METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES

CREATE A PUPPET, CREATE YOURSELF
THEATRE FOR SOCIAL INTEGRATION

create a puppet
create yourself

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THE PROJECT

1. BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE 'CC CREATE A PUPPET, CREATE YOURSELF - THEATRE FOR SOCIAL INTEGRATION' PROJECT

The CC Project aims to develop, test and disseminate widely an innovative methodology based on creative approaches in adult education. It is also focused on the needs of disadvantaged adult learners with a view to training social and civic competences.

The choice of theatre and, specifically puppetry art was made based on the long-standing experience of Teatr Grodzki in using this specific art form in education and therapy. Even though puppet theatre is usually perceived as something childish, it can serve as a very efficient and attractive way of teaching adult students how to discover the aptitudes and abilities needed for a true social adaptation.

2. THE PARTNERSHIP

There are five European organisations involved in the CC Project. They are:

Bielskie Stowarzyszenie Artystyczne TEATR GRODZKI
Based in Bielsko-Biała, Poland
www.teatrgrodzki.pl
jolanta@teatrgrodzki.pl

CITIZENS THEATRE
Based in Glasgow, Scotland
www.citz.co.uk
learning@citz.co.uk

YOUTH CENTRE BABILONAS
Based in Vilnius, Lithuania
www.centrasbabilonas.lt
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CSC DANILO DOLCI
Based in Palermo, Italy
www.danilodolci.org
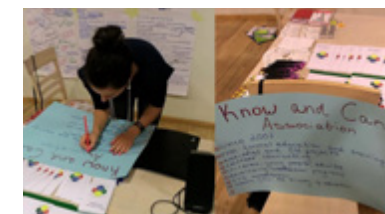presidente@danilodolci.org

KNOW AND CAN ASSOCIATION
Based in Sofia, Bulgaria
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3. INTRODUCTION TO THE METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES

These guidelines have been created to encourage and support adult educators in using puppetry art with groups of vulnerable and/or socially excluded adults. The guidelines aim to provide a clear, structured outline on how to plan and deliver puppetry art workshops with the intention of addressing social exclusion. In addition, the guidelines aim to answer questions about the described techniques and how they should be implemented for maximum impact.

4. TARGET GROUPS

The target groups for all the activities outlined within this document are adults who are considered vulnerable and/or socially excluded. During this project, the five partner organisations have carried out pilot workshops to test the methodology and to see how that methodology may need to be developed or amended, depending on the specific needs of the various target groups that take part. Groups that were involved in the Pilot Workshop Programme include:

- A group of adults who were in recovery from drug and alcohol dependency
- A group of male prisoners
- A group of adults who attended a psychiatric hospital
- A group of long-term unemployed adults who attended a Social Integration Centre
- A group of refugees and asylum seekers
- A group of retired, unemployed women

This is just a selection of the various groups that participated in the Pilot Workshop Programme. All these target groups, in different ways, include socially excluded and vulnerable adults.

There will soon be an eCompendium available here:

http://ccproject.art/publications/

The eCompendium will include case studies and information on how the CC methodology was implemented and developed with the various Pilot Groups. This document will be available in 2019.
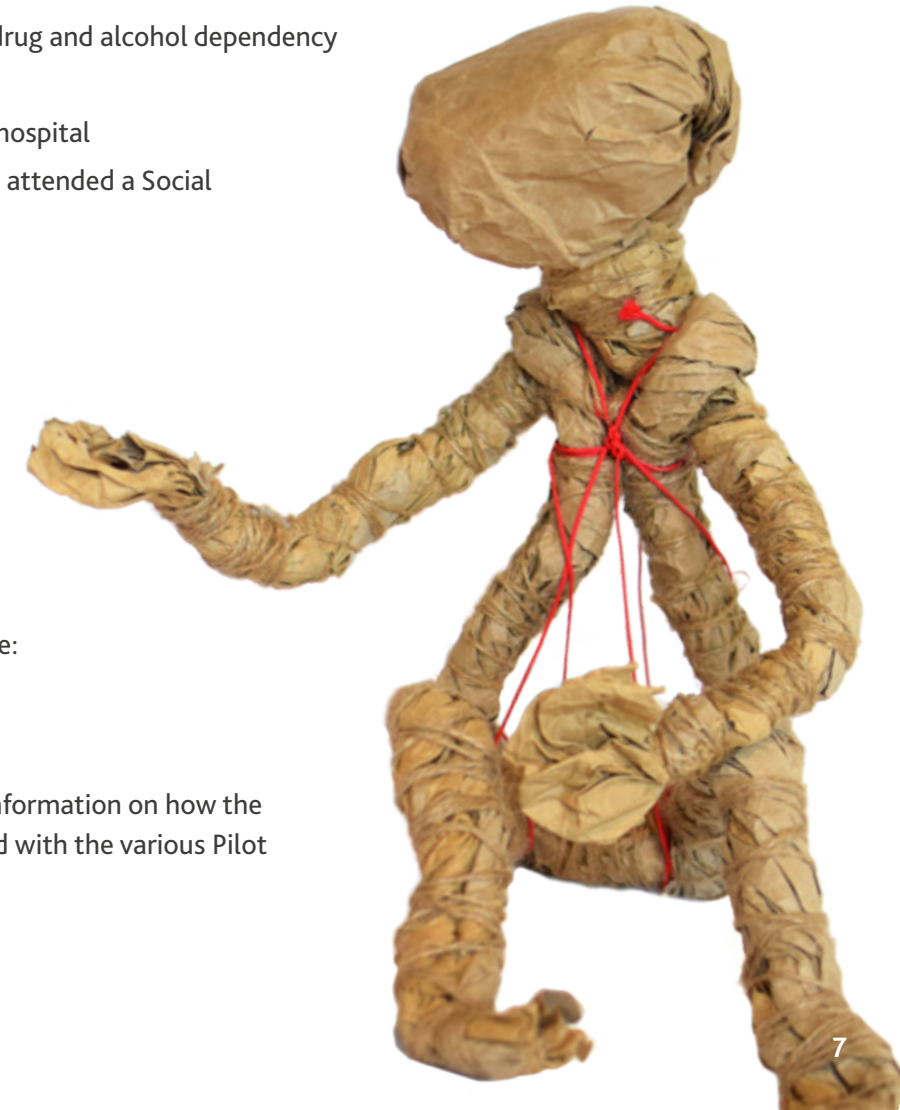
5. EDUCATORS

These guidelines can be used by adult educators who work with any of the types of groups listed on the previous page or any other group of vulnerable or socially excluded adults.

The guidelines have been created specifically to be a useful instruction manual, with a comprehensive breakdown of activities and techniques. They also include suggestions for timings, space and materials required to successfully embed puppetry art into the repertoire of an adult educator.

METHODOLOGY

6. GLASGOW TRAINING COURSE

In December 2017 a training week was organised for the five participating organisations. Educators from Poland, Lithuania, Italy, Scotland and Bulgaria travelled to Glasgow to undertake an intensive training programme, led by Maria Schejbal from Teatr Grodzki.

In advance of the training course, each organisation completed a Needs Analysis questionnaire which, amongst other information, provided a history of puppetry in their own country.

Across all five European countries there was a rich history of puppetry and all had many professional puppet theatre companies practicing today. However, it is evident that puppetry is still something which is aimed mainly at children and not seen as being as 'high-brow' as many other types of theatre.

The full Needs Analysis Report can be found here:

http://ccproject.art/publications/

The training week in Glasgow aimed to prepare the adult educators who would subsequently be delivering the Pilot Workshops to groups of vulnerable adults. The training was practical and, as well as learning the various techniques, the participants were encouraged to reflect on what was being taught and on how they felt as participants.

7. STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO THE ACTIVITIES COVERED DURING THE TRAINING WEEK

ACTIVITY 1 - MATERIALS WAITING FOR OUR INTERVENTION
(30 MINUTES/COLLECTIVELY)

All participants sit in a circle surrounding a collection of different materials previously arranged by the trainer. These are, for instance: a roll of brown paper and a single sheet crumpled up, a few pairs of scissors, a few spools of string (different colours), some old newspapers, coloured crepe paper.

The setting of the objects should represent some kind of order and express different inter-linkages and power relations. For example, the roll of paper is placed centrally, while the single sheet lies on the side and scissors are about to cut it. The newspapers form a chaotic pile and spools of string stand in a regular double line.

The participants are asked to share their impressions on the composition of objects. Some supporting questions might be helpful: What is happening here? Are these seemingly still objects acting somehow? Is it possible to "translate" this image into a story? What does it tell us? What messages and feelings do we get from it? How do the colours and shapes and relationships between individual objects influence the meaning of the whole image?

NOTES

This exercise is a warm-up for working with objects and learning about the basic rules of visual narration. It also contributes to group-building processes and helps participants to get used to expressing themselves openly and to working together. For some people it might be a difficult task, if they are fixated on purely verbal communication and lack abstract thinking skills. However, it is worth making the effort to draw people`s attention to the fact that different ways of conveying messages, also with no words, are available, both in theatre and daily life.

ACTIVITY 2 - PUPPET MAKING ADVENTURE
(2 HOURS /INDIVIDUALLY)

The materials introduced through the previous exercise will now be used for puppet creation. The instructor leads the group through all stages of the process. The instructor builds the paper figure and explains what should be done and how.

Each participant needs two sheets of paper (100 x 130cm each), a newspaper and some string to make the basic construction.

First, we need to make the paper more flexible and softer by crumpling and crushing it, so that it becomes similar in texture to fabric – soft and flexible. We do it with the first sheet of paper.

Next, we cut or tear it in half length-wise. We form the shape of a head (a ball) using one half of a paper sheet (or newspapers which we cover with one half of a paper sheet). We tie a string around the puppet's 'neck'. The rest of the paper below the neck should be twisted up into two arms. All parts must be tied up with string.

The same must be done with two other long pieces of paper which will be used for the torso (so, now the second sheet of the paper should also be crushed and crumpled and cut in half). Two halves of the paper sheet should be twisted. One piece should be bent in half and wrapped around one of the puppet's shoulders. Then the procedure needs to be repeated and the two pieces should be joined and tied up with string at the top. The two pieces sticking down must then be joined together and tied up with string to form a circular shape.

ACTIVITY 2 - CONTINUED

Two other long pieces of paper, which will be used for legs, should be twisted up. Just like the torso, the legs must be bent in half, twisted and wrapped around with string. Thus, the basic structure of the puppet can be made.

An example of making (and animating) paper puppets can be found in the form of a learning path placed at the ARTES good practice platform:

http://artescommunity.eu/paper-puppets-in-action/

Also the film material and a training App showing how to make a puppet have been made available as a part of the COUNT ME IN TOO project:

http://www.cmi2.eu/pl/app_generator/app/82/

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJ5-Tsf65CA&feature=youtu.be

Now it`s time to ask our puppet an important question:

"WHO ARE YOU?"

This helps to make each figure a real character with some distinctive features, representing also the creator and his/her sensitivity, inner world and perception of life.

The participants should have some time (even half an hour?) to equip their own puppet with additional elements of its appearance (for instance funny hair or a dress). It should be a free exploration process in search for giving birth to a real personage. It is suggested not to draw facial features, since it usually has a caricatured effect.

NOTES

It often happens that workshop participants express resistance towards manual work (an, "I am not good at making things with my hands" attitude). However, in the case of this method, the task is, in a way, 'hidden'. The participants simply follow the instructor and the actions proposed are easy to perform, so in fact everyone can make the figure – a theatrical puppet on his/her own or with some help from the other group members.

During the training, the discussion started among participants about whether it would be better to present the whole process step by step at the beginning, so that everyone understood in advance what should be done. However, it seems that such an approach does not work. It would be rather discouraging for participants to try to capture and remember all steps of the creation process. They seem to be more relaxed and free when they do not think about what comes next.

Since some people are slower and find manual work more difficult than others, it is good to encourage those who are fast and skilful to support their colleagues and to show/explain what should be done if such need arises. Various types of paper and string may be used. The ones that work best are: brown (wrapping) paper and hemp string, but some people might be allergic to the latter. The trainees need to be pre-warned that paper can cut their skin easily. Therefore, it might be useful to wear thin protective gloves at the beginning (before crumpling the paper). Black gloves can be later used for the animation exercise and final 'performance'.

The whole process of puppet making is of significant importance for the CC methodology. It is a special phenomenon that most of the workshop participants feel truly connected to their puppets. This connection provides great potential for self-development processes, nourished by the artistic creation.

ACTIVITY 3 - REFLECTION CIRCLE
(30 MINUTES/ COLLECTIVELY)

The participants sit in a circle. They are asked to share feelings and reflections on the working process they have just gone through. There are different ways of facilitating such an exchange. Some ideas for sharing reflection are presented below but, in this case, it was simply talking and all the participants were eager to take part. The rule was set that everyone could say something if he/she felt it was important. There was no one specific question to be answered; the group was simply encouraged to share their experience.

NOTES

The summing-up session is of great significance for participants and their integration. They feel safe and more comfortable in the group, having a chance to express feelings and impressions, worries and satisfaction, needs and ideas for further joint work. On the other hand, some people would rather avoid personal expression, so the leader has to decide whether to let them stay silent or try to motivate them to speak. In some cases, subsidiary questions might be helpful, for instance:

Did you feel comfortable in this specific situation?

Was it difficult to create the puppet?

Were the instructions sufficient to perform the task?

Answering one of the above questions, even very briefly, can help those who are emotionally blocked or shy to become more open and to share thoughts during the next reflection sessions.

ACTIVITY 4 - DEGREES OF DIFFICULTY
(15 MINUTES/INDIVIDUALLY)

Participants stand in a row. On the other side of the room, facing the participants, is a row of chairs – one for each person. The trainer describes the tasks to be performed whilst also demonstrating them. Everyone should do the tasks at their own pace, ignoring the other participants.

Stage 1 - We walk up to our chairs, avoiding an imaginary obstacle half-way (for example, walking around or jumping over a puddle). We sit on a chair, in our minds we count to five, get up and go back to the start, remembering the obstacle in the middle of the road.

Stage 2 - Repeating all previous steps, this time having some object on our heads, like a newspaper or a piece of paper - we try to keep our balance, if an item drops, we pick it back up and we walk on.

Stage 3 - Repeating the previous two tasks, we add another: each participant makes their way to their chair and back with an object on their head, avoiding the obstacle twice. Each person then clearly announces what they've done that day - from waking up to this very moment.

The exercise can have a more complex structure if the leader or the participants themselves propose additional challenges.

NOTES

This exercise teaches concentration and discipline, helps to overcome discouragement, and deals with difficult situations.

In a practical way, this exercise allows the participants to experience the acquisition of new skills, and the persistent pursuit of an objective. This direct experience of effort and the repetition of increasingly difficult steps gives them some idea (on a tiny scale) of the challenges posed by working on a performance or in continuing their education. At the same time, it helps to conquer the fear of failure and it also provides a sense of success (participants are always able to successfully complete at least one small part of the task).

It is also a good physical warm-up and can be proposed at the beginning of the session or after a lunch break (as it was in this case).

It is important that participants choose for themselves the most suitable kind of movement. Also, they do not feel like they are being observed by the others all the time since everybody is busy with their own action.

ACTIVITY 5 - ANIMATION SKILLS
(1 HOUR/IN SUB-GROUPS)

The participants are divided into sub-groups of 4-5 members. One by one they play the role of a director, while the puppet they have created is animated by three other participant puppeteers. One of them animates right hand/arm and the head of the puppet. The second holds the torso and operates the left hand, and the third (in the middle, bent down or kneeling) is responsible for legs/feet. It`s the most comfortable to place the puppet on the table to avoid leaning over the performing space too much.

The director tells the puppeteers what the puppet should do step by step and what happens on stage. For instance: The character is lying and sleeping, breathing calmly. Suddenly the puppet springs out of 'bed' and looks around. It starts approaching the audience, creeping on tiptoes, etc.

The rule is that the actors use no words. However, sounds can appear (the sound of an alarm-clock for example). It might be helpful to specify the main theme for all animation exercises. In the case of the CC training course it was proposed that everybody would focus on the subject 'Beginning of the Day' while bringing the puppets to life. The role of the leader during this exercise is to visit each group and to give them hints and tips, without interfering with their work too much.

NOTES

For the participants, it is usually a very interesting experience to watch their puppet acting and being alive. In a practical way they learn about animation rules and discover the motor abilities of paper figures.

An especially important aspect of this part of the workshop process concerns cooperation and building trust, mutual understanding and willingness to look for the best solutions and to compromise. The actors have to cooperate closely and effectively in order to make the puppet obedient to their will.

ACTIVITY 6 - PRESENTATIONS & FEEDBACK
(2 HOURS/COLLECTIVELY)

After working in sub-groups and experimenting with the puppets, it`s time to share the results and findings with each other.

Each Director presents her/his little story acted out by the puppeteers to the rest of the group.

After each presentation the workshop leader asks the audience what they saw and how they understood the plot presented. Next, the creators of every puppet act explain what their aims and goals were and if the spectators got the right meaning from individual actions by the puppet. The audience can suggest some changes in the action to make it clearer and more understandable. The role of the leader as a discussion facilitator is important in this part.

Analysing the clarity of the story and also suggesting ideas for its improvement help the participants to understand better the complex nature of communication.

NOTES

It is a time-consuming process (in the case of the CC training course sixteen presentations had to be discussed) but it is really needed to close the first stage of the puppetry adventure. It gives participants the feeling that they have achieved something tangible in a short time. This practice is also of a high instructional value and a good peer learning experience.

ACTIVITY 7 - REFLECTION CIRCLE WITH SCARVES
(15 MINUTES/COLLECTIVELY)

All participants sit in a circle. The leader uses some coloured scarves (or shawls) to mark each stage of the process. While placing the chosen piece of fabric on the floor, he/she names the activity and reminds participants about the activities. The group should be encouraged to reflect on each exercise on a personal and professional level. Also, any doubts, questions and reservations should be discussed.

NOTES

Coloured scarves are very often used in psychodrama as they easily lend themselves to animation, and through their various parameters - size, colour and texture, indicate different content (a completely different feeling is evoked by a light delicate fabric in pastel colours than by a piece of thick, black material).

Other objects can also be used instead of scarves, such as pebbles of various shapes and sizes, soft toys, everyday objects, or simply pieces of brown paper shaped in a suitable way.

The use of visual presentation supports verbal communication and facilitates group reflection and the exchange of opinions. At the end of the discussion, the whole process is plain to see.

ACTIVITY 8 - TWO CHAIRS
(50 MINUTES/COLLECTIVELY)

All participants sit in a semi-circle. The leader sets two chairs on the stage. One of them, the comfortable chair, is a space of good feelings and positive reflection. The second chair should be placed upside down as a representation of everything which is/was disturbing, uncomfortable, problematic and difficult during the previous workshop.

The trainer is first to speak about important events and feelings, changing (as many times as necessary) from one chair to another. In this way the participants can understand the essence of the activity and are encouraged to try it for themselves. They should now, one person at a time, follow the trainer and come onto the stage and use both chairs to share their thoughts, feelings and reflections on anything they find important regarding the workshop process.

NOTES

It is a very good way of starting the day. It helps group members to focus on themselves and on their current needs. Simultaneously, it also serves as a warm-up to prepare the group for further work.

In the context of topics related to self-development, the leader can focus the participants' attention on the problems that are associated with different personal challenges.

This exercise particularly facilitates self-expression and self-discovery. That is why it is worth investing the time required to do it.

ACTIVITY 9 - PATH
(10 MINUTES/EXAMPLE BY THE LEADER)

The trainer acquaints the group with the rules of the exercise, in which colourful scarves or other items of varying shapes and colours are used. Again, it is best if the trainer is first to do the exercise. The idea is to lay out the scarves along an imaginary path that leads to a desired goal.

The example shown below is the work of Maria Schejbal (MS) done during the CC training course. The entire group actively collaborated with MS during the process, providing many useful and valuable suggestions.

MS picks up one scarf and explains what her goal is:

"I'd like to publish a collection of short tales I`ve been working on for a long time. But most of them are just drafted and need to be completed."

MS throws the scarf to mark the point corresponding to the fulfilment of this dream - far ahead, at the end of a long road. She does not quite know what to do next. She asks herself and the group how to approach this difficult task.

"I have ideas for eight or ten fables, but I find it difficult to write them down. There are too many urgent tasks to take care of. I simply never have time to write. It all seems just stupid."

The group starts asking questions. For example:

- What exactly do you have?

- What have you managed to write so far?

MS puts a few scarves at the beginning of her path and explains what they represent.

"The actual texts consist of just a few lines and only two stories are more elaborate. One is ready. But still, the idea of publishing the whole collection of stories, somehow, some time in the future seems not realistic. I am too busy with other things."

Someone gives a suggestion about a practical solution:

"Perhaps you could make a resolution that you will devote at least a few hours to working on your tales each week."

MS likes the idea and places a different scarf a little bit closer to the desired goal.

"This might work. Without being too ambitious, it

ACTIVITY 9 - PATH (CONTINUED)

...makes me more determined."

MS looks at the distance between her present position and the end of the path and again she gets discouraged.

"No, it is not going to happen. It is not realistic. It makes me frustrated. I can almost see this book, with a nice cover, but this is just a dream. Not reachable."

Another suggestion comes from the group.

"Maybe you should not think about the whole collection being published. It might be better to focus on something more realistic and within your reach now. For instance, you can try to finish two more tales, let`s say, by the end of next year."

MS agrees with such a solution which means in practice changing her goal. She takes away the scarf representing her original goal and places another one closer to her.

The struggle for a better understanding of the obstacles but also existing strengths was continued for another few minutes with group support and led to some important discoveries.

At the end MS went along her path to experience it not only mentally but also physically. After that, the scarves were removed and the group briefly summed up this exercise.

NOTES

'Path' can be especially useful in motivating change in a difficult life situation and breaking deadlock or a sense of failure, as well as directing participants towards specific educational and self-development challenges. In addition, it can also increase self-confidence and belief in one's own abilities. It helps participants to specify what exactly they need and expect, and what they lack to achieve a goal.

'Path' can be used in various forms and at different stages of group work. It can be used for specifying the tasks and challenges faced by participants, or as a summary and analysis of their progress.

The exercise can be helpful in professional and educational contexts, as well as in health assessment and measuring the progress of therapy. It is advisable that each participant in the group tries to make his or her own path, because the direct experience of this exercise gives a sense of strength and the motivation to undertake further action. The advantage of this exercise is the in-depth analysis of the factors that determine the existing situation and that can contribute to changing it.

In the case of the CC training course, this technique was also used for facilitating the elaboration of the scenarios to be performed by all four sub-groups.

ACTIVITY 10 – PATHS: TOWARDS THE SCENARIO
(1 HOUR/ IN SUB-GROUPS)

The participants go back to the sub-groups established during the previous workshop. They are invited to practice the technique and to create their own paths, one by one. Their final goal is to weave common topics and different problematic areas together into a plot.

It is suggested that each group will compose a scenario for a simple, yet meaningful, action on stage and will write it down. The focus should be on describing the plot in detail, scene by scene, as it was during the exercise meant for practicing animation skills on the first day. Such a scenario should first answer the questions: What exactly does the puppet do and what happens on stage? The group should jointly decide also about the number of puppets to be used (just one or more?), about the elements of the stage and where to perform.

NOTES

This exercise can contribute very effectively to the building of trust and emotional links between group members and help them to feel valued, because it gives the floor to everyone equally. However, it can be also a very difficult experience for participants since it requires a joint decision about choosing only some ideas and giving up the others. The members of each small group must be able to compromise and to reach a consensus. In some cases this might be impossible. At that point the intervention of the leader is needed.

ACTIVITY 11 – REFLECTION CIRCLE
(30 MINUTES/ COLLECTIVELY)

The same as it is described in Activity 3, page 16.

ACTIVITY 12 – WORKING ON THE THEATRICAL ETUDES
(1.5 HOURS/ IN SUB-GROUPS)

The participants continue working in sub-groups. Their goal is to implement the actions drafted in the scenario and find a suitable theatrical way of communicating a message to the audience.

It is good to remind the participants about the very first exercise in which they analysed the language of visual narration (see Activity 1, page 10 - 'Materials Waiting for our Intervention').

Now they have a chance to freely experiment with images and actions, searching for the most meaningful and clear solutions. At this stage the groups should work independently. However, the leader should always be available and ready to support them.

NOTES

This part of the workshop can be very exciting/rewarding and frustrating/ discouraging for participants. In fact, it is perfect teamwork training. Each group must make an effort to agree on common choices and find a way to cooperate effectively. Usually in each group there will be one or more dominant people who seek to impose their own point of view upon the other members. Support of the trainer might be needed to facilitate negotiations.

ACTIVITY 13 – PRESENTATIONS & FEEDBACK
(1.5 HOURS/COLLECTIVELY)

The same as it is described in Activity 6, page 22.

ACTIVITY 14 – REFLECTION CIRCLE WITH SCARVES
(15 MINUTES/COLLECTIVELY)

The same as it is described in Activity 3, page 16.

ACTIVITY 15 – WORKING ON THE THEATRICAL ETUDES
(1 HOUR/ IN SUB-GROUPS)

The same as it is described in Activity 12, page 29. Rehearsing and polishing the etudes.

ACTIVITY 16 – 'THEATRE' GROUP GAME
(30 MINUTES/ COLLECTIVELY)

Prior to this exercise, the leader marks the shape of a big square on the floor. It can be done with the use of scarves or long and narrow pieces of paper.

Participants work together to create an imaginary THEATRE inside the square. They have a moment to reflect on what role in theatre they want to play. They can become anyone or anything, for instance a director or lighting system, a script, an actress, a piece of dust, a stage fright, etc.

Creation of the theatre should start spontaneously - one of the volunteers assumes a pose which characterises the chosen role, then explains to the others what's happening. For example:

"I am a script, lying on the floor, forgotten by everybody, not needed anymore."

The next participant finds a place for himself in an appropriate position relative to the script and introduces himself:

"I am a spot light, moving around, going where they need me."

All members of the group, one by one, take their positions in the same way. When everyone has their place, the trainer asks everyone in a single sentence, or perhaps a single word, to describe how they feel. Then,

he/she gives the start signal for action. Everyone behaves according to their chosen role and interacts with the others.

During this improvised action the trainer takes the actors, one by one out of the square, so that they can observe "theatre" from the spectator`s perspective. After watching the action from outside for a while they go back to their roles.

Finally, the leader starts taking away the scarves – the sides of the square, and when they are gone, he/she stops the action.

NOTES

This activity teaches interaction with others, thus enhancing integration of the group. At the same time, it helps participants to discover their own uniqueness and individual place in the group. The exercise has a valuable cognitive component - it helps participants identify, define and reveal the emotions (positive and negative) associated with being in a group. This applies also to the broader context of social functioning in different situations and contexts (such as in a family environment or at work).

For some participants it can be a unique chance to take up the role which is opposite to their usual behaviour (anti-role). This can lead to important personal

discoveries and sometimes even to combating barriers and blocks. In psychodrama this phenomenon is called a 'surplus reality'.

The technique can be applied at all stages of the group process, though its function and meaning will change depending on the development of the group at the point where it is introduced.

Instead of creating a "theatre" the group can be invited to create a living organism or a town.

ACTIVITY 17 – REFLECTION CIRCLE
(30 MINUTES/ COLLECTIVELY)

The same as it is described in Activity 3, page 16.

ACTIVITY 18 – WORKING ON THE THEATRICAL ETUDES
(1 HOUR/ IN SUB-GROUPS)

The same as it is described in Activity 12, page 29: Rehearsing and polishing the etudes.

ACTIVITY 19 – PRESENTATIONS & FEEDBACK
(2 HOURS/COLLECTIVELY)

The same as it is described in Activity 6, page 22.

ACTIVITY 20 – 'CHAIRS-CHARACTERS' GROUP GAME
(1 HOUR/COLLECTIVELY & INDIVIDUALLY)

The participants sit in a semi-circle. The facilitator places one chair in front of them and proposes to create a personage out of it by adding different items/objects. Whoever wants to contribute to this joint act of creation can provide the evolving character with new attributes.

Everything can be used – pieces of cloth, shoes, bags, any found object. After a while, another chair is placed on stage, this time lying upside down on the floor. Again the group is encouraged to transform the chair into a character in the same way as before.

Finally, a third chair appears on stage, perhaps turned away from the two other chair-characters. Once more, the participants jointly create a personage using all the different materials that they can find in the room.

When the creation of all the figures is complete, the facilitator invites participants to analyse the image. First, the group reflects on the whole picture, talking about relations between individual personages and about the general character of the scene.

Next, the facilitator focuses participants' attention on each figure, one by one, asking what visual elements are the most and the least important about their look and expression. The following questions can be helpful:

What makes this figure look like a man or a woman or an animal?

Which elements can be taken away with no harm to the clarity of the image?

What details of the figure's appearance are essential for its identity?

Such thorough analysis of each individual character helps participants to understand the language of visual expression better.

Next, the participants work individually. They have 10 minutes to write down the stories which come to their mind in relation to the three characters created out of chairs. They should feel entirely free to weave different associations and ideas together into a plot. No suggestions regarding the form and style are given. As a result, a great variety of stories are created.

ACTIVITY 20 – CONTINUED

After 10 minutes, the facilitator places a chair next to the three figures and asks participants to come on stage one by one and read their stories aloud. Sometimes the stories are of a very personal nature, so some participants don't want to share them with the group. They should be allowed to keep them confidential if they prefer.

Here is an example of the narration written by one of the participants:

**Is the last train late again? Will it come? I'm tired, but happy... it was so nice to meet my old friends:)
I still feel happy - so many nice memories.**

Oh... that woman... so many bags... does she need any help?? Oh.... she is picking up the bottles... her face is so sad...

"Does anybody know anything about the train?"

"Excuse me, hello! Do you often leave from this station?"

The stranger turns around and looks at me really not friendly.... no answer... probably I should call a taxi.

The participants again gather in a circle around the three chairs/personages and discuss the whole working process. Everybody can reflect on personal experience and professional lessons learned. It is an important phase of the exercise since the members of the group exchange different points of view and ideas, thus learning from each other. At the end the participants jointly take all three figures to pieces.

The recording of this exercise was made as part of the ARTES project during the two workshop sessions implemented by Teatr Grodzki in Ireland on 22-25 November 2014, at the invitation of two organisations: ALâ – Adult Participatory Theatre, Arts and Education (Galway) and Clarecare (Ennis).

http://artescommunity.eu/theatre-of-objects-and-stories/

NOTES

This technique is very useful in stimulating participants` creativity and spontaneity. It brings fast results and satisfaction. Usually, the participants are astonished that they have created "something from nothing".

It is also a good way of inventing stories, which can be further developed and translated into theatrical language.

In the case of the CC training course, this exercise was used as kind of a relaxation technique before meeting the audience. The attention of participants was turned away from their theatrical etudes to let them 'rest' from rehearsing and keep distance from the upcoming performance.

ACTIVITY 21 – WORKING ON THE THEATRICAL ETUDES
(2 HOURS/ IN SUB-GROUPS)

The same as it is described above in Activity 12, page 29. Rehearsing and polishing the etudes.

ACTIVITY 22 – PRESENTATIONS (DRESS REHEARSAL) & FEEDBACK
(30 MINUTES/COLLECTIVELY)

The same as it is described in Activity 6, page 22. Actors performed wearing black clothes and gloves and comments from the rest of the group resulted in only minor amendments to the scenes.

ACTIVITY 23 – MEETING THE AUDIENCE

Four etudes were presented to the audience.

"*The audience for the performance comprised of people from the Citizens Theatre Community Collective. This group of adults usually meets on a Friday afternoon. The group is made up of around 20 people from across the community, many of whom are socially isolated for a number of reasons. Members might have a long-term health condition, poor mental health, have experienced a period of incarceration or homelessness, long-term unemployment and some have been in addiction recovery. This was the ideal group to witness the performance and give feedback as it was representative of our target groups for the pilot workshops.*

The audience were very attentive and absorbed by the world of the puppet. The post performance feedback was very incisive; it had clearly affected the audience. They not only commented on what they saw but also articulated what a potentially powerful tool this could be when working with people who are dealing with issues that might lead to social isolation." (Neil, Citizens Theatre)

ACTIVITY 23 – CONTINUED

NOTES

Presenting the results of joint work to the audience is of great importance for the whole process. It is firmly part of the process and not something additional or separate. It is kind of a final 'exam', confirming the knowledge and skills acquired by participants.

Some remarks from participants:

"It was so useful at the very beginning to present to the audience all the materials we had used to make our puppets. It was good to ask the audience questions: What do you see here? Is it possible to create any story from all that? Do you see any connection between these things?"

"It was good warming up for the audience and preparing for the presentation. After it they were very active sharing their opinions and expressing their thoughts."

Some remarks from the audience:

"The puppets were without faces but we could recognise their emotions."

"I was so impressed how the puppets could move... as though alive."

"It was such real theatre... the puppets could 'talk'."

The structure of the training described above was adjusted to the limited time available for gathering all the key training staff from partner organisations. Only two days of the training course were full working days, while on the third day the afternoon was free and on the fourth (last) day the meeting with the audience took place in the afternoon. However, the proposed modules can be easily adjusted to different conditions and timings.

8. FEEDBACK FROM GLASGOW TRAINING AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The feedback received from participants of the training course in Glasgow was overwhelmingly positive. 100% of participants found the training to be useful.

"I enjoyed the learning aspect and thought that it was delivered in an assured and expert manner by Maria and Jola (the trainers). It was well paced, informative, insightful and fun to take part in."

The three main strong points of the training course (according to the evaluations gathered) were:

- the leading of the training
- the professionalism of the trainers
- the good practical organisation

"Amazing and dedicated trainers, the structure of the process, the organisation of the hosts."

The trainers' teaching approach was regarded as "fantastic" and they were evaluated as "amazing". Many people stated that they really appreciated the "strong leadership of the trainers". The group appreciated the trainers' experience of delivering this training as well as the individual attention they gave to participants.

Almost all the participants were 'very happy' with the practical arrangements and 'very happy' with the working programme.

During the training course in Glasgow the educators spent time thinking ahead to the pilot groups they would be working with

and how the participants of the pilot groups would respond to creating and manipulating puppets.

There were various psycho-drama related activities undertaken during the training course in Glasgow. Over 90% of educators felt comfortable while participating in these activities. Many commented on how useful these activities were for future work:

"They were interesting and creative, in an abstract way. I think the groups will find them fascinating."

"They are great ways to communicate ideas visually. They were accessible and didn't really put too much pressure on the individual participant. They don't put you in a position where you might feel a sense of failure. You felt creative with a lack of judgement."

There are two key questions which this project hopes to address:

Which aspects of puppet theatre can be successfully transferred from a solely artistic context to a broader educational domain?

How can a group of adult students who have learned theatrical skills in puppetry utilise those skills in their everyday lives to achieve personal goals in their social interactions?

A total of 63.6% of educators felt that information regarding these questions was sufficiently addressed during the training course. However, 36.4% of the respondents weren't sure if the questions were sufficiently addressed.

RECOMMENDATIONS / TIPS:

- Ample time should be allocated for 'ice-breaker' and 'getting to know you' type activities if it is a newly formed group. It is essential that participants feel comfortable with one another as they will eventually have to work collaboratively to achieve a common goal.

- A large, clear room should be used for the activities. It is helpful to have tables and chairs available to use when needed.

- Prepare materials in advance of the workshop so participants can quickly achieve results.

- The trainer should make an example puppet with the group during the step-by-step puppet making activity. A visual guide is useful and reassuring.

- Allow plenty of time for activities. The puppet making process should not be rushed. The initial training course lasted the equivalent of three and a half days.

- Allow participants to work at their own pace and in their own way, offering gentle guidance and support.

PILOT WORKSHOPS

9. OVERVIEW OF PILOT WORKSHOP PROGRAMME

During this project the participating organisations have worked with groups of vulnerable and/or socially excluded adults. They were identified by each organisation before the project commenced and are listed below, by country. There are links contained to each Pilot Group page on the CC project online platform (if you are viewing this as an interactive pdf, you can click on each group name to activiate the link).

If you are reading a printed copy of this document, you can find out more about each of the Pilot Groups by following this link: **http://ccproject.art/pilot-workshop/**

There are also blogs for each Pilot Group, which can be found by following this link: **http://ccproject.art/news/**

POLAND

Name of group: Dr Józef Babinski Specialised Hospital
Number of participants: 30
Educator names: Maria Schejbal, Małgorzata Starzyńska-Majsak

Name of group: The Centre of Social Integration
Number of participants: 10
Educator names: Iwona Kusak, Jolanta Kajmowicz-Sopicka

LITHUANIA

Name of group: Group of Retired and Unemployed Women
Number of participants: 9
Educator names: Rolanda Sliaziene, Arune Taunyte

Name of group: Women at a Crossroad
Number of participants: 11
Educator names: Rolanda Sliaziene, Arune Taunyte

ITALY

Name of group: Migrants in Palermo
Number of participants: 10
Educator names: Lorella Libeccio & Dario Ferrante

Name of group: People with Fewer Opportunities
Number of participants: 10
Educator names: Emiliano Mungiovino, Dario Ferrante and Grace Sciarrino

BULGARIA

Name of group: People from Vulnerable Groups
Number of participants: 12
Educator names: Lora Yoncheva, Rumyana Shalamanova

Name of group: People Willing to Find Themselves
Number of participants: 16
Educator names: Lora Yoncheva, Natalia Shalamanova

SCOTLAND

Name of group: South Community Recovery Network
Number of participants: 10
Educator names: Elly Goodman, Neil Packham and Angela Smith

Name of group: 218 Women's Residential & Day Care Service
Number of participants: 14
Educator names: Elly Goodman, Carly McCaig

Name of group: Bridging the Gap
Number of participants: 25
Educator names: Neil Packham, Louise Brown

Name of group: Phoenix Futures
Number of participants: 10
Educator names: Elly Goodman, Neil Packham

Name of group: Scottish Prison Service - HMP Low Moss
Number of participants: 7
Educator names: Neil Packham, Elly Goodman

10. FEEDBACK FROM THE PILOT WORKSHOPS

The pilot workshops which were delivered during the first half of 2018 were evaluated in order to track their impact and also to identify strong and weak points. You can find out more information about the pilot workshop programme and see case studies by reading the eCompendium (see page 9 of this booklet for more information) or by reading the Pilot Group blogs: **http://ccproject.art/news/**

Below is a summary of the main feedback which was collected by trainers and participants during the Pilot Workshops.

Strong points about the CC methodology (from the educators' point of view):

- **The puppets are simple and enjoyable to make.**

- **The step-by-step process of making the puppets allows for group leaders to offer support and advice during all stages of the workshop.**

- **The repetition of the making process means participants gain confidence in their abilities as they create their puppet.**

- **The group activities encourage collaborative working with others in the group. Educators can support the participants to compromise, to share ideas and to work together towards a shared goal.**

- **Having the puppet as a focus for participants is useful. It allows people to share personal and emotional opinions, ideas and stories through the safety of the puppet.**

Positive feedback from educators about the methodology:

"It enables the leader conducting classes to get to know the participants, their strengths and deficits, it reveals their needs in the field of personal development and communication skills."

"It enables participants to collaborate and thereby to increase their interpersonal skills."

"It is a method that develops creativity and imagination."

"The process of 'making' bonded the group and conversations flowed freely, people helped one another without being asked - there was a good sense of group unity."

"In work with a puppet, metaphors are usually used, through which participants talk about themselves and discuss issues related to attitudes and values. It's a safe way that makes it easier for participants to talk about their needs, tame their fears and communicate about their needs."

"The simple technology of puppet making, the emotional relation between the puppet and the author, the possibility to talk about oneself and others not directly, but through the puppet, space for reflecting and feedback."

"The puppet creation is for sure the most appealing technique to get the attention of the participants and guarantee their constant engagement."

"The process of making the puppet was certainly the most successful. The physicality of the process, the pleasure of witnessing the creation of it. The opportunity to completely immerse themselves in the process. The materials are completely user friendly, it is always possible to correct and adapt your puppet."

"The introduction to paper and having permission to make something that could not go wrong was positive. Having space and time to enjoy what was being made and seeing the journey progress from making to story development was satisfying. Quick results were effective, so that individuals could see the puppet form in a short space of time."

"The power of decision making from how the puppet evolved with its characteristics, to music choices. This was particularly important given that the group tend to struggle with decision making, especially within an arts context, which isn't a regular part of their recovery process. The sense of completion and achievement was a crucial part of the method, also that the work had a tangible end goal."

Weak points about the CC methodology (provided by the educators):

- Workshops were less successful when there was less or no involvement from a dedicated member of staff linked to the Pilot Group (such as a healthcare professional).

- Participants who have no experience of theatrical conventions require preparatory work in advance of participating in some of the activities. This was not always possible due to the time allowed with some groups.

- Some activities are too complicated or confusing for participants who have a language barrier.

- Attendance at the PIlot Workshops was sporadic (in some groups) which meant the educators had to manage people at different stages of the process.

- Gaining access to Pilot Groups for the required amount of time necessary to complete the process proved difficult in some cases. Institutions such as prisons are highly regimented. Therefore, some of the planned activities had to be omitted.

## Negative feedback from educators about the methodology:

"In the specific context of the psychiatric treatment, it seems desirable to involve someone from the medical staff to participate in all the workshops and to have their help in dealing with emotional processes and struggles triggered by theatrical activities."

"Work with puppets in groups that have never had any contact with theatre should be preceded by exercises, games and playful activities that build trust, increase openness and self-esteem of the participants, in order to build their readiness for theatrical activities. The duration of the process of 'familiarising the participants' must be adapted to the needs of the group and individual participants."

"Sometimes for specific groups, some exercises are too complicated and the language barriers are too high to be overcome, for example the scarf technique for evaluation and feedback is not applicable to migrants."

"The difficulty comes when people are near to completion and new people arrive and want to join in. You are constantly introducing new people to the process. This applies to many of the groups who don't have a consistent core group of participants."

"Some games or psycho-drama related activities can be inappropriate for specific target groups."
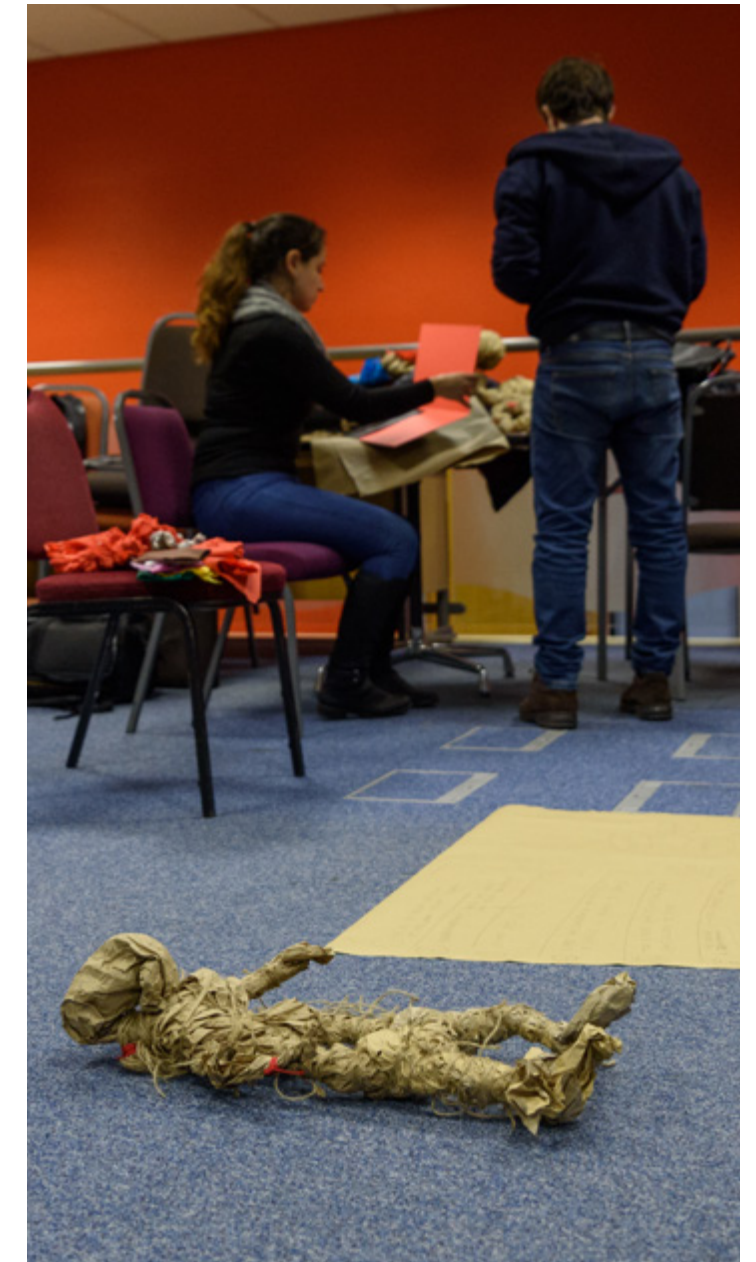
11. RECOMMENDATIONS GOING FORWARD

- A group size of no more than 20 people is preferable to achieve the best results.

- Having at least two educators during the workshops is beneficial. One person can be the group leader and one person as an extra support in the room.

- A large room which has access to tables and chairs, but also has a clear space is preferable.

- Allowing at least 2 hours per workshop is necessary to achieve a reasonable amount of work. At least 10 full hours of workshops per group is required to cover the minimum amount of activities. Ideally 20 hours is preferable to cover all activities outlined in the Methodological Guidelines.

- If undertaking any of the psychodrama activities, ensure you have the trust of the participants beforehand and you feel confident they will react positively to the suggested activities. Having a worker present who works with the group regularly, such as a rehabilitation officer, social worker or healthcare professional, is preferable.

- If you have a group of people who do not speak the native language well, you may need to adapt how you run the workshop and do more non-verbal activities or have a translator available.

- It is beneficial to have an audience available to watch any final performance. A supportive audience who will provide reassurance and positive feedback for the group is preferable.

CONCLUSIONS

12. FINAL CONCLUSIONS

We must refer back to the original aims of this project to conclude whether it has been successful in achieving its goals. The main focus of the project has always been SOCIAL INCLUSION and the outlined activities were developed with this in mind. The journey to social inclusion for vulnerable adults can often be a long and difficult one, with many factors and stages to be considered.

The CC project aimed to:

Develop a set of practical teaching tools
During this project two publications have been created as Intellectual Outputs - the Methodological Guidelines you are reading now and the eCompendium which can be found here: **http://ccproject.art/publications/** (available in 2019). Both these publications are available in 8 langauges to make them as accessible as possible.

Support innovation and creativity in adult education
Bringing together five partner orgnaisations from all over Europe, each with different experiences and creative approaches, has been hugely beneficial to this project. Each organisation has an educator and practitioner network which is far-reaching, allowing resources and creative approaches to be widely shared.

Contribute to social inclusion in Europe
The main emphasis of this new methodology is on searching for effective motivating mechanisms for disadvantaged learners. In contrast to traditional teaching methods, the arts-based activities enable not only knowledge assimilation, but also the acquisition of practical social skills like self-discipline, perseverance in pursuing new goals, a sense of duty and responsibility, and combating frustration and fears. In this way this methodology is an effective means of facilitating the greater social inclusion of vulnerable individuals and groups.

Development of partner organisations
The elaboration of the training programme has broadened the operational capacity and expertise of each partner organisation by providing a skills development programme for key staff members. Moreover, new partnerships and working relationships have been established, leading to a broader scope of activities of each partner.

12. FINAL CONCLUSIONS (CONTINUED)

Cross-sectoral communication and cooperation between adult educators/trainers and artists across Europe

A series of Multiplier Events will be taking place in 2019. These events will promote exchanges between adult educators and trainers from across Europe. There has also been ongoing dissemination, by all partners of information related to this project and the creation of an Online Platform (**http://ccproject.art/**) which contains a wealth of information about the project, the pilot groups, the methodology and the outcomes.

THE TWO KEY QUESTIONS

When this project was in the initial planning stages, there were two key questions that were asked:

1. WHICH ASPECTS OF PUPPET THEATRE CAN BE SUCCESSFULLY TRANSFERRED FROM A SOLELY ARTISTIC CONTEXT TO A BROADER EDUCATIONAL DOMAIN?

2. HOW CAN A GROUP OF ADULT STUDENTS WHO HAVE LEARNED THEATRICAL SKILLS IN PUPPETRY UTILISE THOSE SKILLS IN THEIR EVERYDAY LIVES TO ACHIEVE PERSONAL GOALS IN THEIR SOCIAL INTERACTIONS?

The initial training in December 2017 and the subsequent feedback gathered from the Pilot Workshops which took place during 2018 has successfully addressed these two questions.

A quote from a member of the South Community Recovery Network (SCRN) Pilot Group in Scotland offers an insight into the experiences of participants:

> "At first I thought, 'Oh no! How do I make a puppet?' But then I saw it come together and I got a buzz out of it. I was trying to make an alter-ego and trying to give it a bit of character; to bring it to life. My puppet is meant to be a superhero. He's got lots of passion and empathy and he is willing to help. I'm getting quite attached to my puppet now. He's a good role model. The project had therapeutic value. It makes you think about your life, your character and you try to incorporate that into the puppet. It helps you find solutions to the puppet's problems. Trying to find an endgame. Is it a happy endgame? Hopefully." *(Pilot Group participant, Scotland)*

Indeed, this was the case across the various Pilot Groups:

> "It was a space to show emotions and feelings, and it helped me to better understand how to deal with negative conditions." *(Pilot Group participant, Lithuania)*

12. FINAL CONCLUSIONS (CONTINUED)

"It made me aware of the experiences pushed to the subconscious and allowed me to meet with them, releasing lingering pain." *(Pilot Group participant, Poland)*

"It helped me to open myself to other people and to learn teamwork." *(Pilot Group participant, Poland)*

The CC methodology has made a significant educational impact for many of the participants who were involved in the Pilot Workshops:

"These workshops enriched our therapy programme for sure. Generally speaking, the positive therapeutic effect on patients can be visible. I did not expect that patients would be so sensitive to puppet theatre." *(Pilot Group participant, Poland)*

"When asked if her puppet reminded her of anybody, without hesitation, she said herself. That she was like a puppet in her domestic situation and that she was pulled in many different directions by her family. She commented that the activity was therapeutic to her, she lost herself in the making and it gave her a sense of release because here she doesn't have to be responsible for everyone else." *(Educator commenting on a Pilot Group participant, Scotland)*

The participants of the Pilot Workshops provided feedback at the end of the project. Many commented on how the workshops had helped them to build confidence and work closely with other people:

"For me, the strong points of the CC method were the self analysis and situations when other participants revealed something new about you, something which you were afraid to reflect upon." *(Pilot Group participant, Lithuania)*

"Yes, for sure it was useful. I got some insights, certain understanding. It was important to hear the stories of other participants, to feel how it mirrors me." *(Pilot Group participant, Lithuania)*

"'Y' seems very promising as well - she declared that performances inspired her to continue in real life the role played by her puppet – a friendly, cheerful supporter of troubled, broken, helpless characters." *(Educator commenting on Pilot Group participant, Poland)*

12. FINAL CONCLUSIONS (CONTINUED)

Looking again at the two key questions that were asked at the very beginning of the CC project, we can break them down and answer them fully.

1. WHICH ASPECTS OF PUPPET THEATRE CAN BE SUCCESSFULLY TRANSFERRED FROM A SOLELY ARTISTIC CONTEXT TO A BROADER EDUCATIONAL DOMAIN?

Participants of the Pilot Workshops benefitted greatly from the activities undertaken. Specifically, when thinking about aspects of puppet theatre that developed participants in an educational way, there appears to have been many examples.

The creation process of the puppets, which began as simply rolls of brown paper and string, encouraged the participants to focus on seeing a task through to the end. The making of the puppets required concentration and the ability to follow instructions. Participants were encouraged to persevere and trust that they were completing the task successfully.

Working with the other participants to create a story was a challenge for some people. Group members developed their skills in listening, compromising and decision-making. They were invited to analyse their own personalities and behaviours, and to share those deeply personal thoughts with others.
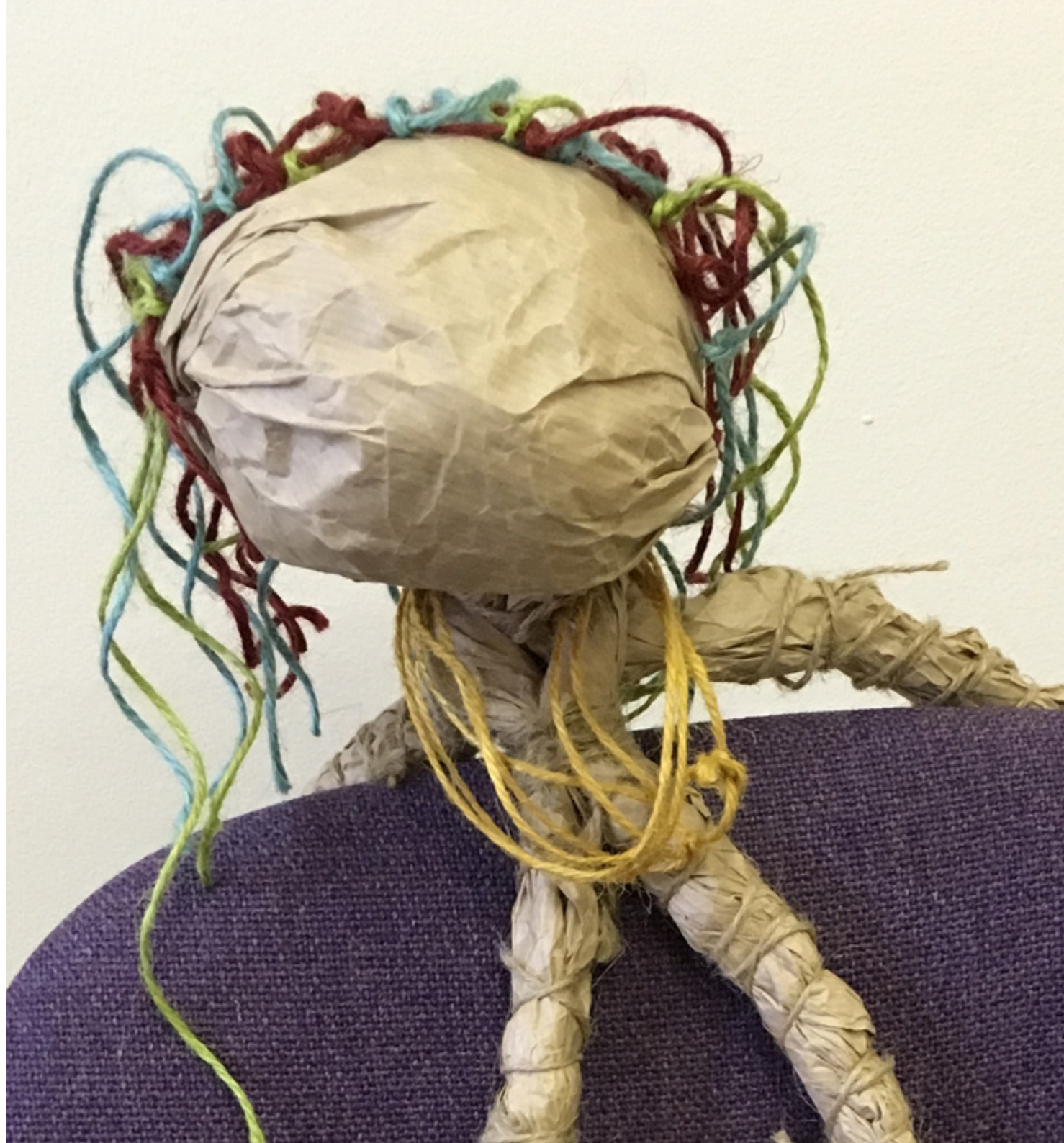
Learning how to manipulate the puppets brought a new element of group work to the project. Participants developed their skills in working closely with others, in listening and being patient. Everyone works at different rates and the skills required to manipulate the puppets are easier for some people and more challenging for others.

As most organisations decided to run their Pilot Workshops over several sessions, usually once per week, the participants developed skills in time management and were encouraged to commit to the project from beginning to end. Some of the participants found this more difficult than others due to their chaotic lives or due to other commitments they already had.

We must not underestimate the courage required for the final performance element of the project. To stand up in front of others and perform is a daunting prospect for anyone, and particularly for vulnerable and socially excluded adults. The participants demonstrated resilience and courage to successfully perform their puppet shows.

It is therefore clear that many aspects of puppet theatre can contribute to educational learning for those participating; from the initial creation of the puppets, to the group negotiations and decision-making and finally to the puppet manipulation and performances.

The second key question can also be analysed in more detail:

2. HOW CAN A GROUP OF ADULT STUDENTS WHO HAVE LEARNED THEATRICAL SKILLS IN PUPPETRY UTILISE THOSE SKILLS IN THEIR EVERYDAY LIVES TO ACHIEVE PERSONAL GOALS IN THEIR SOCIAL INTERACTIONS?

The CC methodology has now been trialled with thirteen different groups from five European countries.

The overwhelming feedback from this extensive programme of practical workshops is that the CC method is accessible to all, instantly engaging, and delivers pleasing results. It is a method which allows even the most vulnerable people to succeed, to learn, and to feel good about themselves. It is a method which allows vulnerable people to acquire skills that they can utilise not just in the safe environment of a puppetry workshop, but also throughout all aspects of their lives.

Simply by joining in with the Pilot Workshops and taking part in the activities, all the participants have progressed significantly in their journeys towards greater social interaction.

The CC method gently encourages a commitment from participants to interact with others and work towards a shared goal. To engage with the methodology at all involves a degree of social interaction; firstly by being present and then working through the stages of the planned activities.

Every group is unique and its participants have their own individual needs. Therefore, some people's journeys will inevitably be longer and more complicated than others. That being said, participants who have successfully completed the CC project will have acquired skills that can be transferred to many areas of their lives.

The groups that were chosen for the Pilot Workshops represented a variety of vulnerable and socially excluded adults.

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http://ccproject.art/

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