



Magic Carpet Open Studio Group (formerly Transitions), supported by the Self Heal Association September 2017

This is a follow on evaluation from the one submitted to the Self Heal Association in September 2016. The earlier evaluation is available if required. This document focuses on the facts and effects of the Open Studio group on the participants who attend.

History

In late 2014 we asked the Self Heal Association to support a new group over the next three years. The application was submitted following conversations with retiring Arts Therapist and Self Heal board member Malcolm Learmonth. It was suggested there were a number of attendees of former NHS psychological services who would benefit from such a group, having graduated from regular art therapy input.

We wanted to have the ambitious aim of empowering the group to develop personal and practical resources' so that at some point they may possibly take a greater step towards an independent creative practice and/or become less dependent on supported services.

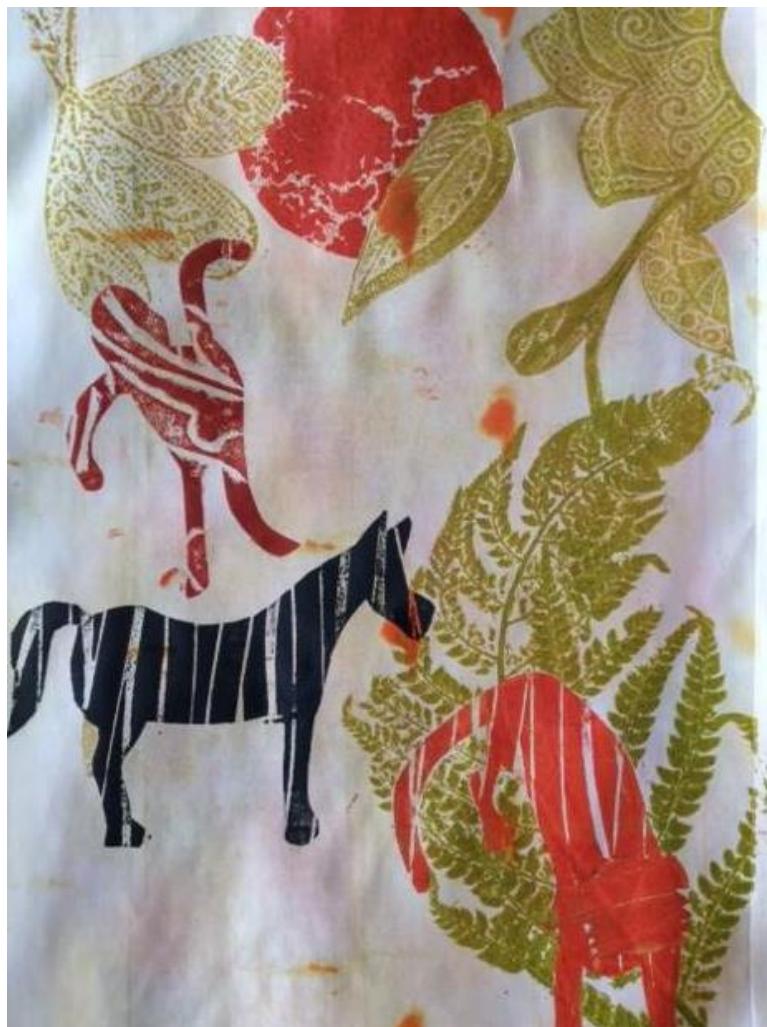
The initial stage of Transitions employed an arts therapist who recently left the NHS psychological services as it was felt in the initial conversations with ML that this would be crucial in involving those participants who previously attended the Briars.

We proposed a three-year project with a tapering off from art therapy support in year three to encourage greater independence and reliance on the collective and personal skills of the group.

In 2016 we renamed the group 'Open Studio', our workers supported them to take on their own projects. In addition we have regular skills sessions as requested by the participants, to date these have been printmaking based, collagraphs, monoprints, simple sculpture and tie-dying.

Overall we have had 31 individuals who have tried the group, at the moment (Sept 2017) those that left did so for the following reasons; family/caring commitments, poor physical health, poor mental health or simply the group wasn't right for them at this point in time.

There are 13 participants who currently attend once a month or more. We have regular enquiries regarding new people coming along to the group.



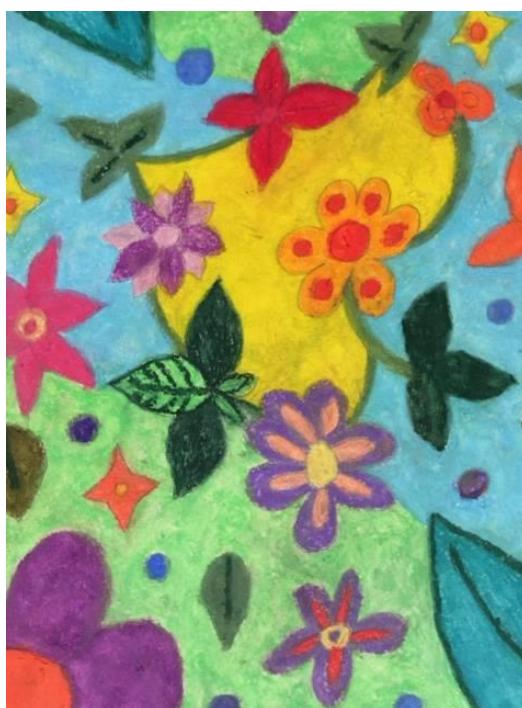
Structure of the group.

Initially the group is set up as an art school model with participants creating art work they had brought along or were making in the session. This model has worked successfully with Magic Carpet in the past, resulting in participants who were inspired to be creative outside of the context of the studio. Materials, refreshments, arts books and inspiration were provided as is the knowledge and expertise of the creative leaders, support staff and volunteers.

In early discussions with group members it became apparent that although the group generally valued the creative freedom and the opportunities to share with other members of the group their artwork, they would like more support. We introduced occasional skills sessions, printmaking, jewellery making, collage, casting and drawing. These have proved inspirational to participants.

Referrals and new members

We have had new referrals over the last 12 months (to September 2017) from community teams, the Briars. enabling services, individuals and family members that know of Magic Carpet.



Evaluation

We have tried different methodologies for our second evaluation, and we used the Warwick Edinburgh scale as a starting point to assess whether our project has made any changes to their wellbeing. We intend to do this again towards the end of the project and assess what changes are made individually and across the project.

On the 8th June 2017 we did our first WEMBS evaluation and 3 people agreed to complete the form. Since then 4 more new participants have also completed an initial evaluation. For the second WEMBS evaluation on the 7th September only 3 participants from a total of 5 who had completed initial evaluations were present. Two out of the 3 participants missed out a question making their completed forms invalid. The one correctly completed form had a score of 29 as opposed to the first which was 36. The person completing it said they had had a bad week.

This we believe highlights the difficulty of evaluating a small number of participants. What is interesting is that from the 7 completed initial WEMBS evaluations the mean score is 41. If this is compared to the figure in 'Table 7: Key UK Population Norms - WEMBS English adults Health Survey for England (Ages 16 years +)' for both men and women the mean score is 50.9.

This is taken from WEMBS user guide - Version 2 May 2015. It can therefore be said that the participants in the Open Studio have a WEMBS score well below that of the normal UK population. It is hoped by repeating the WEMBS every 3 months over the coming year a more substantial number of WEMBS scores can be obtained.

	Respondents							
	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7	
Have you ever attended an art group before?	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	71%
Do you participate in other groups?	Y	-	N	N	-	Y	N	40%
	The responses below are on a scale of 1 – 6 1 being Not at All/Easy and 6 being extremely							
Do you have any worries about attending?	3	2	3	1	2	1	1	29%
How easy do you find it to concentrate?	2	3	1	3	2.5	3	3	43%
How easy do you find it to meet people?	3	3	1	3	1.5	2	3	43%
How easy do you find it to solve problems?	2.5	3	2	3	1	2	3	57%

Date of Assessment 8th June 2017

	Respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3	Respondent 4	Respondent 5	Respondent 6	06/07/2017
	The responses below are on a scale of 1 – 6, 1 being Not at All and 6 being Enthusiastic.						
How keen would you be to join another art group?	-	6	1	2	3.5	6	60%
How keen would you be to join another type of group?	-	5	-	3	2.5	6	50%
How was your concentration in this group?	6	4.5	6	3	3	6	67%
Do you feel you have learnt any useful skills?	6	2	6	3.4	2.5	5.5	50%
Have you gained any of the benefits you were hoping to make by attending this art group?	6?	5	-	5	4.5	5	100%
Have you enjoyed the course?	6?	5.5	6	5.5	4	6	100%

Following training on another Magic Carpet project with Karen Huckvale we have used questionnaires one at the start of a period and one at the end.
The question sheets are in the Appendix.

We used a Likert scale for the questionnaires with our participants using a line on which they could mark their reaction to a number of points.

On the register for the Open Studio there are 19 people of which 8 currently regularly attend the group.

There are 12 people who have filled out referral forms - 6 out of 12 have anxiety or depression. The other mental health conditions include Bi Polar, Dissociative Identity disorder, PTSD, Schizophrenia and Cerebral Palsy. Nine out of 12 are female.

Over the past year one regular participant has developed diabetes and is unable to attend at the moment, one is no longer able to attend due to deterioration in her physical and mental health and one has moved on to further education.

First Evaluation (Pre)

71% of participants had attended an art group before

40% participate in other groups

29% have worries about attending the group

43% find it easy to concentrate

43% find it easy to meet people

57% find it fairly easy to solve problems

Second Evaluation (Post)

60% of participants would be keen to join another art group (Up by 20%)

50% of participants would be keen to join another type of group (Up by 10%)

67% of participants felt their concentration very good in this group (some of the time) (Up by 24%)

50% felt they had learnt useful skills

100% felt they had gained some of the benefits they had hoped to make by attending this art group.

100% have enjoyed the course.

Participants biggest worries about coming to the group are:

'Anxiety coming into town and on bus home.'
'Having to concentrate'
'If there is somebody new, I have not met before'
'Coping with being in a group situation'

When asked what 3 benefits participants would like to see as a result of attending this art group the most common responses were

'Distraction from negative thoughts, interact with others, enjoy - improve confidence.'
'Distraction from endless thoughts, meeting other people and socialising, 'build on my artistic skills'
'Have structure to week'
'Learning more about art techniques and visiting museum'

When asked if they have gained some benefits and if they would like to make a note of them some of the responses were:

'Socialising and communication.'

'Just getting here is a really big effort and achievement.'

'Learning to print.'

'Painting and learning about it.'

'Meeting new people, having space for art.'

Participants who have left over the last 12 months

We have had one participant who left over this period, she told us she enjoyed the group enormously but was finding it difficult to make time in her life for the group. Many participants have irregular attendance due to their health issues.

Summary

This evaluation looks at the last 12 months of the project. We recognise that this group is just one activity that a participant does during the week, but from talking to participants whom Magic Carpet has known for several years we know that when they have been unable to socialise because of their health, often Magic Carpet is a project they feel comfortable returning too.

The Warwick Edinburgh results demonstrate marks below the UK national average. The figures in the 'Likert' questionnaires clearly show an increase in confidence and willingness to try new activities, which we understand to be is a response to the importance of this group in the participant's life. We have introduced participants to short term projects that we have secured funding such as the Exeter Involve 'trips' group and also to 'Out and About' which included visits to local artists studios and well and painting outside.

Over the last 12-month period the group has made 3 visits to exhibitions at the RAMM which generates much enjoyment and discussion. It also enables participants to gain confidence in visiting the museum which some have never visited before or not for many years. It is a resource, which a few participants now feel comfortable accessing on their own

There are several friendships which have developed amongst participants which provides another layer of support and is very valuable considering the isolating nature of poor mental health.

Over the last year of the project we will appoint an independent consultant to evaluate Open studio for us.

Robert Wynne and Claire Taylor October 2017

Appendices. Evaluation Pre and Post

Warwick Edinburgh Scale Questions

STATEMENTS	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
I've been feeling optimistic about the future					
I've been feeling useful					
I've been feeling relaxed					
I've been feeling interested in other people					
I've had energy to spare					
I've been dealing with problems well					
I've been thinking clearly					
I've been feeling good about myself					
I've been feeling close to other people					
I've been feeling confident					
I've been able to make up my own mind about things					
I've been feeling loved					
I've been interested in new things					
I've been feeling cheerful					



Magic Carpet Art Group Evaluation

Date: _____

We would appreciate your time in completing the questions below. No need to identify yourself unless you want to or are asking a question you would like answered.

Have you ever attended an art group before? Yes No

Are you an active participant in any other group activities? (e.g. cricket, choir, knitting circle) Yes No

If so, how many and which is your favourite?

Are these mostly weekly, monthly or every 6 months?

If not, would you like to attend a group, and if so what?

Do you have any worries about coming to this art group? (*Please place an X on the line where it feels right for you*)

None ————— Loads
At all Some a bit lots

If so what is your biggest worry?

Would you like to talk to us about this? Yes No

How easy do you find it to:

Concentrate

Not at ————— Extremely
All Easy Quite Fairly Very lots

Meet people

Not at ————— Extremely
All Easy Quite Fairly Very lots

Solve problems

Not at ————— Extremely
All Easy Quite Fairly Very lots

What 3 benefits would you like to see as a result of attending this art group? (e.g. new skills like painting, drawing; meeting people, sense of achievement, distraction from everyday life, problem solving etc.)

Put a star by the one which is most important to you.

How might you know if any of these benefits have happened?

Thank you very much from the Magic Carpet Team



Magic Carpet Art Group Evaluation

Date: _____

Please place an X where it feels right for you on the scales. No need to identify yourself unless you want to or are asking a question you would like answered.

How keen would you be to join another art group?

Enthusiastic _____ Not at all

How keen would you be to join another type of group?

Enthusiastic _____ Not at all

How was your concentration in this group?

Really good _____ Quite difficult
(some of the time) (all of the time)

Do you feel you have learnt any useful new skills??

None _____ Several

What are you most pleased with?

Have you gained any of the benefits you were hoping to make by attending this art group

All _____ None

If you have gained some benefits, would you like to note them here?

Have you enjoyed the course?

Not at all _____ Very Much

What was best, what could be better and do you have any suggestions?

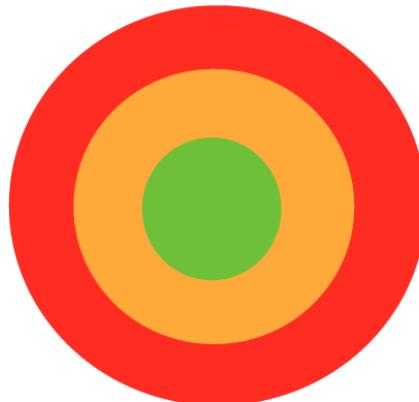


Magic Carpet Art Group Evaluation

Date: _____

We would appreciate your time in completing the questions below.

Draw a stick man  and place it how you feel you are at the moment in the circles



Have you ever attended another art group before? Yes No

Are you an participant in any other group activities? Yes No

Are these every: week; month; 6 months?

Below, please place an X on the line where it feels right for you

Do you have any worries about coming to this art group?

Loads of worries None at all

How easy do you find it to concentrate?

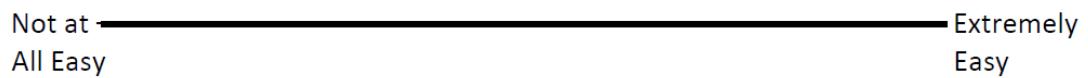
Not at Extremely
All Easy Easy

How easy do you find it to meet people?

Not at Extremely
All Easy Easy

PTO...

Do you find it easy to solve problems?



What benefits would you like to see as a result of attending this art group?

Thank you very much from the Magic Carpet Team