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DEEP ACTS

**Developing Emotional Education Pathways and
Art Centered Therapy Services against gender violence**

Deliverable D3.4

CURRICULUM FOR PILOT ART THERAPY WORKSHOPS

***Activities to structure the therapeutic intervention in an
art therapy group and photo-art therapy in "Open Studio"
with victims of abuse and violence***

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Introduction

Work Package 3 "Art Therapy Centered Services" of the DEEP ACTS project has among its specific objectives that of systematizing and disseminating specific tools and methods based on art therapy for therapeutic interventions aimed at victims of violence.

It was decided to achieve this goal by developing a curriculum and guidelines to be applied in a specific pilot course that would serve to test the methodological materials made before moving on to their final revision and validation.

The term curriculum here means a "List of activities undertaken to structure, organise and design training, including *the definition of learning objectives, content, methods and teaching materials, including guidelines for the training of teachers and trainers*" (Cedefop, Terminology of European Education and Training Policy. Luxembourg, Publications office of the European Union, 2014).

The purpose of this document is to respond to the information given by Cedefop - European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training - which is the European Union's reference centre for vocational education and training. It provides information and analysis on vocational education and training systems, policies, research and practice.

Rather than offering a dry methodological product, in order to bring it to life we decided to report the study plan set specifically for the DEEP ACTS Pilot Course organized and managed by Fermata d'Autobus, leader of the project, as we believe that it is thus possible to read the curriculum in light of its application prospects. We are sure that those who wish to use our proposal will thus be able to understand it more fully and see that it is best adapted to their context and purpose.

1 - THE STRUCTURE AND ITS FUNCTIONS

In structuring group interventions in art therapy and photo-art therapy within an "Open Studio" it is necessary to start from the place and space in which it takes place, or "the Atelier".

In addition to the description of how to structure work under normal conditions, some changes will be specified as a result of the limitations due to the state of health emergency resulting from COVID-19.

Basic requirements of the Atelier:

Number of participants.

For these types of group activities you can work in a space with twelve patients, although generally for better clinical and organizational work it is advisable not to exceed a maximum of eight participants.

Following the pandemic, it is necessary to guarantee a minimum of 1.5 metres of safe distance between all participants and the art therapist.

In our case, after assessing the size of the available space, the laboratories therefore cannot contain more than five patients, the art therapist and a possible trainee.

Bathroom.

It is necessary to be equipped with services and a sink for running water.

You specifically need a soap dispenser with soap, a paper towels, a trash can, a basket of towels and sponges to wash the artistic materials.

In Covid19 conditions it is necessary to have an operator that guarantees the implementation and compliance with all the required sanitary hygiene regulations (use of the mask, measurement of body temperature, sanitization of the artistic materials used).

Brightness and colour.

A bright lspace is required.

Natural light is as important as artificial light, preferring warm tones, possibly adjustable to create different atmospheres according to the different moments of work proposed: working time, listening to music, presentation, relaxation,

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breaktime, sharing work in groups.

It is important to carefully choose the colour of the walls of the Atelier by evaluating which colour tone is preferable also to the geographical climate present in a given area.

In general, however, soft uniform colours with medium gradation are indicated.

The presence of a paneled wall is essential, which can allow you to draw, paint, create standing and that allows you to exhibit your creations during group sharing.

Atelier furniture.

The most essential component of the furniture is the presence of a **large** table, depending on the methods of intervention of the art therapist.

The wooden table or board is suitable for 8-10 participants maximum, well-balanced and stable.

This table must be designed and created in a specific format so that each participant can work on a creative sheet of size 70x100cm, optimal for all techniques (specifically for painting and collage).

In addition, this provision promotes group union and cohesion, strengthening participant relationships.

In addition, it is important to have individual tables to help participants create independently, providing a greater boundary, a margin, a safety limit of the Sis.

In the Covid19 era, the solution that involves working in single tables arranged in a circle is necessary, always making sure that there is sufficient space to maintain the correct safety distances.

An area of the atelier must be equipped with one or **more cabinets**, with key or lock closure, possibly with glass doors (protected by burglar film), which allows the ordered material to be seen inside but without it being taken without permission or damaged.

It is also necessary to carve out a space in which to store the creations of the workshop that over time will be contained in individual folders for each patient (for example, wooden furniture with shelves open in the 90x120cm format shelf).

It is required to provide a comfort zone within the atelier, characterized by the presence of one or more **sofas** and /or **armchairs** with cushions and blankets.

This allows participants who have difficulty during work to stay inside the

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session in a more careless and protective way.

Of course, for Covid19 it is required that all these environments be sanitized before and after the conclusion of each workshop.

With respect to items on the walls, it is important to have a clock and a calendar that allow the participant to remain oriented within the space-time dimension of the workshop and facilitate in following the temporal indications given by the art therapist.

For decoration it is preferable not to overfill the walls with paintings, drawings and photographs so as not to influence the participant's creations.

It is essential to have a small cart in which to store the necessary items to serve a small breakfast or snack during the break in order to recover the energy spent and to ensure good nutrition.

Finally, it is advisable to have a storage room, strictly locked, where you can safely store all detergents, sanitizing products and washing products to avoid an unsuitable use of these products by participants.

Other requirements of the Atelier.

Accessories not indispensable but recommended are;

An area used for photography

A range of basic photographic materials, camera and tripod; if there is the possibility, a light and a backdrop. You also need a wheeled coat hanger with different clothes for any transformations or disguises, so that the participants can play with their appearance by offering them the opportunity to see and re-see each other in new ways.

The furniture of this area can be set up with photographs chosen with the aim of anticipating the fundamentals of a future phototherapy work by stimulating projective thinking.

During the Covid19 emergency it is advisable to use gloves for the use of materials and in any case a general attention to compliance with hygiene and health regulations.

An area used for the oven.

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To cook the clay and shelves to store the sculptures. This area should, if possible, be separated from other spaces, as volatile clay dust settles on the surfaces.

An area used for reading.

One or several cabinets, with key or lock closure, possibly with the glass doors (protected by burglar film), which allows the books to be seen inside but without being able to be taken without permission or damaged.

Reading a book during the conduction of groups or sessions, in fact, can have both a therapeutic and relaxation function.

In addition to the physical and structural requirements of the Atelier mentioned above, the structuring of the work project is fundamental: a diagram with a logical sequence of all the weekly interventions for the entire duration of the workshop.

This allows the definition of micro and macro-objectives on which to work during the workshops, increasing the therapeutic value of individual meetings.

This organization, however, never precludes free expression without a given theme, giving space to listening and reflection on topics of various kinds.

During the meetings it is advisable to create a playlist with natural sounds and relaxing music, in order to create a sound background that is pleasant to listen to and that can favour the loosening and lowering of individual and /or group tensions.

2 - THE ORGANISATION OF PILOT GROUPS

Organising the work in a harmonious and functional way is the key to being able to create a good basis on which to work, especially in anticipation of very difficult situations that can arise during the management of groups and that can represent for art therapists moments of stress.

In the groups and sessions of Art therapy and Photo-Art therapy there are three different organizational times:

1. The organisation of before;
2. The organisation of during;
3. The organisation of after.

Each is explained below.

1. Before.

It is essential that the art therapist is informed about the clinical condition of participants weekly, through communication with the treating team (for example, any changes in therapy can affect the mood daily and also during the group conducted).

In the Atelier the art therapist is responsible for:

- checking that their phone is working; calls to colleagues should be made, if necessary, when there is no trainee to assist,
- being equipped with a first aid kit, even for small injuries;
- preparing on a table, due to the current Covid-19, hand sanitizer, thermometer, a box of gloves and a box of spare masks;
- arranging work materials; this can happen in two different ways depending on whether there is a single work table or multiple tables ((ie one for each participant). It is essential to present the materials with great care and care regarding their aesthetics, in order to favour the curiosity and exploration of these by participants;
- setting the trolley or snack table on the same conceptual bases as the table with creative materials. This is not insignificant, especially for those with eating disorders;
- preparing a computer or other device with a playlist of natural sounds and appropriate music, which can favour the conduction of groups or sessions or act as a relaxing musical background during breakfast or snack;
- checking and supervising compliance with the hygiene and sanitary regulations for Covid-19: near the cushions of the sofa there must be disposable headrests and a box containing tissues.

For all groups or sessions, at the beginning of the work, each participant will be given their own plastic box, with a recyclable lid and with a personalized label containing their pair of gloves.

This detail serves to keep the surfaces sanitized, but also to reassure patients who might fear possible contagion.

In addition, in photo-art therapy groups it is necessary to add a specific plastic

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box with recyclable lid containing, for each participant, a pair of gloves, 5 magazines, a roll of sellotape, glue and scissors.

Finally, it is necessary to equip participants with a recyclable plastic box without a lid where scissors can be stored in the event of a work stoppage; in fact, they are forbidden to handle scissors or blades without the presence of an operator, as they could use them improperly.

2. During.

The art therapist at the beginning of the cycle of workshops has the task of communicating to patients the calendar of meetings motivating any absences in case of holidays. This serves to minimise eventual frustrations and to provide time frames for the work to be done with them.

In each laboratory the art therapist will propose to the group a particular theme as a starting point for their creative works, always leaving the possibility to work freely.

During the creative work of the participant it is essential that the art therapist carefully observes the dynamics that are created within the group, thinking in advance of any therapeutic interventions to be carried out at the end of the work in order not to distract patients during creation.

During the workshop a snack is served by the art therapist: a small snack composed of food and drinks that can be brought to the table, always respecting hygiene measures.

At the end of the work, after a short break, a moment is prepared in which patients share their work verbally and the artistically expressed contents and the emotional experiences connected with them are elaborated.

Given the current situation it is useful to give information on anti-Covid-19 procedures to carry out the group or the session safely: instructions on how to sanitize your hands, instructions on how to manage your material and on the use of gloves. The use of gloves is necessary during the choice of materials to be used, while creative work, in its own location, can be done gloves-free.

At the end of the session the materials used are deposited in a single box and the art therapist will distribute masking tape in order to hang the creations on the wall for the moment of sharing in a group.

3. After.

At the end of each workshop it is important to store both materially and digitally all works made by participants so that they can be reused in the future.

In addition, it is important that the art therapist mentally reanalyzes the progress of the laboratory by compiling a clinical diary and briefly reporting their impressions to the operators.

With respect to the precautions to be taken for Covid-19 it will be the responsibility of each person, assisted by the art therapist or any trainee, to sanitize their box.

Once finished, the art therapist, wearing gloves, must remove from the wall all the participant's creations and, after having arranged them on a disinfected table, must leave them exposed to air before being put away in the appropriate folders.

Finally, it is the responsibility of the art therapist to disinfect the furnishings and materials used during the session before they are stored in their containers.

3 - THE CONTENTS

The aim of the interventions described above is to provide security in an expressive, creative, structured and contained space that responds to the needs of women victims of violence and abuse.

Trauma and abuse leave wounds very difficult to heal and the art therapist, like any other therapist, has the task, within the laboratories, to provide emotional containment, creating a safe setting in which patients can feel welcomed and be entitled to share their internal traumas.

The principles of this setting are based on the restorative function of a new care, able to favour over time the surfacing of the previous trauma, first in a non-verbal mode through artistic creation and only later, following group sharing and elaboration within the setting, in a verbal mode.

Through this mechanism, therapy art groups become facilitator tools, crossing bridges that allow the care of deep wounds which would hardly be reached in other ways.

The art therapy space, or atelier, thus becomes a space of self-expression, a safe place in which to express and deposit one's emotions, through the legitimacy given by the "listening gaze" of the art therapist.

Over time, this will create a climate of trust and support, both technical and emotional, aimed at encouraging creative expression and developing and increasing participants' self-esteem. The work focuses on the aspect of "care", understood as caring for the person.

The possibility of listening in a new way to oneself and one's own needs allows the beginning of a reconstruction of one's self.

In this vein, particular attention is also paid to the body, calling on the sensory organs to allow one to discover and rediscover the dimension of pleasure. Pleasure is indispensable in order to love oneself and others, and moves one towards the reconstruction of a new, healthier daily life.

The atelier, the worktable, the creative materials, the tray with food... all become firm points around which the art therapist and all the participants rotate, creating an atmosphere that favours tranquility and reassuring quiet.

The characteristic care of the context predisposes the emotional encounter between the therapist and the participant and allows an affective approach,

indispensable to allow the recognition of pain and to allow its expression within the artistic object.

It is therefore desirable to have a setting that allows the participant to feel an affective containment, which facilitates their artistic expression and the consequent elaboration in therapy.

In the photo-art therapy approach, using photographs as productive catalysts becomes a useful connection bridge: making contact with the deepest contents of the unconscious thanks to the use of photographs makes this process manageable, ensuring safe distancing and working metaphorically through symbols.

The art therapy path, over time, gives the possibility to get rid of deep wounds that could not be verbalised.

Below will be presented the diagram of the pilot laboratories designed specifically for the Deep Acts project against gender-based violence, within the "Heavenly Strawberries" community that is part of the care circuit of Fermata D'Autobus located in Oglianico (TO), Italy. It is a cycle of 21 meetings in which five women who are victims of abuse and violence with both psychiatric and substance addiction problems take part.

These meetings will start on December 1, 2020 and will end on May 11, 2021 and will be conducted by Dr. Raffaella Carola Lorio in online mode, with the support of Dr. Stefania Abbenante who will have the role of observer of the groups in presence.

The groups will be held every Tuesday, weekly, with a duration of 3 hours (from 10:00 to 13:00) for the 10 photo-art therapy meetings and 2 hours and 30 minutes (from 10:00 to 12:30) for the 11 "Open Studio" meetings for art therapy.

The atelier in which the groups will take place is an open-space located in the "Heavenly Strawberries" structure, so as to ensure the maintenance of the necessary safe distance between the participants and all the correct hygiene and sanitary standards for Covid-19.

Starting from the middle of March 2021 these groups will instead be carried out and concluded within a new atelier and in its garden, located in front of the "Heavenly Strawberries" community.

Before the start of the project and, in particular, before the start of the photo-art therapy groups, a cover letter will be sent to all participants asking them to look

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for photos that have an affective and emotional value; such photos can be self-portraits (selfies), portraits, family photos, photos of animals or any photos that they like and that they have taken and preserved throughout their lives.

In the extreme event that the participants do not have photos with them or are unable to recover them, they are asked to use the photographs they own on their mobile phones or social networks (e.g. Facebook).

The photographs they choose must all be printed, preferably in colour, in order to be able to work during the groups, with any changes or manipulations.

During the 21 meetings, Dr. Abbenante will have the task of drawing up and compiling an observational diagram for each participant who will investigate the following areas: self-awareness, relationship with others, participation, respect for the rules, creativity and use of the body. This will be used in the final phase of the research to compile observation statistics.

In addition, both at the end of the 10 groups of photo-art therapy and after the 11 open plan groups of art therapy a similar questionnaire will be delivered to the participants (for a total of two approval questionnaires), in order to assign a quality index in the final phase of the research.

At the end of each group, the work carried out by the participants will be reproduced and preserved; this will also serve as a presentation of the work carried out in the pilot groups.

All material photographed and stored will be released by participants thanks to the consent of a privacy release that each will sign.

The detailed calendar of pilot groups is set out below.

Photo-Art therapy groups

The groups are 10: 6 developed with the Collage technique, 4 developed with the technique of Projective Photos.

A theme is recommended in each group, but this does not exclude the possibility for participants to follow their free expression without any obligation or forced imposition.

Each participant, in the groups developed with the collage technique due to Covid-19, will be given a box with a recycled plastic lid with a sticker with their name written on it containing 5 magazines, 1 scissors, a small glue and a pair of

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gloves.

The themes are as follows.

1.12.2020 Developed with <i>the Collage technique</i> .	1. Self-portrait
15.12.2020 Developed with <i>the Collage technique</i> .	2. My safe place
22.12.2020 Developed <i>with the technique of Projective Photos</i> .	3. Christmas
12.01.2021 Developed with <i>the Collage technique</i> . For those who want it, your photographs are available.	4. My Family
19.01.2021 Developed with <i>the Collage technique</i> .	5. I would like to express my wishes from the most simple to those I know that working on me I'll try to make it possible.
26.01.2021 Developed with <i>the Collage technique</i> . Use one, all or as many photos as you want of your own, integrating them even if you wish to others.	6. My collage
02.02.2021 Developed <i>with the technique of Projective Photos</i> .	7. Relationships
09.02.2021 Developed with <i>the Collage technique</i> inserting the for those who want their own photographs	8. To love and Love
16.02.2021 Developed <i>with the technique of Projective Photos</i>	9. Reflections on the body
23.02.2021 Developed <i>with the technique of Projective Photos</i>	10. Self-care

Open Studio Groups

The themes are:

2.03.2021	11. The colours
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9.03.2021	12. Happiness
16.03.2021	13. Slowness
<p>From this date until 11.05.2021, work can also be integrated with ecotherapy because, covid-19 emergency permitting, the host Dr. Lorio will be able to return to work in presence and because the temperatures will be warmer.</p>	
23.03.2021	14. The Woman
30.03.2021	15. Dad
6.04.2021	16. The senses "Touch"
13.04.2021	17. The senses "Taste"
20.04.2021	18. The senses "Smell"
27.04.2021	19. The senses "Vision"
4.05.2021	20. The senses "Hearing"
11.05.2021	21. The land and the ecosystem

4 - THE METHODOLOGY

The methodology used within our Association, Fermata D'Autobus, conceived by our art therapist Raffaella Carola Lorio, applies the principles of art therapy following some theoretical bases of several important pioneers.

Over the years an art therapy setting model has developed based on certain principles of the "Open Studio" described above, developing over time methodologies learned from training with the American Art Therapy Association of which Dr. Lorio is a member.

During groups or in individual sessions we use strategies that refer to mindfulness techniques, useful to concentrate the body and breath with a background of sounds to train the body to the concept of here and now, and then move on to hints of ecotherapy with sensory body awakening so as not to forget about our body also in relation to the nature that surrounds us.

Thinking of the word method, one word described above is referred to: "care" which is the key to everything that develops around it.

Taking care of participants helps them to carry out, within the group and in the session, a creative work of the expression of deep traumatic elements, which is taken care of both within the group sharing in the workshop as well as subsequently thanks to the containment of the care team, by community operators and within individual psychotherapy.

The method by which photo-art therapy laboratories are structured is based mainly on the five techniques described by Dr. Judy Weiser, in particular the one that refers to projective photos, to which the collage technique is added.

The projective photo technique is used because participants like it very much and it is able to stimulate imagination, research and concentration by activating interesting group dynamics.

During this technique, adding an invitation to writing allows one to get more in touch with the most contemplative part of the Self.

The work with collages is instead a very useful, practical and versatile technique. The collage is created both from images found in magazines and from personal images, which are glued to paper of different sizes and colours, with possible integration of materials produced in art therapy laboratories.

Collages focus on free themes or proposals from the photo therapist. This

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technique allows one to express deep parts of oneself, inaccessible on an exclusively verbal level, with very imaginative and interesting forms.

5 - MATERIALS

The materials necessary for the Open Studio and for the art therapy sessions are (some quantities are indicated in excess as if everyone were to use the same technique and as if 15 patients were to participate):

- For Covid-19:
 - o a disinfectant for surfaces
 - o a sanitizer for the hands,
 - o a thermometer,
 - o a box of gloves,
 - o a box of masks.
 - o 15 boxes with recyclable plastic lid to hold the gloves and materials of each individual,
 - o 15 boxes with recyclable plastic lid for each individual that will have to contain 5 magazines, 1 small glue and scissors (this is for the Photo-Art therapy Group)
 - o a box
 - o 15 recyclable plastic baskets to hold a glass and bowl for sweets or savouries.
- 15 cloth rags to dry brushes
- 4 sponges for washing
- 2 rags
- 3 rags/mop heads to wash the floors.
- 1 mop handle for washing floors
- 1 paper towel roll to dry surfaces and dry your hands
- 1 ream of coloured A4 sheets
- 60 sheets of each colour in the 70x100cm format (used specifically for photo-art therapy collages, calculated for a month if everyone wanted to).
- 60 white sheets in the 70x100cm format (used specifically for photo-art therapy collages, calculated for a month if everyone wanted to).
- 15 Scissors
- 1 Large bottle of liquid glue, 1Kg
- 15 small glues to be inserted in each personal box
- 15 small glues 100gr
- 15 pencils
- 15 rubbers
- 8 pencil sharpeners
- 4 boxes of coloured pencils
- 4 boxes of oil pastels
- 4 boxes of coloured pens
- 4 boxes of large coloured pens/markers
- 6 bottles of paint in primary colours
- 60 brushes, a mix of small, medium and large, 15 of each type.

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- 80 magazines of various genres, so that there are 5 for each participant with escort
- 1 box with various fabrics
- 1 box with wires, various ribbons
- 1 box with animal moulds, hearts, ink stamps
- Privacy releases for archiving and social media posts
- 1 Computer
- 1 Printer
- Photo paper 3 boxes for each 10x15, 18x24, 24x30 format
- 3 Tablets (extra)
- 1 photocopier (extra)
- 4 simple digital cameras
- 1 tripod
- 1 backdrop (extra)
- Privacy releases for work, storage and social photo shoots.