Colourful Change Workshop

Learning objectives

- Raise awareness about mental health.
- Encouragement and development of reflective practices.
- Promoting self-expression.
- Fostering empathy.
- Developing coping skills.
- Exploring self-discovery.

Participants

The activity consist of two parts (individual / in a group) and can be performed by **people from 14+**. It is a very beneficial method not only for youngsters, but other age groups too. Colourful Change workshop bonds the group on deeper level connecting creativity, helping to express present emotion and what is hidden in our subconscious. The ideal group size would be **15-20 participants**.

Needed tools and resources

- Large A3 sheet of paper.
- Watercolours, gouache, markers, crayons, or coloured pencils.

Duration of the workshop

The duration of the activity can be dependent on the number of participants, but approximately it would take up to **1 – 1.5 hours** overall.

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Description of the workshop

1 Energiser (up to 5 min): Kick off the session with an energising and engaging game before diving into the workshop.

Example: Ask participants to stand in a circle, ensuring everyone can see and hear each other clearly.
The moderator stands in the middle of the circle.
Explain the rules of the game: the moderator will say out loud nouns like “sun”, “lemon” and points to a participant that has to quickly say the colour of that word (if “sun” – the response – “yellow”). Encourage participants to respond as quickly as possible without extended pauses. If someone hesitates for too long, they are out of the game for that round.

2 Warm-up (up to 10 min)

Example:

Colours: provide participants with colourful sheets and say out loud emotions and on each emotion ask the participants to pick and raise a certain colour sheet that resonates with them.

3 Colourful Changes

Activity: Introduce the method for the group:

- Provide each group with a large A3 sheet of paper and a set of watercolours, gouache markers, crayons, or coloured pencils.

- Explain to the groups that they will be working in two-part workshop: individually they will need to draw a circle, keeping in mind a certain topics like depression, eating disorders, anxiety and try to choose a colour for that topic.

Afterwards, divide the participants into small groups of 4-5 people, depending on the size of your overall group. Each group will create a collaborative drawing in the silence or with background music without lyrics on a selected mental health topic. The drawing can be done as an abstract design, a scene, or something artistic. Let them express themselves via colours by feeling what another person just painted.

- Encourage participants to take turns adding to the drawing, with each person contributing a small section at a time. They can build upon each other’s ideas, blend different styles, and experiment with different colours and shapes.

- Set a time limit for each activity (e.g., 1st – up to 10 minutes, 2nd up to 15-20 minutes) to keep the energy high and the momentum flowing.

- As the groups work on their drawings, facilitator should walk around, and offer encouragement, but avoid interfering with their creative process. Let them explore and experiment freely.

- Once the time is up, invite each group to share their completed drawing with the rest of the participants. Encourage them to explain their inspiration, creative decisions, and any challenges they faced along the way. And what emotions they felt during that process.

- Finally, display the drawings around the room.

4 Debriefing (up to 15 min)

Firstly, start by asking participants to reflect on the process of creating a personal and the collaborative drawing. Encourage them to share their thoughts on how they felt working together as a group and individually, what they enjoyed about the activities, and any challenges they encountered along the way.

Secondly, invite participants to share any insights, observations they gained from the experience or discoveries about their own creative process and emotional background.

Thirdly, take a moment to express appreciation for everyone's contributions to the activity. Encourage participants to offer feedback on the debriefing process itself, including any suggestions for improvement or areas they found particularly valuable.

Finally, offer some closing thoughts to summarise the key takeaways from the activity and the debriefing discussion. Encourage participants to carry these insights forward and apply them in future collaborations and creative endeavours.