

Creative Booklet: Art



You're not Alone

Encouraging and supporting young people
in their engagement with creativity as a self-help tool.



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Introduction

About 'You're Not Alone'

You're not Alone is an online wellbeing resource formed in Sunderland as part of the Young People's Project at Washington Mind. Our purpose is to support and encourage young people in their engagement with creativity as a self-help tool, especially when experiencing loneliness.

We want to celebrate the strength of young people by recognising the difficult conditions they are currently experiencing, by acknowledging everyone's individual experiences of loneliness and showcasing how resourceful they truly are.

Creativity and Wellbeing

Expressing yourself through creative mediums can be used as a distraction tool, to help contemplate our thoughts and feelings, and as a means of self-development.

Creativity is uniqueness, inventiveness, and originality. That's why being creative can be so useful as a self-help tool, it's unique to you, invented by you and original; it's yours.

The aim of this booklet...

Each activity will present you with a different ways of using art to cope with adverse feelings such as loneliness. From this, we hope that you may find a way of using art as a self-help tool.

How they fit the recovery curriculum...

These activities can help you re-building relationships, understanding more about yourselves and your feelings (especially around the current pandemic), and in understanding what has happened.

Task 1: What do you see?

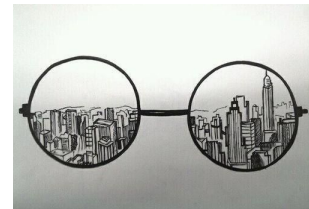
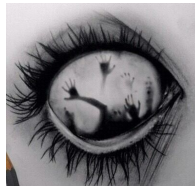
What you will need:

- A pencil
- A piece of paper
- Coloured pencils/pens (optional)

Goal: the goal of this activity is to help you realize how your experiences in life may be different from the experiences of others, and how that has different effects on our mental health.

Step-by Step:

1. Firstly, it would be helpful to write down all the things that you 'see' in life e.g. your feelings, thoughts, experiences etc.
2. After this, you should then try to illustrate these feelings through your own eyes, trying to express your thoughts and feelings through drawing/art.
3. If you feel comfortable, you could use this drawing to start a discussion with others to explain what you are trying to illustrate, and find out what others may 'see'.



Task 2: Meditative Painting

What you will need:

- Coloured paints (or pens)
- Paint brushes
- A piece of paper

Goal: The goal of this activity is to create a body-mind connection, letting out feelings through your painting. The aim is to relax and help to understand your emotions

Step-by Step:

1. First, you should take a minute or two to really think what emotions you are experiencing, and reflect on how you are feeling.
2. Then, choose from your colours/paints a selection of colours that you think represent your feelings.
3. Try and imagine each brush stroke as letting out your feelings, and really concentrate on your feelings and emotions during the activity.
4. OPTIONAL – calming, mindfulness music could be played in the background.



EXAMPLES: <https://doodletherapy.blogspot.com/2011/07/creative-stress-relief-meditative.html>

Task 3: Mountain and Valley

What you will need:

Pens or pencils
Paper

Step-by Step:

1. First, draw a quick sketch of a valley with two mountains either side.
2. You should use the mountains in the image to illustrate high points in your life e.g. times of happiness. You should use the valley to illustrate a low point in your life e.g. A time of loneliness or upset.
3. You can then try to illustrate how you could make a 'bridge' between the mountains to avoid or make easier the low point you experienced (e.g. any coping mechanisms you may have used). It would also be helpful to explore 'barriers' to crossing the bridge.



EXAMPLES: <https://arttherapytechniques.blogspot.com/2010/10/september-and-october-art-therapy-tasks.html>

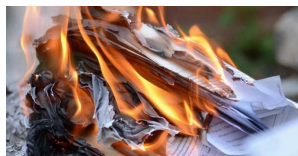
Task 4: Release

What you will need:

Pencil or pens
paper

Step-by Step:

1. You have the option to either create an image expressing negative emotions you would like to release, or positive emotions you would like to give out (whichever you feel will benefit you the most).
2. The image can then be either destroyed or 'put away', in whatever method the you feel would be beneficial e.g. shredded, teared up, put into a fire, put in a box and stored away etc.



EXAMPLES: <https://www.childline.org.uk/toolbox/games/balloon/>

Goal: The goal of this activity is to understand how the highs and lows in our lives make us who we are. Also, to self-reflect on times we have felt lonely and upset and discover ways we could cope with similar feelings in the future.

Goal: The goal of this activity is to allow you to have the cathartic experience of 'releasing' your negative emotions, or 'sending out' positive ones.

Task 5: Visual Autobiography

Goal: The goal of this activity is to try and tell your life story in the form of art

What you will need:

Pens or pencils
Paper

Step-by Step:

1. Firstly, you could write down what you would like your 'autobiography' to include. This can be things like what is important to you, things you enjoy, things you dislike, any accomplishments etc. Whatever you think is important to include.
2. The things included in the piece of art could relate to your past, present or future.
3. You can then try and represent your 'autobiography' in the form of art, in whichever way you want! Its yours!



EXAMPLES: <https://mskuksclass.weebly.com/all-about-me-visual-autobiography-unit.html>

Task 6: Mind Mapping

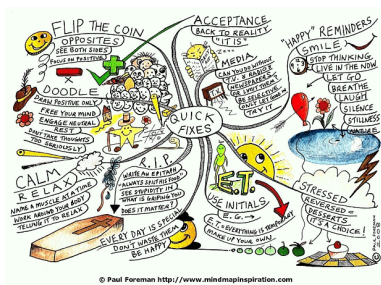
Goal: The goal of this activity is to understand how your mind works, understand your thinking patterns and try to understand your behaviours.

What you will need:

Pens or pencils
Paper

Step-by Step:

1. Write down your thoughts or feelings on to a piece of paper.
2. Use the 'mind map' method, putting your feelings or thoughts in the middle, and work backwards trying to understand your feelings.
3. You could also include any behaviours that may be in response to certain thoughts and feelings, and try to understand the thinking patterns that cause these behaviours.



EXAMPLES: <http://www.mindmapinspiration.com/why-attach-to-a-thought/>

Thank you for taking part! We hope this has helped!

Feedback!!!

We would love to hear how you found this activity book. It would be great to know whether this was something any of you have found this helpful! If you have had a go at some of the activities and found them beneficial, we'd love pictures of the artwork you have produced. Any artwork sent in will have the chance to be published on our online blog (as long as you want it too!).

Check out our blog at.... www.yourenotalonewm.com

How to get involved...

If you have found this beneficial and would like to see what else we have to offer, visit our website and follow our social media pages to keep up to date!



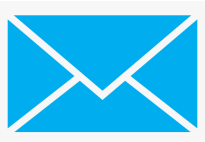
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