty box at the top, on the top, or the bottom left quadrant of the first, we're just trying to figure out what's what's really important, what's integral to being enabler of others self expression and development? So throughout my own	**Link to way of being 2.** 'They allow participants to develop while identifying support points throughout by being attentive and responsive.'

workshops, I found that there was a lot of ways of being that really surrounded helping the participants themselves, express and be themselves. I'm guessing that's what this is kind of getting at. **Fiona Grant** 02:43 Very much. **Skyler Ridewood** 02:50 Does anybody have any experiences from their own practice that kind of are similar to this way of being? **Ursula Kelly** 03:09 It's reminded me of something. Should I type this or say it? **Skyler Ridewood** 03:13 Sorry? **Ursula Kelly** 03:14 Do you want me to type it or say it, I'm just thinking of if something that is, I've been in a special needs school recently. And they did something that is used quite a lot in therapy, because I'm also an art therapist. And it's about asking people, How is the weather like children specifically? How is their weather today? And it gives them a nice kind of way of being able to respond	**Link to way of being 2.** **Link to way of being 3.** 'using unexpected activities and tools allowing for multiple possibilities… Facilitators ask participants to individually

how they're feeling without it being too focused on their emotions. **Linda Vickers** 03:44 Yeah, I would, it's Linda speaking. I would also agree with that general approach. I've been not actually running groups myself, but supporting art therapists working with children and families during lockdown. And their usual way of working has been has had to be adapted because they're not in a setting that is necessarily conducive for us or as kind of organised as it would be if they came into the centres. And it's been kept really general things like how was the weather What can you see out of your window that kind of way in? And the other thing that has been a problem is the use of digital technology because some of the children involved just don't have access to a phone or computer that's, that's consistent. So there has been a lot of talking on the phone and trying to facilitate best care. **Skyler Ridewood** 04:57 I guess what you're saying at the start when you were talking about weather and just trying to find a way for participants to be able to easily express? Is this the	reflect on their wellbeing before and after sessions while actively listening.' **Link to way of being 5.** A problem larger than this way of being can support. **Link to way of being 2.**

supportiveness that we're trying to get out here? It's about helping them along the way to expression. Am I right there? **Linda Vickers** 05:14 Yeah, it's finding a nice kind of gentle way. That leaves things open to the children to see how they are with without feeling they're on the spot. **Fiona Grant** 05:34 One of the wee things we done in the workshops is where was using a number of thing with pictures so then the kids would pick a number and from facial expressions of animals or something that describes how they're feeling without actually having to say. Exactly how it is. **Skyler Ridewood** 05:59 I used within my workshops, I use this tool called the blob tree. Have you guys heard of that? The blob tree is awesome. Yeah, it's kind of like a tree with loads of different characters, in different kind of emotional positions. And basically, my participants had to circle which one they felt most empathetic towards, I guess. Yeah, I think we probably should move ahead and move	

on to Ursula is way Oh, no, this Christine's way of being sorry. It's DIY. Do it yourself. I'll just let you take it from there.	

Way Of Being: **DIY (Do It Yourself)**

How it might be achieved:

As a facilitator, communicate you are not a teacher - bounce questions back to group, encourage participants to work through challenges themselves.
Encourage subversion of 'instructions'
Use what is at hand, use inconsistency and difference to advantage.
Praise all efforts, put value on process (important where it is difficult to share finished work online)

Experience from Practice:

These are pieces of a mobile that will never be finished. I made this as part of my group's response to the Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival. I thought it was important for me to also make something alongside them as encouragement, but in the end thought it best that only their work was to be showcased. I used old postcards to create shapes based on body parts and bones. The idea behind it was that I am trapped in my body (with chronic pain) and trapped in lockdown, working online. I wanted to make a mobile from kitschy holiday images as an 'out of body experience' to animate my discordant bits. I found working through an idea valuable, rather than producing a finished artwork.

Share what's valuable about this way of being

freedom to express

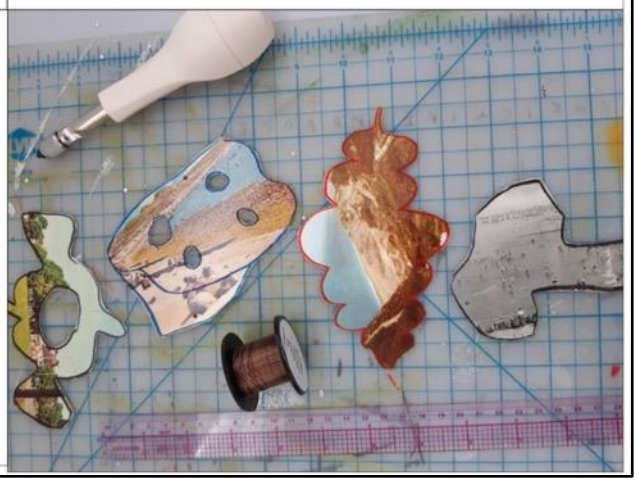
shared control over pace etc

Flexibility for participants

value on process can be super helpful in terms of managing expectations of having to create something specific

Freedom to speak/no conventional 'leaders'

Acknowledging different ways of learning



Transcript	Meaning
Christine Novosel 06:40 So I'm Christine. I'm a visual artist. I'm a printmaker, and I also work in the community arts. So I have been doing online workshops since June 2020. So in the midst of pandemic, and that was working with young people and adults doing online workshops. And then from September, up until a couple months ago, I had a bit of a more meta role. And that was facilitating facilitators. So it was a career development project for artists. So I was taking 10, mid career, early career artists and training them in community art skills, and we were working online. So it was a bit of supporting groups, and supporting artists to support other groups. So a whole layer for online projects. And the way that I've chosen as my way of being as an online facilitator is DIY, so do it yourself a big part of my life, I'm an ex punk, it bleeds into everything that I do. And I've chosen this for this project, because the ethos behind DIY culture is that you all try to participate. And you're working together to make something. And there's this idea of shared experience, and, and being collaborators, and using what you have at hand to make something. So it's really about process. It's	**Link to way of being 2.** 'Facilitators undermine hierarchies using open and adaptable process-based activities that provide paths for expression often using digital platforms.'

not really about outcome. And it's about building relationships together. So I'm just I've had few notes here. And I'm a bit different because I'm a visual artist. So online workshops are really difficult for me and my medium. So my style of online facilitation is independent offline exploration, and using our zooms, and our online meetings, to be a discussion and point to the making really happens off camera. And I find that gives people a bit more leeway and freedom to do things. And the example that I've given here is a project that I was doing in parallel to an activity. And so I was also participating in the activity. So I can understand the pacing, the challenges and the experience. And I chose this as an example, because I think it's quite important that things that you don't see, put forward online are just as important as what people share. So then in the end, this is a project that never got off the ground, I never showed anyone, and I sort of was just participating alongside the group. And but I thought it was important that I also did the activity instead of just being an instructor. So I think it's really important to be, I suppose, wearing a facilitator hat, and coming in and out of a group rather than being a bit more of a hierarchical instructor, which is really	**Link to way of being 5.** Asynchronous working as an option. **Link to way of being 2.** 'Facilitators undermine hierarchies using open and adaptable process-based activities that provide paths for expression often using digital platforms. They

difficult online. Because in an online format, you've got sort of, I suppose the way that zoom is it's hard to have chatter together. So it's always one person speaking, who has the floor. So I suppose I'm always trying to find ways to make sure that it's more of a group experience rather than right everyone. This is the next step. Listen to me. Yeah, that's the gist of that.	participate but do not judge as they are not instructors'
Skyler Ridewood 09:54 Absolutely. I totally agree with it and the problem is it's so hard Because you're trying to balance the group, being structured and doing things together and collaborating, but also you don't want to impose your will on your participants really. So just like last time, if we just try and highlight what's important about it using the post it notes and if anybody wants to discuss their own experiences during that, that's great. This one here that says freedom to speak in no conventional leaders, I think, that's really interesting. Because we have this platform, and it's quite clear that only one person can be speaking at once. So it's like how do we we get around that issue? How do we decide	Structured Freedom **Link to way of being 2.** **Link to way of being 1.**

who speaks and how they speak in a way that works for everybody?	**Link to way of being 5.**
Christine Novosel 11:58 I like how you use Miro, I think that's fantastic. If you've got a conversation going, and then another venue for commenting on. I think It's always awkward with a new group. When you have the first session, you're like, right, guys, how's everyone doing? And let's get going. And I've been in workshops, I've had 10 to 15 young people and everyone's cameras off. And that can be really difficult. And what a pressure to ask a young person to speak in front of a group online with strangers. So, I really love when people use other tools to divert the pressure from a zoom screen.	**Link to way of being 5.** **Link to way of being 1.** **Link to way of being 2.** **Link to way of being 5.**
Skyler Ridewood 12:37 I think that's very true. Even now, for me facilitating if I was looking directly at the screen the whole time watching you guys's faces, it might, it might make me a bit nervous, you know, I can really emphasise there. Okay, I think that's enough for this one. So shall we move on to Emrys's first one, which is ensuring that the space is accessible from a range of views to meet	

the needs of disabled people who need to access the space.	

Way Of Being: **Ensuring that the space is accessible from a range of views to meet the needs of disabled people who need to access the space**	
How it might be achieved: **Learning from other disabled practitioners, making an accessibility audit/checklist, looking at previous examples of accessibility in online arts spaces**	**Experience from Practice:** **Live captioning on events, image descriptions at events**
Share what's valuable about this way of being accessibility being so much wider than physical needs We so often assume everyone can use devices and go online! When made accessible, can reach people in new places. Sometimes we can make assumptions about understanding of new softwares	

Transcript	**Meaning**
Emrys Mordin 13:09 Yeah I will just introduce myself a wee bit. So my name is Emrys. I use they them pronouns. I set up Sapphic writers about a year and a half ago now. Sapphic writers is completely online so we don't do anything face to face completely remote platform for Sapphics. So that's bisexuals, lesbians, and other queer women and non-binary people	**Link to way of being 5.**

who feel they fit into that category to come together and write, share their writing, meet other writers. And also access opportunities. So we have every two weeks we have a kind of online zoom chat. And we have a quarterly zine and run some workshops. It's a lot of fun. It's a lot of work. And, yeah, one thing that's really important for me, as I move through my career is kind of a freelance producer, and a freelance artist is ensuring that spaces are accessible. And this doesn't just apply to kind of face-to-face work. I think lots of people just think, oh, a building must be wheelchair accessible. But it's so much more than that. And a lot of my early work at sapphic writers was exploring accessibility in an online remote sense, because firstly, I need accessibility requirements to access the work that I was doing. And also, I knew other people would too so I thought this would be a really important topic to add to the conversation about how we manage accessibility and spaces and how we how we carry out that work. Yeah. **Skyler Ridewood** 14:47 Awesome. Absolutely agree. And my findings throughout my first workshops were a lot along those lines. It was a lot	

about inclusivity. And you guys will see that in the next few bits. So again, if we We could just add, post it notes, and if anybody wants to discuss any of their own experiences. Go ahead. So just what's important about this way of being?	
Emrys Mordin 15:10 I think one other thing that I really quickly want to say is that it's okay to acknowledge the accessibility as a lot of work as detailed by my awful drawing spinning plates, but that it's part of it, I think. And that's okay to acknowledge if you want to, say that in the postit notes.	
Skyler Ridewood 15:31 I think there's, there's a lot to be said around skill level and making it acceptable for any skill level, to be part of the online arts group. It can be difficult, though, because people are going to be reluctant to share based on on their, on their skill level.	**Link to way of being 5.** **Link to way of being 2.**
Emrys Mordin 15:53 Yeah, and I think this is especially where accessibility emerges with feminism. Because as women or non binary people, we do feel imposter syndrome on a larger scale than men will. And I think that's part and parcel of the experience of growing up	**Link to way of being 5.** **Link to way of being 2.**

and the world that we live in. And so when accessing spaces, like saphic writers, even though we're built for people that maybe do have no experience and just want to try something out, it's still even though it's a space specifically for non-men, it can still feel very overwhelming. So yeah, that's a good point. **Skyler Ridewood** 16:34 Okay, if we've done that, do you want to share your second principle there Emrys your second way of being Sorry? **Emrys Mordin** 16:46 Ohh is that me? **Skyler Ridewood** 16:46 Oh, yeah, because you you sent in two, as far as I can tell **Emrys Mordin** 16:50 Ohh so I did. **Skyler Ridewood** 16:51 The second is creating a thriving community and making people feel welcome.	Systemic issues with who is allowed to express

Way Of Being: **Creating a thriving community and making people feel welcome**	
How it might be achieved: **Regularly checking in with the community and making people feel welcome and included by interacting with their posts/work**	**Experience from Practice:** **Weekly new member posts on FB group, leaving room for impromptu performances or pieces in open mics/feedback spaces, being authentic about the way I interact with people in the space**
Share what's valuable about this way of being included recognising all participation is an achievement, even if just watching or dipping in and out helping the more quiet participants people feeling part of a group, knowing they will be missed if not attending, recognising people value different interactions	

Transcript	**Meaning**
Emrys Mordin 16:56 Um, yeah, I guess this is along the same lines and kind of feeds into what you were saying Skyler about. You know, making sure people feel welcome, regardless of skill level. And it's really, it's really a case of just checking in regularly with people and really taking the effort to know people, there are people at sapphic writers who are in our	**Link to way of being 5.** **Link to way of being 1.**

online community Facebook group, and have submitted to a zine or two have come along to a workshop. And even though I've never met them face to face, and I don't actually run their workshops, I still know them. But it's about also, knowing the people that don't necessarily comment on the posts don't necessarily submit to a zine or come along to a workshop. And it's about finding out why they don't. And what we can do to make it a safer place for them to engage with. And so it's about it is, again, it's hard work, because it means you need to learn lots of names, and you need to be able to pick up on things quickly. But it's just about fast responses and really being really nice and your approach with people. Yeah, I think that's the best way to put it	**Link to way of being 5.** **Link to way of being 4.** **Link to way of being 1.** **Link to way of being 2.**
Skyler Ridewood 18:07 Awesome. That makes a lot of sense. And again, if people can just comment on what they think's important about that way of being about creating a thriving community, making people feel welcome.	
Emrys Mordin 18:24 I think a lot of it also is reframing your end goal. So is your end goal, having people submit to every single scene or come along to a workshop block or feel comfortable	**Link to way of being 5.** Setting priorities

posting, or is your end goal for that person to simply feel like they have a space if they need it. And a lot of the times, when we work in spaces like this, we can get carried away with the idea of wanting to meet these targets. And these numbers of the people that we see show up. And actually, **the people that I have seen engage the least have been the people have privately gotten in contact and said, Thank you for the space, even though I don't engage. It means the world that exists. And I finally feel like I can be me, even though they haven't expressed themselves in any other way. It doesn't mean they're not getting anything out of it. So yeah. Let them stay quiet as they want, but acknowledge that they use their space as much as others.** **Skyler Ridewood** 19:20 That must be very fulfilling to hear. **Emrys Mordin** 19:23 Yes, it's lovely. **Skyler Ridewood** 19:28 Alrighty, so we'll move on to the next one. And this one is Linda's. I'm excited for you to talk about your picture Linda. I want to hear about the dog.	**Link to way of being 5.** Important Quote

Transcript	Meaning
Linda Vickers 19:37 Oh, the dogs, okay. I've been away. I've been away out of my office. I was up on the Isle of Lewis. So I didn't have access to a computer or any artwork, but I was thinking how am I generally? how I relate and the most obvious access I had was on my phone to my snapshots of my friend's dog, and actually, when I looked at what I've written about playfulness, curiosity,	**Link to way of being 3.**

attending to use of senses, the whole thing, and the idea of having an overall picture, and then kind of zoning in on the detail that somebody might say, or have in their artwork, which actually was pretty much embedded in those snapshots, which kind of make me laugh, actually. The favourite picture was of the little dog with its eye, right close up. But I kind of think symbolically, that's what happens. Once people form relationships and feel comfortable within a group. There is more playfulness and curiosity and kind of zoning in on things. And I found in the groups I've been involved with, it starts off quite generally like the weather, and what can you see out the window, and it can quickly lead into a focus. Also, I'm finding there has been a preference for people not to show themselves on screen. But once you kind of find a way either through showing an image or using your voice or the chat box, people can be persuaded over time to show themselves and, and kind of look, eye to eye so I felt actually those snapshots kind of said quite a lot about the way I work says probably across the board. **Skyler Ridewood** 21:50	**Link to way of being 1.** **Link to way of being 3.** **Link to way of being 5.** **Link to way of being 1.**

Is that quite an intuitive way that you feel that you work? It's quite natural?	**Link to way of being 3.**
Linda Vickers 21:55	
I think it is. Yeah. And I wonder also whether it's maybe generally a way that people get to know each other is usually kind of from the outside in. I know, there are some people who are probably kind of open. You know, so speak literally in each other's faces from the get go. But my experience has been this this tentative playing around in that little image there of the dog kind of. I think that was the second, rolling over to its back and showing its belly. There is a sort of a comfort in it, and a playfulness to it. And I think people can show their soft side over time.	**Link to way of being 1.** **Link to way of being 3.** **Link to way of being 1.** **Link to way of being 3.**
Skyler Ridewood 22:43	
Okay, and just like before, if we just try and get down what's important to this way of being Just one more thing, say on that like, within my own workshops, I found that a lot of the best occasions where the kind of emergent the occasions that just came out of someone saying something funny, and the whole group laughed together. And that was, that was some of the best parts of the of the online arts group that I did was this kind of emergent camaraderie that that	

just burst out of nowhere sometimes. Okay, so next one is Ursula, and that is encouraging playful connection. Do you want to take it away Ursula?	**Link to way of being 1.**

Way Of Being: **Encouraging playful connection**

How it might be achieved:	Experience from Practice:
Simple task - continuous line drawing using whatever mark making tool you have. Ask everyone to contribute, can be via chat function, verbal call out, text message and no pressure if not able to share something. The group each creates their own image responding to these prompts. Time to share and reflect on images and process of making.	**We had our final zoom session of the term and as a way of ending and holding the space until we resume in September, I chose the theme of 'anchors', thinking about what keeps us grounded. The image below is how I recorded the multitude of prompts offered by the group. There was rich conversation happening whilst we drew which meant I kept breaking the continuous line, hence the changes in colour.**

Share what's valuable about this way of being

wellbeing over a schedule - value in connecting

sense of community / group identity through making together. Trust.

a free level of engagement

Transcript	Meaning
Ursula Kelly 24:03 Sorry, I feel like this has been, I'm kind of recapping on what you have said already. It's, I've been running an adult group online. And it's something that we did coming up to the ending over the summer break as we took a break for the month of August. And some of the group, they will attend and have their mics and cameras off. So, some will communicate through the chat function. Others communicate by sending text messages, even though they're on the online room. Where just having kind	**Link to way of being 2.** **Link to way of being 5.** **Link to way of being 2.**

of a space where everybody is free too. It might make more sense for support in terms of the activity. So we were talking about what are our anchors and what can we hold on to during that break period. And inviting everybody to kind of to give their own contribution at any time as we create a continuous line drawing this to keep That connection. And it starts off really slow. It's almost like pulling teeth because nobody is comfortable sharing. But then as we went on, and over the course of the hour, things were coming thick and fast. And it's just, even though they're coming from through chat through words through text messages. And it's something about giving the space as well to not rushing, but actually giving it the space that it needs to do that. And for people to feel comfortable. Even if we do meet every fortnight, it still takes time in each individual session to warm up and be able to, to get into the kind of the flow of things. Yeah, and I think what's important with that is I'm doing it at the same time they're doing it. So I'm very much it breaks down that hierarchy. It's not like, Okay, I'm here, this is what we have to do. And this is where Christine kind of goes along, Christine was talking about earlier is that it's being in it with the group, I think is important, and recognising. I mean, we said	**Link to way of being 1.** **Link to way of being 2.** **Link to way of being 1.** **Link to way of being 5.** **Link to way of being 2.** **Link to way of being 5.** **Link to way of being 2.**

at the start of every session, whatever everybody is comfortable with my cameras on or off virtual backgrounds on or off, whatever. Whatever is needed.	**Link to way of being 5.**
Skyler Ridewood 26:19 Yeah, absolutely. That sounds that sounds perfect. Yep. Yeah. But at the same time, there's this kind of frustration when it feels like the group isn't quite engaging. So it's, and I guess that feeds to what Linda was saying earlier about trying to tease that out slowly.	**Link to way of being 2.**
Ursula Kelly 26:42 Yeah, we have an adolescent group. And they're all adolescents in crisis. So it's quite a vulnerable group, but they tend to keep their cameras off. And there's no, there's no response. So half the time I don't even know if they're there. But then the thing is, I have to trust that if they want to leave the group, then press the live button on zoom, they're not going to stay. And they're not going to log in the next week. If so you don't want to, it's not easy.	**Link to way of being 5.** **Link to way of being 2.** **Link to way of being 5.**
Skyler Ridewood 27:13 You've got to trust that they they're enjoying it enough to keep on coming. And	

it's hard to even check that that's the case. Sometimes I imagine. **Ursula Kelly** 27:24 I think that's what's really important, particularly with online groups, because everybody's going to engage at a different level. And even for some people, just sitting there with their cameras off, it's enough for them to hear what has happened and to feel part of the group. They don't have to be frantically making something. **Skyler Ridewood** 27:48 Okay. Again, just putting down what you guys think is important about that way of being encouraged playful connection. But that that discussion itself was interesting. Okay, so again, just using rightwards, but all the way up to the top.	**Link to way of being 2.** **Link to way of being 5.**

Expert's Feedback on Preliminary Findings

Below the transcript discussion is mostly me presenting the preliminary-findings though some aspects of participants discussion are analysed. After I shared each preliminary-

finding participants commented, these comments are shared within the images in this section and were used to iterate the findings.

4 Theme 1 Structured Freedom

"I was thinking of the role of the facilitator. Maybe we start off all at the same time or maybe with the same materials... Having quite a structured support, to begin with, and then letting each participant just go wherever they feel naturally inclined."

Trina

Trina's Artwork

Using line in a broken way... like you **let somebody go** and then maybe they need some **support later**, so you pick up with them... the colourful lines were like one facilitator and they are picking up with people at different points in their journey but the different colours were ... how you would react to different people in different ways giving them different sorts of support.

Trina's Artwork

Jay's Artwork

I seen a mother duck with her wee ducklings behind... they're totally fearless because they're following their mum, like they're following their leader... They'll go for a wee wander off, but they'll return to the path that the leader has created for them...it gives them the freedom to express."

Using post-it notes please consider:

Share your own experiences of and what's valuable about this Theme

having a starting point from which everyone is free to move in their own direction but needing that same start

activities that allow varied space help to allow freedom to take activities in various directions

Need to have a pinpoint to start somewhere, but difficult to have a step-by-step activity online

discussing the directions you have taken activities in sometimes help to feel like your response is listened to/ valued

Transcript	Meaning
Skyler Ridewood 27:48 On the board for this next bit will involve me sharing my findings with you guys, just above. Yep. So the next few slides will involve me sharing my findings with you guys. And you guys kind of commenting on them critiquing them. And I just, I just want to know if they're on the mark, from your own experience, of if you think that they're they're actually, whether you think there's any nuances also what you think is important about them? Okay, so, for the first theme, the themes we're trying to get at the heart of what my participants thought was supporting their wellbeing in the online art group. And the first one was Structured Freedom. I got my art, my my artists, my participants to make artwork surrounding these kinds of things. So the first one was one participant. Trina she spoke about, you see, it's this artwork here that I'm circling around, so the abstract shapes, she spoke about how she was using, she was looking at this from the facilitators perspective, and she was using	**Structured Freedom** My own understanding of structured freedom.

broken lines in a way to talk about how, as a facilitator, you'll go from one person to another, you pick up with participants. But then the different colours in our artwork were about more like how she responds to different participants in different ways. So each colour was kind of trying to signify her her interaction with the different participants. So that was really trying to get at the structured freedom, how they all follow these lines of structure, how the group follows this set of tasks. But there's also freedom in that structure that people get to go off and do what they like. The next example was another artwork by Jay and this was about a mother duck and her ducklings. This was basically just a big metaphor to describe the facilitator is the mother duck, and the participants, the ducklings. So for this, she was trying to get it structured freedom by talking about how the mother creates a path. And then the participants or the ducklings are fearless, because they know that there's a path that they can follow ie the structure. But within that they are free to do as they please within that structure. So that's why each duck has its own kind of flavour or colour. Yeah. So I was just wondering if we could share any of our own experiences on structured freedom in the workshop, and	

then try and pick out what's important, or there's anything that maybe isn't right about this understanding? Anybody have anything they want to share? First off, does that does that make sense to everybody? The theme of structured freedom? **Ursula Kelly** 32:07 I think it can be a tricky one to balance because if there's no structure at all, then it can be really overwhelming. So there needs to be some level of structure. But at the same time, I mean, even the word structure freedom. **Skyler Ridewood** 32:27 Yeah, it's almost a paradox because structure, by necessity, in a way kind of limits freedom. But at the same time, that structure is quite a safe space. I found from my, my workshops, it gives participants something to move from. **Ursula Kelly** 32:45 Yeah. **Skyler Ridewood** 32:51 Okay, does anybody have anything else they want to add? **Linda Vickers** 33:04	Structured Freedom

I'm just, I don't know if this is relevant. I'm just looking at those images, the one of the mother duck with the ducks. I don't know this, if this is relevant to this question. But there's something about the mishmash of ideas and opinions that can come out quite strongly from individuals in a group. And I feel like the structure or the container for that is that the mother duck image of holding all of the the differences as well as similarities within. So what may seem chaotic, in the interactions between people or what they're producing, is held in mind by the facilitator, even if they're not directing it, but they kind of have a role in in holding it. **Skyler Ridewood** 34:08 Yeah, I think from what I was reading from my own research was there was this big tension between being yourself but also being part of the group. And I think that really is kind of getting to the core of the structured freedom idea is that the group kind of gathers around the structure and each individual's free to kind of be themselves within that structure. within the group, I guess. **Ursula Kelly** 34:33	Structured Freedom

Yeah. Yeah. I'm just thinking about the the idea of being the individual within the group, and being able to express your own individuality because with the adult group that I have, I set teams and at the start was were so reluctant to respond to the team if it wasn't a positive response, but actually having those conversations. And I think this comes in to the structure of freedom in terms of having some reflection time at the end that it's the response can be authentic, it doesn't have to be in agreement, or it doesn't have to be like, we're doing it because we agree with it. But allowing the, and that comes with having the knowing the group, so being able to kind of hold it and set the pace, I guess.	**Link to way of being 1.** **Link to way of being 2.** **Link to way of being 3.** **Link to way of being 1.**

5 Theme 2 Reinventing Ourselves Together

Mark's Artwork

Mark: "So I created this self-portrait that I cut up into parts, allowing me to break from my normal position and explore with my whole body and mind through new connections, new arrangements free from the constructs of physical reality."

Marz: "These guys have different colours, some of them have different numbers of fingers. So, it's very individual... I started just putting some finger prints with ink on the paper... I was doing it and I was like; I'm just copying Skyler."

Fi: "That's so true about doing a piece of art though, you know like how we were saying about copying somebody's idea though, because everybody needs to be so "original", it doesn't really matter."

Marz: "It doesn't! I mean you are original in the end of the day though because it's done by you."

Marz's Artwork

Using post-it notes please consider:

Share your own experiences of and what's valuable about this Theme

Helps individuals in the groups self discovery - not alone and that others are doing the same

Can be different within a specific group, from how you are 'outside in the world'

feels special when a group knows they are working towards something new and unknown together - a special mission! Each is a player with something to add

Learning about yourself & others

being able to share and express themselves visually and verbally, those interactions can be really hard for some

Having space to explore new ways of being

Transcript	Links to Findings
Skyler Ridewood 35:34 Awesome. Okay, I'm aware of the time, so I might move on quickly to the next theme. So if we just jump over to the next box. So this one is Reinventing Ourselves Together. So over and over again, throughout the different tasks and exercises that we did, that we're trying to explore wellbeing in the online arts group, participants kind of hinted at how they saw the online arts group as a place to reinvent themselves kind of recreate themselves, using the artwork, but also the opinions of the others in the group during discussions at the end. So the first artwork, you can see there is Mark's artwork. And in workshop two, I shared skills within using photo editing software, a free one that was online. So Mark basically used that and tried to talk about this understanding of changing yourself. So he created the self portrait, that he cut up into loads of pieces. And then he kind of swirl them around to move them around. And what he says is, this allowed me to break from my normal position and explore my whole body and mind through new connections, new arrangements, free from the constructs of physical reality. So really trying to get this	

this understanding of seeing yourself almost as an artwork that you're creating. But then the next example really kind of gets gets at the togetherness of all of this. So Marz, in a different task, she created this artwork. But given my example work, she had felt that she was maybe copying me in some some kind of way. But after the group kind of investigated with her what the artwork was about, we learned that actually, all these dots on it, were her fingerprints. And we also noticed that at the start, she talked about how each of her aliens were very individual very much themselves and not like the others. So through this kind of group investigation, as we got Marz to describe more about her artwork, we realise that actually, her artwork was as individual as anybody else's. And through the group, she managed to see herself as more of an original creator more of a creative person. So that's pretty much the theme of reinventing yourself together. It's about this, this recreation of self but in the group and seeing seeing ourselves through the eyes of others and a lot of ways to understand ourselves better. So just like last time, if anybody has any experiences of this kind of participants who are trying to figure out themselves in the arts group, I'd really love to hear those.	

Also, also just pop down what you think might be important about this way of being or if you think this, this, maybe misses the mark, if you think it's not so simple as this, that is also something that I'd like to hear Lovely, anybody have anything they want to say? any examples that they can think of, obviously, don't use any names. **Christine Novosel** 40:33 just makes me think of something that I always tell groups. I like to tell groups, if I do the same activity or the same, I suppose lesson plan with every single group, even though it might be the same instructions, it will always be different. And it's a nice way to think about how, as a facilitator as well, you're different with every group. And I like telling that to groups, because it makes it does make it feel special, that it's that this mix of people that makes the group what it is, rather than the activity. And there's something nice about that, knowing that it's almost between you and the participants to make something together. **Skyler Ridewood** 41:16 In my final workshop, we did a collaborative task together, where we interviewed each other. And from those	**Reinventing Ourselves Together** Great understanding

interviews, we tried to create kind of abstract portrait of our partners. And then from that, we created this kind of digital group collage that was, in essence, like a, like a kind of group photo. But abstract, gave us like a really nice sense of being being a whole being a group.	

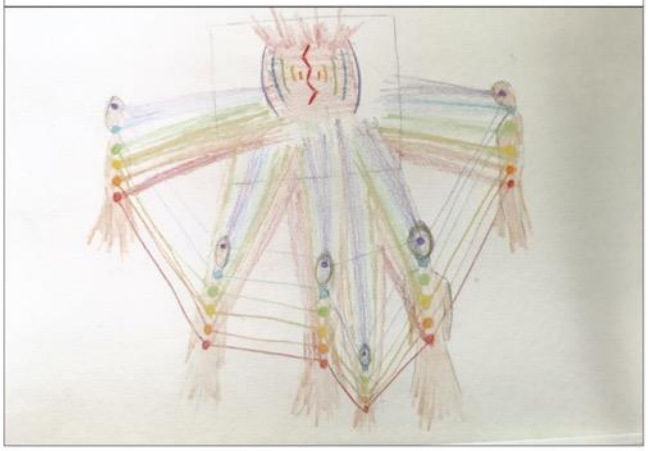
6 **Prior-Research Ways of Being**

1

Way of Being:

Encourage positive social interaction.

How
Create engaging activities. During discussion start with positive comments.



Elle: "We are all connected and we can connect to each other and then come together to bring all our ideas to the table so then they're creating this image together."

Use post-it notes to:

Share your own experiences of and what's valuable about this way of being

Encourage sharing of common experience, before moving onto individual experience

Very important to set the tone of positivity and praise from the get-go. If people are to return, they need to know they are valued

acknowledging that not everyone will feel connected and thats ok

positive space

Transcript	Links to Findings
Skyler Ridewood 41:16 Okay, so let's move on to the ways of being. So these are my versions of the ways of being that you guys shared earlier. And it's pretty much the same format, I want you guys to just pick out what's important, what you think is useful. Also, just tell me if you think that some things, maybe off if something could be more, more on the mark, or if there's a nuance that I've missed. Okay, so the first one is **encourage positive social interaction**, the way to do this that was decided was create engaging activities. And during the discussions on artworks start with positive comments. So here, you can see Elle's artwork she wanted, she's kind of depicted this group that's making an artwork together. You can see all the different figures around and they're all kind of sharing their essence into this one piece. So ideally, if you guys could just, I think this this has a lot of synergies with different ways of being that were shared earlier. So for example, creating a thriving community and making people feel welcome. I think that has a lot to do with also attending curious and playful. It's about playing together. And encouraging playful connection. I think all of these have a lot of synergies. And if what what are	

maybe a better question would be what are your own tactics for encouraging positive social interaction? **Christine Novosel** 43:50 So as an icebreaker, I'm usually on the second or third session with a group and this is mostly with young people, I get them to do thing that's really awkward for them. And I know, culturally, it's really difficult sometimes to talk about the things that we do well. So I tried to make sure in my sessions that we do this. So we'll do an activity and at the very end, I'll just ask, how was that? and then I asked everyone to go around the Zoom Room and say one nice thing about each person. So what they do really well. And I think that's a great way to end sessions. And sadly, some young people aren't used to that. And they're not used to saying nice things about each other and themselves. So I think trying to establish that as this is what this room is like. I think that's important.	**Link to way of being 2.** **Link to way of being 1.**

Prior-Research Ways of Being

2

Way of Being:

Supported self-exploration and discovery.

How
Create playful environments using tools and activities. Send unexpected or unconventional materials. Reflect on activities and outcomes together with discussion.

Marz: "I started drawing shapes, relating to exploration, ships and UFO's and discovery. Then I cut things out, but I wanted something with a background so I poured some ink on it and I had a play with it, I quite like what happened with it. Again, this related to exploration and discovery "

Use post-it notes to:

Share your own experiences of and what's valuable about this way of being

experimental drawing e.g. using non dominant hand

choice allows for exploration

When people explore materials, useful to be available if the unpredicatabilty becomes anxiety provoking

less attention on skill and more about play

start with squiggles

Have to show examples for this to work - people can be hesitant if an activity is too 'out there'. But once you demonstrate it puts people at ease.

Transcript	Links to Findings
Skyler Ridewood 41:16 Absolutely. Okay, thank you all for sharing there. Let's move down following the arrow just directly down. So I think most of you are on the left, but it's this one labelled number two over here, which is called **supported self exploration and discovery**. So this this speaks a lot to the second theme about reinventing yourself together. But this is about particularly the facilitator helping the self exploration. This here is an artwork created by Marz, where she tried to really talk about this self exploration, so what she did with this artwork was she, she made these drawings of different kinds of objects that explore, you can see the spaceship, the boat, and the kind of figure running. And then she also poured ink onto her Canvas, so it was kind of like exploring through the murk. And then finally, because her Canvas was wet, she she added, these pins to hold her drawing down. And the thing about the pins was that they were always able to be moved and changed just like that process of exploring yourself. So what she what was said about how to achieve this was creating a playful environment, using activities. But one really interesting thing that was said, was about sending unconventional materials. Marz	

particularly felt that exploring materials was a way to explore herself. And yeah, does anybody have any kind of example of that, that way of being or thoughts? **Ursula Kelly** 47:08 Can't remember the words if you're non autonomous hand. if you draw with your hand that you don't write with **Christine Novosel** 47:21 Non dominant hand. **Ursula Kelly** 47:22 Your non dominant. Thanks! **Christine Novosel** 47:24 I like that though non autonomous hand.	**Link to way of being 2.**

Prior-Research Ways of Being

3

Way of Being:

Safeguard using in-session and follow up external support.

How	
List referral routes to signpost participants to for concerning, inappropriate, or unusual behaviour. Refer all participants to support channels indirectly.	

Fi: "There always needs to be a backup... because you know you have a time limit and when someone is talking about our drawings it could be at the end and it triggers something but you've left. I think thats really dangerous, when someone opens up in a group and you don't have the time or recourses to delve a little deeper and consider that person entirely."

Use post-it notes to:

Share your own experiences of and what's valuable about this way of being

Can be useful to have a co-facilitator to watch for anyone in distress, also to be available just after session if someone needs follow-up

Clarify at beginning of each session, that it is ok to opt out of sharing work

if you are guest facilitator for an organisation be aware of your own points of contact

doing a quick check out activity at the end is important for grounding so as to not have people leave feeling like they are not in their own bodies/minds

Make sure participants know you are a facilitator and not a therapist or social worker, respect boundaries and what you are capable of dealing with. Dont let group conversations get into difficult territory if you cant handle the outcome! Safety of yourself too.

Transcript	Links to Findings
Skyler Ridewood 48:09 Thats lovely, thank you so much, there's loads to work with there. I'll let the last person finish. start with squiggles, I agree with that. Okay, so onto the next way, this is **safeguard using in session and pull up external support**. So this is Fi's artwork. And basically, she was getting at the fact that the online arts group is a space that can make participants feel very vulnerable. That's why the heart is in her hand in our drawing, and it's just trying to remind you that, that you're, you're in a place where people need need a lot of support, but also, they're they're in a vulnerable position, and you need to safeguard for that. So really, the principle is trying to get at the limitations of the online artist group, obviously, there's a certain amount of time that you've got together, there's a certain amount of time to do certain things. And you, you can't be there for the whole thing. So basically, what Fi was trying to say here, and I might just read it, because it's really good. There always needs to be a backup because you know, you have a time limit. And when someone is talking about your drawings, it could be at the end, something triggers you and then you've left. She thinks that might be very dangerous when	

someone opens up in the group and you don't have the resource to delve a little deeper and consider that person entirely. So the way that this is meant to be solved or at least safeguarded is to have a list of referral routes ready to signpost to participants to and this might be because they're behaving unusually It might be because you've noticed that they're feeling down. And the idea is to also signpost, these, these referral routes to everybody at the end, just in case you've missed something. Absolutely, I really agree with this clarify at the beginning of the session that it's okay to opt out of sharing work. Again, I think that that kind of speaks to the theme of structured freedom and really kind of trying to ensure that participants are freely doing anything within the workshop.	

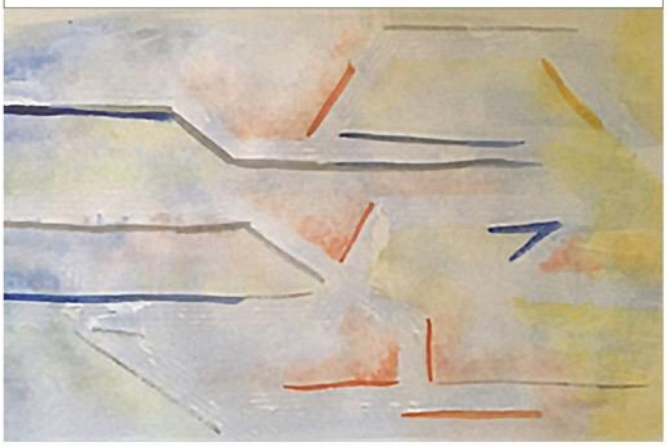
Prior-Research Ways of Being

4

Way of Being:

Facilitate a supported freedom of expression.

How
Facilitators takes a step back and allows artist to develop while identifying points to support along the way.



Trina: "I was using line in a broken way like you let somebody go and then maybe they need some support later, so you pick up with them... the colourful lines were like one facilitator and they are picking up with people at different points in their journey but the different colours were ... how you would react to different people in different ways giving them different sorts of support. You help people and support them in the best way you can with whatever they need at that point"

Use post-it notes to:

Share your own experiences of and what's valuable about this way of being

being listened to, heard and valued and making this a part of the delivery

building a space that over time feels playful and easy to tap into

This comes after a few sessions - need to build trust and rapport first

When people are unfamiliar with the range and possibilities of art materials inc digital possibilities, there may be a role for a more directive/educative approach to enhance expression

having a conversation with each individual before they join the group so as to find out what their needs are and how they can be supported

Transcript	Links to Findings
Skyler Ridewood Awesome, that's lovely, thank you so much. Let's move directly above us to **facilitate a supportive freedom of expression**. That's just up here. It's again, the structure of freedom drawing. So from this one, it's called facilitates for freedom of expression. How it's meant to be achieved is pretty simple. The facilitator takes a step back and allows the artist to develop while identifying points, of support along the way, which really this this artwork kind of speaks to very well as thoughts about the facilitator, taking off and leaving off with different participants and allowing them to go where they please. Yeah, so what do you guys think is important about about this way? How can we facilitate supported freedom of expression? How do we help participants express themselves? I guess what this is trying to get at. This one's an interesting one. When people are unfamiliar with the range of possibilities of art making materials, including digital possibilities, there may be a role for more direct to educative, approach to enhance expression. I think you're totally right. What's interesting here is when we are trying to balance hierarchy while also trying to share skills that we might have. I had a	

previous I think it might have been someone's way of being but it might not have been it might have been in the previous workshops. But I've noticed that people trying to really not define themselves as teachers, while at the same time still sharing skills.	
Linda Vickers 56:34 Yeah, I think it's it's a very nuanced kind of role. And you have to be quite careful, it's probably quite bespoke with each individual. Some people soak that up with you sharing your knowledge and experience and other people have to be guided in a way where they're coming up with their own ideas, whilst you give them something to respond to.	**Link to way of being 2**
Skyler Ridewood 57:12 Absolutely. So really, I guess, I guess the solution to that is just being as person centred as you can, and really trying to listen and respond to what that person is wanting.	
Linda Vickers 57:29 Yeah, I can actually think of an example, where I was co-facilitating a group with I'm both from the art therapy end and they're	**Link to way of being 2**

from the educative end but they were making a group painting. But they were very kind of basic. And what they were able to do with the other members in the group, were more nuanced. And there was quite a response, because they did a very cartoonish kind of sun on a landscape. But it was absolutely devastating for that person to be shown by the facilitator, how to make the sun look more real. It was I don't know how they would have been a way to do it, actually. But I suppose that's also one of the dangers of shared artwork.	**Link to way of being 1**
Skyler Ridewood 58:33 I suppose it comes down to whether they were asked to whether that participant had asked the facilitator to help draw that sun or not?	**Link to way of being 2**
Linda Vickers 58:42 No and they're very proud of what we've done. So yeah, I think it can sometimes go. I think joint artmaking can sometimes be quite tricky.	**Link to way of being 1**
Skyler Ridewood 58:59 That's a really good example. Thank you for sharing that.	
Linda Vickers 59:02	

You're welcome.	

Prior-Research Ways of Being

5

Way of Being:

Create a safe environment to express online

How
Choose participants carefully. Have ground rules to support everyone's safety. Create group rules with the participants with protocol to follow if they are broken. Consider each case individually.

Jay: "I seen a mother duck with her wee ducklings behind... they're totally fearless because they're following their mum, like they're following their leader... They'll go for a wee wander off, but they'll return to the path that the leader has created for them...it gives them the freedom to express."

Use post-it notes to:

Transcript	Meaning
Skyler Ridewood 59:05 Okay, I think we can move on to the next one. So this one is **create a safe environment to express online**. And this is the mother duck picture because the structure of the group creates the safe environment from what I understood from from Jay talking about her, her drawing, she says she saw a mother duck and the duck was behind. They were totally fearless because they're following their mum like they're following leader. They'll go for wee wander off, but they'll return to the path that the leader has created for them. This gives them the freedom to express. So how this was meant to be achieved was choose participants carefully have ground rules to support everybody's safety and then create group rules with the group. And follow protocol if that is broken and again, the protocol would be decided by the group itself. And using a case by case kind of way of dealing with these things was deemed preferable. So this one kind of leans to a lot more of the structure, but the structure around safeguarding. So, I guess what would be useful here is if we kind of thought about what structures we have, or have used in the past to, to create that safe	

environment for our participants. This is all really great stuff. Thank you guys.	

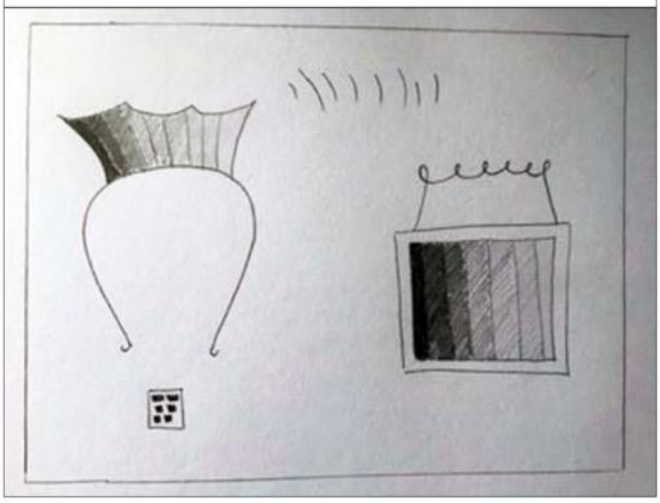
Prior-Research Ways of Being

6

Way of Being:

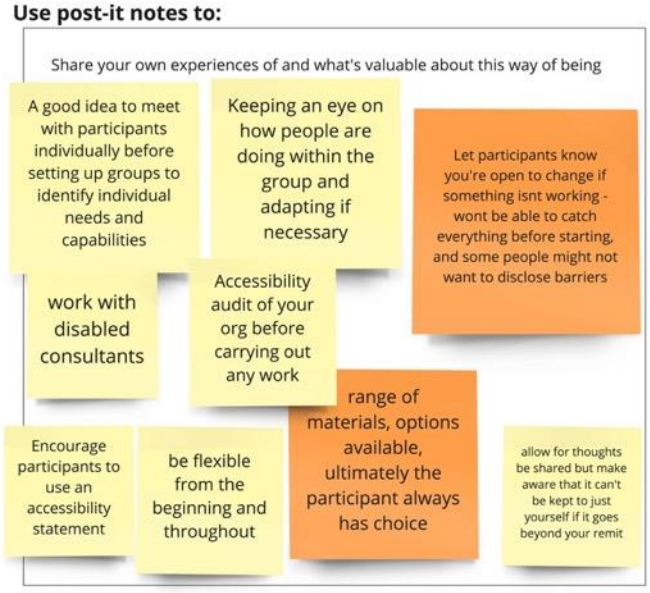
Adapt workshops to include everyone.

How
Consult participants before workshops. Assess their capabilities. Consider possible participation barriers. Ensure workshops suit participants abilities.Create flexible plans to fit different needs.Go back to participants and explain the final workshop tasks.



Trina: "So this headset thing visually indicates wellbeing. Within arts workshops people get so ideally comfortable that things can come out. So, what I thought is that the headsets would connect directly to a receiver so that something is giving an appropriate response."

Use post-it notes to:

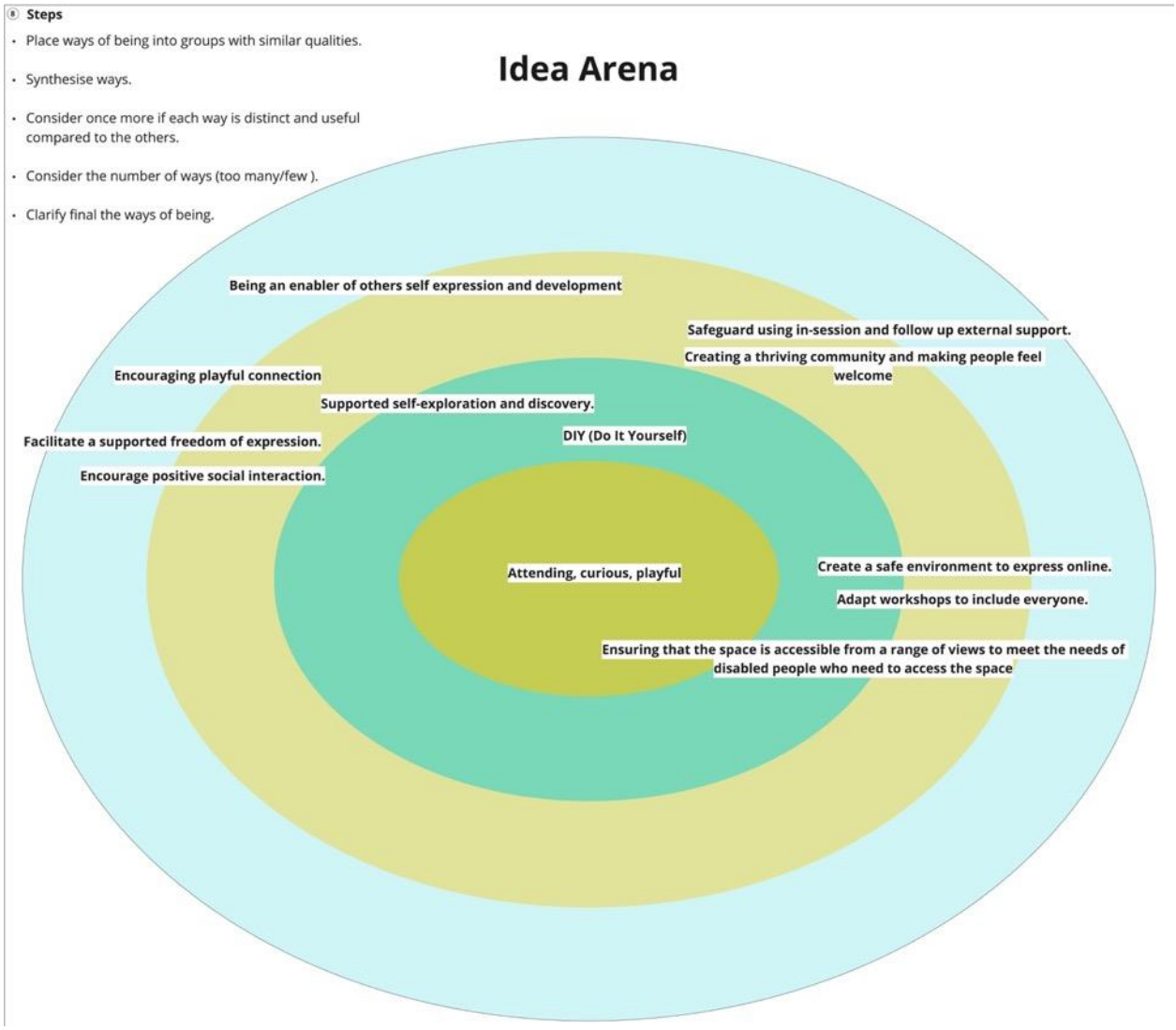


Transcript	Meaning
Skyler Ridewood 59:05 Alrighty, I think it might be time to move on to the last one. This one is just at the bottom, below this. And it's called adapt workshop to include everyone. Very simple. So, the way this was meant to be achieved, how it's meant to be achieved was to consult with participants before workshop, have access to their capabilities. Consider any possible participation barriers that they might have. Ensure that workshops, suit participants capabilities, create flexible plans for different needs, and then go back to participants and explain the final workshop tasks before they happen. So here, the example is from Trina again, and this was a really lovely example because it was about sharing our wellbeing in the group. And basically, she imagined this kind of product that would be used in the online arts group that would share directly a participant's wellbeing to the facilitator and the rest of the group. But this would also be at their own discretion. So there's a wee remote down there. So a really lovely idea and a way for participants to communicate without having to communicate physically. So this was really about kind of destroying the barriers to communication and allowing it to be as inclusive as possible. Just below	

she describes her object. So I guess again for this one is how how can we adapt? How do we best adapt the workshops to support a large range of people I think that's a really important point at the end of this orange one over here that some people might not want to disclose their own barriers, which can kind of its more than understandable, but I can see how it might make the facilitators job a lot harder. Very good point. Awesome, okay. The next one is just a we 10 minute break. We've been at it for an hour and 15 minutes. And thank you so much, it's really going very well. There's so much rich data here that I'll be spending the next month analysing. So if we all just meet back in 10 minutes, so that will be 25 past three, and then we're going to finish the workshop by trying to slim down our ways to be come up with a final set. But yeah, I will see you guys at 25 past. Just go get yourself a cup of tea and all that.	

Expert Holistic Considerations

In this next part of the focus group, we attempted to consolidate all our ways of being given my PAR approach. Ideally, I hoped that here a lot of the analysis could be done together. This was overambitious. Nonetheless an interesting insight emerged; this was that the findings were insoluble and couldn't be synthesised into more simpler parts or that such a feat was beyond us. The other crucial conformation was that the ways of being were all interconnected and not necessarily separate.



Transcript	Meaning
Skyler Ridewood Hello Alrighty, for this one, if we all meet on the big circular dartboard kind of board to the right. And for this one, if possible, and you don't have to, of course, but if everybody could turn off their mics, turn on their mic, sorry. It's just because this will involve a lot of discussion and kind of negotiating. And kind of, basically, we're	

trying to get all the ways of being that we spoken about today. And we're trying to synthesise the ones that are similar, and then reduce down the number. So this is something that could be sent out to other practitioners. So the plan is that we go round one by one, I'll say each way of being and once I've done that, we can start to talk about which ones might be similar which ones can be mushed together. And hopefully, we'll get down to like five, six, maybe seven ways of being that we can publish and share with with the larger community. Okay, so the first one being an enabler of others, self expression and development. Second one is creating a thriving community, making people feel welcome. Third one is encouraging playful connection forth encourage positive social interaction. Fifth attending curious and playful, adapt workshops to include everyone, ensuring that the space is accessible from a range of views to meet the needs of disabled people who need access to the space. DIY, do it yourself. safeguard in session, follow up external support, create a safe environment to express online facilitate a supported freedom of expression and then self exploration and discovery. Okay, so There, I think there's quite a few synergies. So feel	

free to grab any of the ways of being pull them around, move them around, try and find the ones that are similar and group them together. So to the top definitely have a lot in common. **Emrys Mordin** 1:20:56 I've put attending curious and playful kind of in the middle, because I think it applies to all of them, to be honest, fits into all of them. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:21:04 That's a totally fair thing to do. Okay, so we've got some clusters emerging. So these three together here, we'll start with them encouraging playful connection, facilitate a supportive freedom of expression, ensuring that the space is accessible from a range of views to meet needs of disabled people. I think that last one, ensuring the space accessible to meet a range of uses and needs for disabled people is very similar to adapt work workshops to include everyone. I think that it's more specific than that, and the other one's just a bit more generalised. What do you guys think? How could these two ways being be synthesised? I think those were just a really strong one for me that were very similar? Or does anybody think they're not very similar?	**Interconnectivity of ways**

Linda Vickers 1:22:29 I think they're similar **Skyler Ridewood** 1:22:39 Okay. **Emrys Mordin** 1:22:42 I think it's a bit difficult, because obviously, they can all relate to one another and in different ways. So I found it quite hard to kind of group them, I kind of just wanted to put them all in one space. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:22:55 Thats fair there is no wrong answers. So it might be that they can't quite be reduced down. And I've just got to figure out what I can do. After that, that's also a totally fair assumption. Not assumption, fair point, sorry. I found also that do it yourself had a lot to do with being an enabler of others self expression and development, but also to do so the do it yourself, I think had a lot to do with these ones up at the top. What do you guys think there? **Ursula Kelly** 1:23:38 Think they do connect with those at the top, but then what Emrys's was saying about attending curious and playful, we've	**Interconnectivity of ways** **Interconnectivity of ways**

been at the centre, I feel like the Do It Yourself also needs to be at the centre because whose needs are we serving? **Skyler Ridewood** 1:23:54 Okay. So maybe we can move the whole cluster closer to the center. These I'm gonna move this near this so the ensuring that the space is accessible for disabled people I'm going to put next to the adapt workshops include everyone. But that does also feed in to create a safe space to express online encouraged of social interaction, I think that that's kind of getting at the social point, a lot more than the other three that are new there. So I might move them slightly that way. Again, if people disagree, I'm more than happy to, to change I **Christine Novosel** 1:24:48 Think with the points on the right, so the right side of the board, there's sort of two streams one is how to get people into the workshops in the first place. And the other one is, how do you keep them there? And keep them engaged? So it's almost, there's accessibility and then inclusion as well. I think those are two different. I don't know	

welcoming, I think that maybe, like welcoming people in **Skyler Ridewood** 1:25:17 Are you trying to draw a distinction between welcoming and being inclusive? there? Are you saying that they're the same? **Christine Novosel** 1:25:27 I think so the point of adopt workshops to include everyone, and then accessibility, I do think those are two different things. So adopting workshops, also includes content, themes, pacing, but accessibility is more of how do you actually get people into the format of the workshops and make sure that they can proceed in the first place would that makes sense? **Skyler Ridewood** 1:25:57 It's a very difficult thing that I'm trying to get you guys to do. I understand, sorry. Okay. Why don't we quickly go through each one and try and see which ones that links to? So if I go left to right, I'm going to say, facilitate a supportive freedom of expression. Which ways of being Do you guys think that one connects to most? I think supported self exploration. And discovery has a lot to do with that. But also	

quite a lot to do with do it yourself. So I'll have those three, just there. So facilitate a sport of creative expression, supported self exploration and discovery, and then do it yourself. I feel like they they can really kind of amalgamate, what do you guys think? **Ursula Kelly** 1:27:09 encourage positive, positive, is positive social interaction fits with that as well. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:27:19 Sorry? **Ursula Kelly** 1:27:20 I think that that links with the support says, freedom of expression. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:27:40 Okay. I reckon we might not, sometimes things just don't work. And I think this, this might be an idea that didn't quite work out very well. But it's nice to see that all of these kind of cluster and there's there's a lot of synergies between all the ways of being and they can't really be pulled apart. Is that what I'm getting from this? **Linda Vickers** 1:28:02	

I can see them always more like, you know, one of those old fashioned Venn diagrams where some circles overlap, and others that overlap on all fronts. Think it's very hard to break it down. Because they kind of merge in different levels. If you think about them a lot. They will merge. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:28:33 Yeah, I guess in a lot of ways. It's, it's kind of like a bowl string that we're trying to untangle. Maybe. Maybe it doesn't need to be untangled.	**Interconnectivity of ways**

Expert's Final Thoughts

Transcript	Meaning
Skyler Ridewood 1:28:33 Okay. Let's move forward on to the last bit now that we've we've kind of established that this is not going to be reduced down further. And for this, it's more like, I'm trying to really, maybe we just have a wee discussion about the the online setting. So what have we noticed? Just forget about the first bit because that would have said more too if that that last task had gone well. But why don't we speak to to how these ways of being might be used in the online art setting how the online art setting can kind of hinder them. Obviously all of you have been using the online setting. And just I'd like maybe we just go around one by one and share something interesting about the online setting that we found. Would it be alright if I pick and choose? Linda, would you be alright to start? If you can.	
Linda Vickers 1:29:58 Like I say It's been really difficult because in the main groups I've been supporting, have had, they've got digital poverty. So suppose that kind of counts out, speaking to a lot of it in a way, but for those things I have been involved with, it can actually work really well, for people to dip their toe in, because	**Link to way of being 5** Some workshops cannot be adapted to include literally everyone. **Link to way of being 5**

the technology allows for people, for example, not to show themselves. I think that's got problems, as well as to have too much avoidance of interaction, but it's a very **gentle route in**. So I think the technology allows for lots of possibilities, which I hadn't thought of when I first started. But equally because of digital poverty, it's something that therapists I've been working with have had to think outside the box. So they've been using letterbox art therapy where they send materials out. And then, if possible, get photographs back and are using telephone. So that's also kind of provided another another way of working so yeah, I think it's opened up a lot of things that could be developed further. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:31:38 I think it gives and It takes the issue like some people have been, some people have been now able to access art groups because of the online setting. But then a lot of people have also been absolutely excluded because of the digital poverty. But also, just like beyond not even having the tech its also about not being able to use the tech sometimes. **Linda Vickers** 1:32:05	It's also on the other hand very useful for some people to use in engaging. **Link to way of being 3** Faces problems of not sharing **Link to way of being 5** **Link to way of being 5**

absolutely one thing, I would say that the thing I've observed is some of the art therapists I work with just don't know, the technology themselves, me included. So there's scope for people who were more conversant with the new technology to work alongside people who don't know, but also would then enable them to show you know, for example, adults with learning disabilities is one group, I can think of. **The way you showed how Miro worked today, you made it simple.** The way I was shown in a workshop, absolutely flummoxed everybody I was working with. So I can only imagine what that might be like with, for somebody with the sort of learning challenges. So yeah, I think there's room for supervision, as well as the setting, there's room for people to help set up these things. Collaborative, collaboratively with Community Arts when it comes. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:33:22 I remember the first time I got shown Miro, and it was quite scary. So I totally agree there. **Linda Vickers** 1:33:29	**Link to way of being 5** **Link to way of being 5** Need for upskilling facilitators and therapists

You made it accessible. So I think you know, there's room there for some collaboration. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:33:38 Thank you very much. Just because you're next on my screen, could you do you have anything to say about online art groups? Christine? **Christine Novosel** 1:33:47 I'm just trying to think what would be the best? There's so many things. I think, when I first started moving online, back in June last year, I think there's a big worry of how do you make sure that everyone has the same experience? So without that workshop room, where you're all together? How do you replicate that? And I think trying to replicate what you do in person was a mistake in the first place. So I think through many workshops and difficult situations, it's much better to acknowledge that everyone has a different setup at home, and that's okay. And I know there's quite a bit of fear from some people saying, Oh, I don't have you know, my screen isn't great. I don't have a table to work out of. I don't have a quiet place, but that's fine. And being okay with that, and like we've said quite a bit in this in this group. **You can**	**Link to way of being 2** A whole new way of doing things was needed. **Link to way of being 4** Separation of participants and facilitator **Link to way of being 5** More accessibility issues

have your camera off, it's fine, do what works for you. And also making activities that embrace differences. So doing drawings of the view out your window, doing drawings of everyday objects at home and knowing that everything would be a bit different from everyone else. So it alleviates that pressure of having to do everything the same. And come up with the you know. So for example, before I would be doing a printmaking workshop, and everyone would have the same kit, and they'd be, you know, looking at me, and we'd all be working towards the same thing. It's completely different online. And I think that's fine. Two different things. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:35:21 I think that really speaks well to the fact that we're all on these we video boxes. We're all individuals coming together, but we're also so separated. And that that really kind of is what I learned from my understanding is, that's what's at the core of this, trying to do things the same as impossible because we're so separated. Awesome. Ursula do you have anything to say about the online setting? **Ursula Kelly** 1:35:37	**Link to way of being 2** Process not outcome **Link to way of being 3** The digital facilitation barrier might encourage more self-reflective and explorative behaviour as the facilitators work cannot be easily copied

I think just kind of picking up from what you were saying about recognising that we are all in different spaces, which is really important. There's different things happening in everybody's environment. And that needs to be considered. But also what we've been doing is sending out packs of materials. So when people join, they all start off with the same pack of materials to give some kind of levelness, I suppose. And we've been considering about how do we go go forward with this, because we can't afford to keep buying art materials for everybody. And also people are using different art materials. So is it a case of having an secure in funding to give vouchers for the same art shop that they can buy things in? And then they get to choose themselves what they use? Yeah, we haven't figured that this is just stuff that we're trying to figure out at the moment. But also things like, because people are in their own environment that we've got some people who haven't been able to connect with the organisation for a few years, because they had moved to a different geographical location, or they had different physical needs that they couldn't move, you know, it was not easy. And they've been able to engage online, which has been really, really useful. And I think	**Link to way of being 2** Accounting for individual difference and the resultant contingency **Link to way of being 2 Structured Freedom** Using the workshops structure to bring us together **Link to way of being 5** Accessible to those with mobility issues

there's a lot as well about trust, trusting that people are. Are there. Like I was saying, with young people when they don't, don't necessarily communicate with us, but yet they keep coming back. So there is a level of trust that gets built up.	**Link to way of being 1**
Skyler Ridewood 1:37:58 Do you think that trust How long would you say that it takes to build that? Or obviously, I guess it keeps on building? But yeah.	
Ursula Kelly 1:38:11 With the young people, we didn't have that many sessions, because it was a very specific, short term projects. And I think, partly what was useful with them was because they are young people in crisis that their key workers I worked very closely with them to, to, to encourage young people. So even if they didn't come one week, they still got that same invitation to join the next week, that it wasn't that Oh, you didn't come You can come to next one.	**Link to way of being 1**
Skyler Ridewood 1:38:48 Its place to go, that you're always free to go.	**Link to way of being 1**
Ursula Kelly 1:38:51 Yeah.	

Skyler Ridewood 1:38:51 You're always welcome.	
Ursula Kelly 1:38:53 And keeping that consistency is important. Because that's the thing about working online, there's so many in consistencies that the space that we deliver from needs to be consistent, I think.	**Link to way of being 4**
Skyler Ridewood 1:39:16 Lovely. Fiona, do you want to have a wee chat about online settings?	
Fiona Grant 1:39:23 Yeah. I suppose I was just thinking when Ursula was talking as well about spaces and making it consistent. Like I joined in on for the National Gallery I joined and on our call that they have consistently but then I'm not a consistent person that joins every week. So I suppose there's also that idea of when you're inviting people into those spaces as well. Think about how participants react to that and how you can respect their space that you're going into, that maybe you don't know, what their environments like and what their relationships are, and that you're not, like, established and that space, really, you're just going there to sort of give	**Link to way of being 1** Respect boundaries

what you know, to the environment and then work with what they're doing themselves already. So a lot of communication with whoever is that your speaking with them, for the weeks that they've been doing the workshops for. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:40:38 Is that like you, when you come into a new set, you're trying to catch up with their journey so far, I guess. **Fiona Grant** 1:40:45 Yeah, yeah. And you sort of have to work out as well, where they're at with it. And sort of where they're going with it as well. So they were going to be meeting up eventually, in doing sort of exhibition space. So it's like trying to work out what as the your, your purpose is and that sort of environment. But yeah, I think probably the most challenging one for me, is when you're going into a space where it's already established, and you're having to sort of play catch up. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:41:30 I think, especially when that's in the online setting, that that catch up involves a lot of communication. So, as we have experienced, I'm sure all of us from from	**Link to way of being 5** Conduct a capability, accessibility and technology audit to uncover participation barriers **Link to way of being 2** Flexibility

using the zoom to do this communication, it's, it is often quite a barrier itself, these screens, and a lot of a lot is lost. And there's no way for, for example, right now, there's no way for me to do Miro, as well as watch all of your faces to see if you're all okay. A lot of issues.	
Linda Vickers 1:42:07 That's why what we've started doing is, is having two people always facilitating and it is because there's one person attends to the chat and the more micromanagement and then there's somebody holding the general thing, but actually, when I'm thinking in previous art therapy groups, it's not that dissimilar of if I was working with more than a group of six, I would nearly always have another person and we would take those roles in person anyway. So you know, it's adapting to the different medium.	**Link to way of being 2** Delegating responsibilities
Skyler Ridewood 1:42:47 That's a great point. And I've I've read that in literature as well. A lot of art therapists and arts practitioners are making sure that the online setting that they have someone who's they call it a mediator, someone	

who's watching the group, while the other person is kind of leading the group. **Linda Vickers** 1:43:08 They also kind of what we've noticed, it's sort of oils, the wheels of communication, if you've got a dialogue already going on, invite people in, if people are feeling a bit shy or vulnerable, they're not jumping in this is sort of a bit of role modelling going on as long as you don't kind of rule the group. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:43:35 And that's the balance we talked about earlier, when we were talking about sharing skills, as well as a very nuanced kind of thing that we have to really balance, make sure you're not overpowering, but also allowing everybody to be themselves, be free and do as they would like. Emrys, Have you got anything to add on the online setting from your own work? **Emrys Mordin** 1:44:02 Um, I'm just trying to think of something that's Yeah, I guess, going back to accessibility, and, you know, learning as much as you can about how to make everyone feel welcoming spaces, and what that looks like for them. And just like	**Link to way of being 1** **Link to way of being 2** **Link to way of being 2** **Link to way of being 3** **Link to way of being 5**

reinforcing that, doing an accessibility audit is never a bad idea. That's my biggest contribution. Yeah. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:44:28 Absolutely. I found that that should also within my own work, I found that that should also include a tech technology audit. I had one specific example with one of our group members. And she, we were just about to the photo editing software where I shared how to use the photo editing software and then the hope was that they would go forth and do that on their own work. But as I was giving the tutorial one of my participants found out, oh, my computer, it doesn't, it can't run the photo editing software. And that was probably the biggest failure throughout the group was that she was excluded because of this technological barrier. And from from the distance, there was no lot that I could actually do. I tried my best to help her, but like these things kind of need to be done before the workshop. **Emrys Mordin** 1:45:27 Yeah, yes, absolutely. Absolutely. It's tricky when things come up throughout	**Link to way of being 5**

workshops, and you're not, you know, prepared properly from an accessibility point of view. That's tech or, you know, live captions or anything like that. So, yeah, yeah, I totally get that. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:45:44 Live captions. a very good point. **Emrys Mordin** 1:45:47 Yeah, zoom actually offers free ones now, like automated ones, you can turn them on in your settings. They're great. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:45:54 Thanks. I had no idea. 1:45:58 Yeah, no worries. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:46:00 Okay. Does anybody have any last words then before we end off? **Ursula Kelly** 1:46:08 I think there's something really, really something to be said about spontaneity with online sessions. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:46:19 I like go on going sorry.	**Link to way of being 3**

Ursula Kelly 1:46:22 I just feel like because we have to be so much more prepared and thinking about, like troubleshooting beforehand. If it was to happen in person, I feel like maybe just because it's, it's more familiar, but the reaction time will be a bit quicker. But when something goes askew online, and this is just purely from my experience Im like hhhhaaa. Yeah, so everything has to be so prepared sending out materials beforehand, there's a lot less space for spontaneity, because everything has to be so planned. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:47:01 I think you're totally right there. I think within the theme of structural freedom that I shared earlier, that that's kind of the problem with the structure is it can limit the spontaneity so it's a really difficult balence. **Emrys Mordin** 1:47:15 I think overall, like online group working is just a lot harder. I mean, it is a lot more accessible to quite a few people. Sorry, my dogs are in the background. It's a you know, it can be a lot more accessible in some ways	

for people, but to facilitate and to organise and to manage, it's definitely a lot more difficult. And I it's just because it's not something we're not used to, you know, we've had like, a lot of years of, you know, face to face social contacts and being used to how that works. But we've had a few years to get used to zoom and then bam, we've had 18 months completely online. So it's, it's just generally a bit more difficult. I really think it's okay to acknowledge that there's been a lot of pressure on people to get it right, throughout the last 18 months, and it's okay to not. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:48:09 that's that's absolutely true. And I think leading these groups, something I keep seeing in the literature is that you've also got to really focus on your own wellbeing while doing these things, and make sure you don't take it too much to heart when it goes wrong. I guess, because it will. **Emrys Mordin** 1:48:26 Yeah, because when you do something at a physical space, it's easier to leave it behind. But you've always got your laptop or your computer. You're working usually from home, you know, it's it's a lot harder to just	

be able to go Okay, this is my time now. So, yeah, for sure. **Ursula Kelly** 1:48:44 It's also easier to hide behind somebody else's shoulders when you're on screen. Everybody is there. **Emrys Mordin** 1:48:50 Yeah, totally. **Skyler Ridewood** 1:48:54 Yeah. It's like when you're taking when you're the ones speaking on zoom, it's like you're on stage because it makes your screen huge. And yeah. Okay. That's been really lovely guys. And we're almost at the time. I was surprised I finished on time and I'm really glad I did. But I just want to thank you all very, very much because this is going to finish my thesis have been a big worry for almost three, four months. So thank you so much for coming. Thanks, guys. extremely grateful. Cheers. Thanks, everyone. Bye bye. Cheers.	