

Stefania Abbenante, Andrea Anconetani, Raffaella Bortino, Tommaso Calore, Lilian de Martino, María del Mar García Candau, Egle Demaria, Marco António Caronho Ferreira, Vera Alexandra Gomes Pereira, Raffaella Carola Lorio, Sérgio Manuel Pereira Novo, Irene Rodríguez García, Tea Taramino, Nazzareno Vasapollo

DEEP ACTS (Developing Emotional Education Pathways and Art Centered Therapy Services against gender violence) is a project funded by the European program "Rights, Equality and Citizenship" carried out in the biennium 2020-2022 in Italy, Portugal and Spain with meetings, workshops, conferences, shows, videos, exhibitions and events.

The main objective was to offer innovative methods and specific working tools that involve the use of Art Therapy and Emotional Education to professionals and organizations working in the prevention of gender-based violence.

This publication contains the essential elements of the project.

Anyone who wants to deepen and adopt tools and methodologies can download the outputs made by the research team from the site www.deepacts.eu.



Report on products and results of DEEP ACTS project
Rights, Equality and Citizenship European Union Programme
Project No.881583 — DEEP ACTS — REC-AG-2019 / REC-RDAP-GBV-AG-2019
www.deepacts.eu

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DEEP ACTS

DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL EDUCATION PATHWAYS AND ART CENTERED THERAPY SERVICES AGAINST GENDER VIOLENCE

A European project to support victims of violence



DEEP ACTS

Project certified by ASEDEM -
Asociación Española de Educación Emocional





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in the Download section of the project website: www.deepacts.eu

In case of use of parts of the publication please cite the source and the authors

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**CERTIFICADO DE RECONOCIMIENTO COMO PROYECTO
EMOCIONALMENTE RESPONSABLE
DEL PROYECTO "DEEP ACTS"**

Por el presente, la Asociación Española de Educación Emocional (ASEDEM),
certifica que el Proyecto "DEEP ACTS - Developing Emotional Education Pathways and
Art Centered Therapy Services against gender violence" project funded by the "Rights,
Equality and Citizenship" (REC), cumple los requisitos para ser catalogado como un
proyecto que incorpora la educación emocional en todas sus actividades.

En Mairena del Aljarafe a 20 de febrero de 2022.

Alma Serra González.

Presidenta de ASEDEM

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To all women

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INTRODUCTION

Gender-based violence represents a complex and increasingly topical emergency in our society. As reported by the *European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights* (FRA) in the report "*Violence against women: an EU-wide survey*" of 2014¹, 33% of European women have experienced male violence after the age of 15.

The same research reports that in a significant number of women, after an abusive relationship, a seemingly irreducible vulnerability to abuse remains; this explains the need to offer them protection and help in diverse forms.

It often happens that the presuppositions of violence are not recognized or are denied, that the story that the woman tries to make of the violence suffered is filtered and judged through her life choices. Often hasty judgments are made about past behaviours and, just as easily, the woman is shown how she will have to behave in the future, taking measures that impose choices made by others. Control mechanisms and prescriptions are developed that make women a subject to be protected, trying to prevent them from making autonomous and free choices, thus conditioning their lives and their future. When this does not happen, there is also the

risk of producing what is now commonly called "secondary victimization", which can have the result of inducing the woman to re-enter the relationship with the abuser, as soon as she verifies how painful and complicated it is to really get out of it. Women who have experienced a cycle of violence generate their own idiosyncrasies that condition their way of seeing life, relationships with family, friends and the community in general, experiencing an impotence that creates a spiral of guilt, low self-esteem, loss of hope, and symptoms and emotional disorders that prevent them from rebuilding themselves in a healthy way.

Judges, law enforcement, lawyers, psychologists, doctors, social workers not prepared on the cycle of violence often question the women's stories also because of the absence of specific tools to extricate themselves from the traumatic complexity they are facing.

Providing an extra tool to the professionals who work with these victims is what we have tried to do and what we propose with this publication.

The work summarized here aims to provide methodological suggestions for intervention, (whose complete and de-

1. https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra-2014-vaw-survey-factsheet_it.pdf

tailed documents can be downloaded from the www.deepacts.eu website), reporting the results that emerged from the DEEP ACTS project and providing therapeutic approaches that can be of help and possibly adopted by professionals who in various ways work in the care and treatment of these victims.

The DEEP ACTS (Developing Emotional Education Pathways and Art Centred Therapy Services against gender violence) project, stems from the previous experience in the field of the lead organization Fermata d'Autobus and from the collaboration with other associations, primarily the Spanish association Rumbos; the optimization and systematization of data available from previous results and those derived from the shared path of research and experimentation are an attempt to provide a concrete helping response.

Trauma causes deep wounds that are not always curable through words and, for this reason, often remain inaccessible: the methodological proposals that we present to you offer the possibility for these women to express their suffering on a non-verbal but bodily, artistic and creative level through participation in experiential workshops.

After a first part that aims to provide a general description of the genesis, structure and path of the project, we will expand on a treatment proposal based on Emotional Therapy, a mode of inter-

vention characteristic of Rumbos, and then move on to an approach based on clinical art therapy, which has always been characteristic of the type of treatment proposed by Fermata D'Autobus. (We invite you to download and view the complete manuals from the site indicated above).

These insights will finally be followed by the description with respect to the awareness-raising interventions, characterized in particular by Outsider Art events (with the precious collaboration of the Nobel Committee for the Disabled), by the theatrical tour of the show "Màquina de Encarnar", realized by the Portuguese Theatre Company ASTA, and by the production of audiovisuals made by the Association Nuovi Linguaggi, that testify through images the long shared path to get here (also for this component it is possible to view detailed information and products by connecting to the website mentioned above).

The final intent of this publication is to be able to disseminate in the most complete but at the same time synthetic way possible the experience shared with the project partners, in the hope that it can be useful to other professional figures and that it can represent a starting point for innovative techniques capable of promoting a new well-being for the victims of gender violence.

PART I

GENESIS, STRUCTURE AND PATH OF THE PROJECT



GENESIS, STRUCTURE AND PATH OF THE PROJECT

Nazzareno Vasapollo

INTRODUCTION

"DEEP ACTS - Developing Emotional Education Pathways and Art Centered Therapy Services against gender violence" was nominated in June 2019 under the Call of the European Union Program "Rights, Equality and Citizenship" (REC) which provided for a "Call for proposals to prevent and combat all forms of violence against children, young people and women".

22 projects across Europe were eligible for funding, including DEEP ACTS which received an evaluation of 83/100.

CONTEXT, BACKGROUND AND DESIGN LOGIC

In 2019 the Piedmont association Fermata d'Autobus (FDA), leader of the DEEP ACTS project, assessed that the time was ripe to identify and pursue an internationalization strategy with a view to increasing the quality of its services. This has led to the acquisition of new resources and technical skills for European planning in order to face the inter-

national scenarios in order, on the one hand, to return to The European level the experience and skills gained in over twenty years of operation and, on the other, to update the knowledge of its operators by participating in training activities abroad. The results achieved by this new line of action seem more than flattering considering that to date three EU projects have been funded (one REC and two Erasmus+) and that the Erasmus+ National Agency has recently awarded FDA an accreditation that will favour annual funding until 2027.

When within the association we began to discuss the priorities on which to focus our efforts for access to EU funding, we started, *sic et simpliciter*, from the two pillars of more consistent skills we possessed: therapeutic intervention in general and Art Therapy in particular.

Considering the specific opportunity made available by the REC 2019 call, aimed at preventing and combating all forms of violence with the priority¹ "Protection and support to victims of gender-based violence among particularly vulnerable groups", it seemed to us a formidable tool for an action hinged on the expertise of FDA in favour of a tar-

get group such as that of its users who have an added degree of vulnerability. These are comorbid victims of violence; women diagnosed with both psychiatric pathologies, certified by the sending health services, and addiction pathologies with or without the use of substances.

The target has been identified both because it is historically extremely relevant to FDA's actions, and also because it presents problems related to exclusively clinical criteria that require innovative, composite and multidisciplinary approaches. The collaboration of our association with the Spanish cooperative RUMBOS has focused attention on the possibility of basing the design intervention on the respective specializations Art Therapy and Emotional Education, as privileged guidelines for the development of tools and methodologies with which to equip professionals with therapeutic interventions to maximize their levels of success and enhance the affected systems. To this end, starting from the optimization and systematization of the results of the common practices and specific projects of FDA and RUMBOS, with DEEP ACTS new research and experimentation paths have been created and reference methodologies have been established that represent the response to the needs detected in the initial analysis phase.

With the contribution of partner organizations from Italy, Portugal and Spain, chosen for their characteristics and diversified skills and functionality related to objectives and activities, the project action has deployed two other complementary and integrative lines of action to the "methodological" one (mainly intended for professionals in the sector):

one line an agreement to pursue strategies to raise awareness towards a generalist audience, and the other aimed at communication and networking, aimed at a mixed target. As we will see below, the awareness-raising action has been developed on three pillars: Outsider Art, Theatre and audiovisuals, while that of communication and networking has put in place more diversified activities. Both in the elaboration phase and in the start-up phase of the project, the aegis of an important European programme and a partnership composed of specialized organizations of more than appreciable profile, have rightly represented advantageous starting points to constitute a complete methodological proposal, composed of various integrated elements and which could aspire to represent a high-level European reference standard, great visibility and strong impact.

STRUCTURE AND TIMING OF THE PROJECT

The structure of the project activities designed to pursue the identified objectives has been modeled in the following five Work Packages, which can be downloaded from the project website: www.deepacts.eu.

WP1. Project management and coordination

Objectives

- Manage and coordinate the project in all its phases.
- Monitor activities and evaluate processes and products.
- Liaise with the Commission's steering and control bodies.

1. The Programme of the European Union "Rights, Equality and Citizenship" (REC) represents the programming tool fielded by the European Union to promote, protect and implement equality and rights of persons

The first Work Package has organised the management of time, resources, tools and methods necessary for a correct performance of the activities. Coordination between the partners was ensured through specific tools such as a Partners' Agreement, a Management Manual, a cloud, ad hoc forms...

A special Quality Plan, with the provision of half-yearly reports, served to monitor and evaluate the progress of the project in its parts and as a whole.

WP2. Emotional Education Paths

Objectives

- Systematize and disseminate specific tools and methods for therapeutic interventions aimed at victims of violence based on Emotional Education.
- Increase the skills of professionals and organisations working with these groups in the use of tools and methods implemented.
- Strengthen cooperation between professionals and organisations.

The objectives were pursued under the responsibility and coordination of RUM-BOS (Spain) through the structuring of an appropriate research-experimentation-production path that led to the creation of various deliverables (D2.x).

We started from preliminary research (D2.1) on the best practices and methodologies used in other contexts by crossing these experiences with the specific reference literature and the previous experience of the partners.

It was discussed in a first internal Workshop (D2.2) by a research team composed of operators made available by the partner organisations.

D2.1 and the training activity have served to direct the creation of a special methodology based on the pro-

duction of a Curriculum (D2.4) for the structuring of Emotional Education courses for victims of violence and the related Guidelines (D2.3) for operators who are interested in using the therapeutic intervention proposals of DEEP ACTS.

Before the final release of the Curriculum and Guidelines, the two deliverables were tested in a special Pilot Course (D2.5) attended by women victims of abuse and violence and were again discussed in a last internal Workshop (D2.6).

For the mainstreaming of DEEP ACTS tools and methodologies, a specific Curriculum (D2.7) has been structured to organise training events aimed at therapeutic operators and some specific Workshops (D2.8) have been carried out in Italy and Spain in which to transfer the knowledge established to professionals and organisations of the two partner countries.

WP3. Therapeutic services centred on art

Objectives

- Systematize and disseminate specific tools and methods for therapeutic interventions aimed at victims of violence based on Art Therapy.
- Increase the skills of professionals and organisations working with these groups in the use of tools and methods implemented.
- Strengthen cooperation between professionals and organisations.

The objectives were pursued under the responsibility and coordination of Fermata d'Autobus (Italy) structuring an identical path for Art Therapy to the one indicated above for WP2 and carrying out the same types of activities and *Deliverables* (D3.x).

WP4. Awareness-Raising

Objectives

- Inform operators, organisations and stakeholders about the results of the project and promote its enhancement and sustainability;
- Raise awareness among the general public.

WP4 was mainly based on three artistic pillars: Outsider Art, Theatre and audiovisuals (for the various products see Part IV and website).

Outsider Art was chosen for its link with Art Therapy, one of the guidelines of the project. It represents a spontaneous art, without cultural pretensions and often without any reflection expressed by non-professionals who operate outside the conventional aesthetic norms (self-taught, subjects with psychic and / or social discomfort, people completely fasting of artistic culture ...).

The Nobel Committee for the Disabled has a long tradition in this field having already organised several editions of the Outsider Art Festival. For these reasons they were responsible, together with Fermata d'Autobus, for a special OA Virtual Gallery and for the realization of the 2021 edition with a focus on women and victims of gender violence held in Turin from 24 September to 14 October 2021 with various exhibitions and events.

The Portuguese theatre company ASTA produced a special play (Maquina de Encarnar) which toured Italy, Portugal and Spain in the three languages of the partner countries.

The Association Nuovi Linguaggi, based in Ancona, has created a Docufilm that told the story of the project in poetic form and also a video of the play. Both audiovisuals have been subtitled in English, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.

WP5. Information, communication, dissemination and enhancement

Objectives

- Inform, communicate, disseminate, enhance the project and its outputs and outcomes towards professionals and organisations that deal with victims of violence, stakeholders and a generalist public.
- Networking between professionals and organisations that deal with victims of violence.

Methods and tools used to pursue the first objective were above all: a specific website, social networks, web campaigns, press releases and newsletters. For the second objective we signed twinning protocols with six other European projects and participated in as many conference activities in which we presented DEEP ACTS. This activity has allowed us to implement our network and create new partnerships of European design.

PAPERS

Management products: Management manual in Italian and Spanish, 5 Periodic Reports, Quality Plan, Communication Plan, Database.

Publications in English, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese.

- Art Therapy Research
- Art Therapy curriculum for courses aimed at users
- Art Therapy guidelines for courses aimed at users
- Art Therapy Curriculum for workshops aimed at operators
- Emotional Education Research
- Emotional Education Curriculum for courses aimed at users
- Emotional Education Guidelines for courses aimed at users

- Emotional Education Curriculum for workshops aimed at operators
- End-of-project booklet
- tugal and Spain
- Show-Conference in Italy, Portugal and Spain

TRAINING ACTIVITIES

The following have been organised:

- 4 workshops for the research group, 2 Art Therapy and 2 Emotional Education
- 4 workshops for external operators, 2 Art Therapy and 2 Emotional Education
- 2 pilot courses with final report, 1 Art Therapy and 1 Emotional Education

AWARENESS RAISING

- Outsider Art: Festival 2020 and 2021, Exhibition and Virtual Gallery
- Audiovisuals: Docufilm and Video of theatrical piece in English, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish.
- Theatre: Theatrical piece "Maquina de encarnar" and tours in Italy, Por-

WEB

- Website
- Facebook and Instagram pages
- Virtual Gallery
- E-learning Platform
- Cloud

COMMUNICATION & NETWORKING

- Communication and Information: newsletters, press releases and web campaigns
- Networking: twinning with 6 other projects in Italy, Portugal and Spain
- Conferences: interventions in webinars, seminars, conferences and congresses in Italy, Portugal and Spain

TIMING

DEEP ACTS PROJECT TIMETABLE																								
YEAR	2020										2021										2022			
MONTH	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M
WP1 - Project Management																								
Meetings and Reports																								
E-learning Platform																								
Project Booklet																								
WP2 - Emotional Education Pathways																								
Research D2.1																								
Guidelines D2.3																								
Curriculum D2.4																								
Training Activities																								
WP3 - Art Centered Therapy Services																								
Research D2.1																								
Guidelines D2.3																								
Curriculum D2.4																								
Training Activities																								
WP4 - Awareness raising																								
Outsider Art																								
Show																								
Show Conferences																								
Audiovisuals																								
WP5 - Information, Communication, Dissemination and Valorisation																								
Website																								
Press releases, Newsletters, Web Campaigns																								
Networking																								

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[See: www.deepacts.eu/team-2]

PART II
EMOTIONAL EDUCATION



EMOTIONAL EDUCATION

Irene Rodríguez García, María del Mar García Candáu,
Lilían de Martino (coordinator)

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we want to describe the experience derived from the therapeutic intervention of Emotional Education with a group of women at the RUMBOS headquarters.

RUMBOS - Recursos Educativos Especializados, Sociedad Cooperativa Andaluza de Interés Social is a company specialized in the training, research and implementation of Intelligence and Emotional Education programs in the educational, health, business and family fields. With an experience of 9 years and with more than 18 trainers in this area, we face our task in the different areas of work through the most innovative techniques for the development of Emotional Education. In recent years, Rumbos has become a cutting-edge benchmark in emotional management, conflict resolution and prevention, innovation in educational models and teacher training, all without abandoning daily work in the classroom, to always be aware of the reality of educational communities and the issues that require greater support.

Rumbos has a long history of Emotional Education.

Since 2013 they have been carrying out a program with different age groups with the aim of creating a space where children can recognize their emotions, learn the function of each of them, and

relate to these emotions in a healthy way. Based on our experience with groups of both girls and boys, we decided to implement this Emotional Education space with a group of women. The group generates the development of a support network where everyone feels heard, seen and respected for what they are.

When the person is in a protected space, where there is control and acceptance of what he or she manifests, they feel welcomed, heard and seen; this facilitates the expression of one's feelings and, ultimately, self-acceptance.

Our work with these women is based on the process of psychoeducation, which allows a knowledge of oneself and the understanding of themselves and their ways of thinking, feeling and acting. With this process of Emotional Education the idea is to gain in personal coherence, thanks to which one can live more in accordance with what they want, feel and think.

EMOTIONAL EDUCATION

By Emotional Education we mean all those aspects related to the understanding of emotions in the human being, as well as the management or regulation of them.

We could compare the set of emotions to a palette of colours. The greater the diversity of tones, the greater the range of possibilities when it comes to representing reality on the canvas. Each of the colours contained in that palette will be a different shade that will enrich the final painting. In the same way, different emotions enrich our existence: joy, curiosity, sadness, anger, fear, disgust... All of them are equally necessary because they inform us of the different

needs. Joy invites us to celebrate what we desire and have. Sadness makes it easier for us to say goodbye to what is no longer there or what we have lost, predisposing ourselves to the new. Anger or rage pushes us to put limits on what we don't want or don't like. Fear informs us of danger and pushes us to protect ourselves.

All emotions have a function in us. However, some of these emotions have a bad reputation and so we tend to re-

Emotions



ject certain states related, for example, to sadness and anger. Often, the management of emotions is confused with their repression.

Not giving ourselves permission to be sad when we have lost something, or getting angry when something has bothered us, over time often leads us to not understand what is happening to us or what we really need. We frequently receive implicit messages from the outside that invite us not to experience those emotions that put us in touch with pain or the unpleasant. However, true emotion management involves the ability to recognize what I feel, to understand that what I feel makes sense or has reason to be there, and ultimately to allow me to feel it. When I'm able to treat myself with respect for what I feel (even if I don't like it), I'm adjusting myself emotionally.

When we work with people who have experienced difficult events, emotional regulation becomes an indispensable prerequisite for dealing with these personal stories. Learning to manage what we feel and understand its function places us in a different place, a place

that gives us a more understanding view of ourselves and what has happened to us.

NERVOUS SYSTEM AND EMOTIONS

Our organism is an integrated whole. Nothing that happens on a mental level in our thoughts goes unnoticed by the body and vice versa.

Everything that happens at the body level is transmitted to the brain. We can therefore distinguish two directions in terms of information: "top-down" (from the brain to the body) and "bottom-up" (from the body to the brain).

Numerous studies show that 80% of information travels from the body to the brain, compared to 20% that goes from the brain to the body.

This has a big impact on our lives. Our psycho-emotional state will be largely marked by our bodily state.

The well-known beneficial effects on our minds of practices such as yoga, breathing, meditation, walking, and dancing, reveal this continuous interaction between body and brain.

Responsible for this brain-body con-

nection is the so-called autonomic nervous system (ANS). This system has the responsibility to detect the level of safety or danger that surrounds us and to be able to respond accordingly and lead us to a higher level of safety.

Knowing our nervous system

In 1995, Stephen Porges, an American neuroscientist, developed the so-called Polyvagal Theory. Knowledge of this theory revolutionized the field of psychological therapy, as well as other help-oriented approaches.

Polyvagal Theory helps us understand the intimate relationship between mind and body, and how the body acts as a regulator of our mental states. Prior to this theory, the existence of the autonomic nervous system (ANS) and its two divisions was known: sympathetic autonomic nervous system (SNS) and parasympathetic autonomic nervous system (PSNS).

The first, the SNS, is activated in dangerous situations; it is the "fight or flight" response to stimuli that call into question our survival. PSNS, on the other hand, comes into operation in the states of "rest and digestion".

In this context, polyvagal theory expands the scope of the ANS. To understand this extension, we must talk about the main protagonist of this system - the vagus nerve.

The vagus nerve is one of the 12 cranial nerves, specifically the tenth cranial nerve. This nerve has two branches that, leaving the base of the brain (brain stem), reach different organic structures. On the one hand, the so-called ventral branch of the vagus nerve innervates the muscles of the face and heart. On the other, the dorsal branch of the vagus nerve descends into the pel-

vic area innervating most of the organs of the abdomino-pelvic cavity. The activation of one branch or another will depend on the level of safety/danger captured by our nervous system.

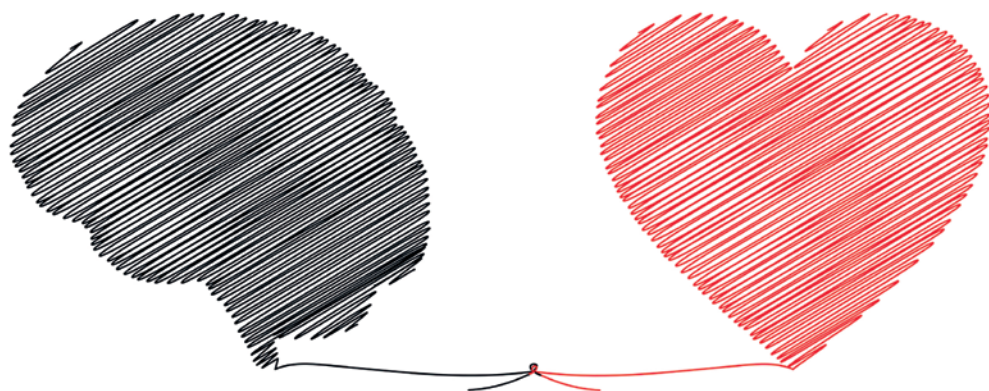
So, if we are in safe conditions, it will be the ventral vagal branch that acts, allowing us the feeling of calm, security and, therefore, the connection with others and the environment. If our system captures a certain degree of insecurity or danger to our survival, the sympathetic branch is activated, allowing the activation of a fight or flight response. If the situation of insecurity becomes to some extent threatening to the life of the person, the dorsal vagal branch will be activated leading the organism to a state of paralysis, isolation and, finally, collapse. The goal of activating these three branches is the same: to safeguard the body from dangers or vital threats by bringing it into a safe situation.

The activation of each of these branches of the ANS generates different bodily sensations. When the system detects a high level of security in the environment, we can enjoy the feelings of calm, tranquillity and connection. Activation of the ventral vagal branch acts on the heart and striated muscles of the face and throat, allowing for friendly expression, a calm and warm tone of voice, and a heart rate in accordance with these states.

Being in this area of the autonomous scale, as Deb Dana calls it, allows us to exercise a regulation on the people with whom we interact, that is, our ANS communicates this state of calm without us realizing it.

Here is the key to bodily communication that goes beyond words and, in most cases, our consciousness.

Mind and body



When our body detects a certain level of insecurity or danger, even if we cannot consciously recognize it, the ANS responds through the activation of the sympathetic branch.

This neural network sets in motion the mobilization response, which results in an increase in metabolism, as well as the elevation of the heart and respiratory rate, with the aim of providing the striated musculature with the nutritional contributions necessary for muscle activity, which will allow us movement to “fight or flee”.

When we are in this region of the scale we feel stressed, even reaching irritability if these states of mobilization are maintained over time. If the organism has not been able to reach the level of security it needs, the activation of the dorsal vagal branch leads the system to enter “energy saving” mode, which results in feelings of isolation, apathy, disinterest and, finally, in a depressive state and collapse.

Nervous system and trauma

By virtue of our experiences, especially the early ones, our autonomic nervous system will configure itself to respond to different stimuli and conditions based on previous experience.

In this sense, the experiences that caused a strong emotional impact and that could not be integrated when they occurred, dispose the nervous system to fight, flee or isolate itself.

These experiences leave an imprint on the neural network in the people concerned. Women victims of gender-based violence will perceive or feel the world and, especially, relationships, as dangerous, so they will activate defensive responses to seemingly neutral stimuli.

In this sense, the intervention from a bodily perspective takes on a new dimension under the neuroscientific results, becoming the ideal approach for reparative intervention in cases of trauma.

Those who have suffered traumatic episodes usually present high levels of stress, anxiety, isolating behaviours, amplified alertness, insomnia, depression; in short, all of this speaks of a strong change in the regulation of the autonomic nervous system. Given this reduced quality of life in traumatized people, the development of resources and useful tools for their stabilization and symptomatic relief on a daily basis becomes vital.

CARDIAC COHERENCE AND EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Throughout history, many cultures and peoples have spoken of the heart as a source of inner knowledge and guidance. Currently, scientific studies shed light on what was already known in the past intuitively.

Today we know that the heart is an information processing centre in the body that continuously sends signals to the brain and the rest of the body. The heart has a complex nervous system that allows connection with the brain. The heart sends signals to the amygdala, an emotional processing centre located in the brain, and to the thalamus, a structure that synchronizes our cortical functions and from where we make decisions and plan. Therefore, brain function will depend on the information that comes from the heart.

The heart produces a powerful electromagnetic field that is modified by our emotions. The intelligence of our heart

underpins some of the highest human values, including appreciation, compassion, unconditional love, positive affection, and patience.

Heart intelligence is also the basis of intuitive wisdom and knowledge that goes beyond logical thinking or linear reasoning patterns.

One of the most striking aspects of this heart-brain connection is that the heart sends much more information to the brain than the brain sends to the heart. The anatomical-physiological basis of this fact is once again found in the autonomic nervous system. The vagus nerve has 80% of the connections that go from the organs to the brain (bottom-up), compared to 20% that goes down (top-down).

Cardiac coherence refers to that psychophysiological state in which the nervous, cardiovascular, hormonal and immune systems are coordinated efficiently and harmoniously. The researchers found that the heart rhythm pattern reflects the emotional state. Coherence refers to the cooperative alignment between heart, mind, and emotions. Coherence is associated with emotional balance, stability and access to intuition, as well as the optimization of higher cognitive faculties, such as attention, perception, mental clarity, memory and problem solving.

Consistency can be measured using technology that measures changes in heart rate, that is, the time that elapses between beats. We know this variable as heart rate variability (HRV). Research in this regard has shown that different cardiac patterns have different effects on cognitive and emotional functions. Stressful states and difficult emotions generate a chaotic pattern of heart rate variability.

As a result, neural information reaching the brain from the heart inhibits higher cognitive functions: how to remember, reason, learn and make effective decisions.

In contrast, regenerative emotions generate a smooth and orderly heart pattern, indicating greater cardiac coherence, which in turn facilitates cognitive functions and strengthens emotional stability.

Consistent heart rhythms send signals to the brain that predispose it to function mentally more clearly. Therefore, greater consistency affects the way we perceive, think, feel and act.

Practicing cardiac coherence for a few minutes a day benefits the body and improves the natural intuitive ability, which will help us make better decisions for ourselves.

Some of the effects of a continued practice of cardiac coherence include:

- maintain greater mental and emotional stability,
- restore emotional balance in situations of stress or overload,
- balancing affectivity,
- improve organic regeneration processes.

Our emotional world colours our daily lives. Some emotional states can be very painful and difficult to sustain, especially when we talk about trauma. In this sense, the practice of cardiac coherence becomes fundamental as a regulator of our internal states.

Being able to regulate these emotional states gives us a new perspective on the possibility of choosing our emotional state and not being a victim of our emotions.

From the approach of the polyvagal theory previously exposed, some of

these people may be trapped in a permanent “fight or flight” response style, or at the other extreme, be frozen and paralyzed in their daily lives.

From neuro-cardiology we know that the heart is directly connected to the amygdala, the structure of the limbic system involved in emotional experience. Learning to self-regulate the autonomic nervous system is an empowering experience for people, especially for those who have lost confidence in their ability to calm down and experience pleasurable states.

Although there are several techniques for the development of the state of cardiac coherence, the basis is the same and is described below.

It is about focusing attention on the central area of the chest, where the heart is located.

Next, imagine that the air we inhale enters directly into the heart through the centre of the chest and that it also comes out of there when we exhale. It is important to breathe more deeply and calmly than usual. After a while, as we breathe, we can evoke a positive or regenerating feeling such as gratitude, appreciation, love, or compassion for something or someone. If we can get into this feeling we try to keep it for a few minutes with the intention of amplifying this sense of well-being.

BODY MOVEMENT FROM BIODANZA

As trauma psychotherapy professionals, we know that traumatic experiences are recorded in the body, not just the brain. In fact, many times, it is not remembered in the form of images but at

the level of bodily sensations. We have a nervous system that begins to take shape while we are children, and even earlier.

Our nervous system lived in the same house as us and attended the same school as us. For this reason, we decided to include in the work with women a psycho-corporal approach that combined the most conscious or cognitive aspects with the more corporal or somatic ones.

Among all the bodily approaches, we have chosen Biodanza for several reasons. On the one hand, it consolidates as a system of organic and affective integration, which means that it helps regulate people's nervous system through a sequence of exercises and movements in line with music.

Biodanza helps to recover or strengthen the potential inherent in the human being: the ability to feel alive (vitality), the ability to feel positive affection towards oneself and other people (affectivity), the ability to enjoy and feel pleasure (sexuality), the ability to create (creativity) and the ability to feel an integral part of something greater than oneself (transcendence). The development of these skills leads us to a more satisfying life experience and in accordance with our needs.

In a Biodanza session, music plays a central role. It is music that allows people to access certain emotional states during the session.

The musical repertoire in Biodanza is extensive and is intentionally selected according to the quality we want to work on.

For example, there is music that facilitates the state of joy, calmness of others, personal power, lightness, strength,

affection towards other people, reflection on oneself, etc.

In the Biodanza session only the facilitator of the session speaks. It is important to access the somatic or bodily experience to enable the full experience. Verbal expression leads us to thinking and makes us lose ourselves in the cognitive paths in which we usually move daily. For their part, the person facilitating the session will use language only to clearly indicate the exercise. Getting into redundant digressions or explanations again facilitates cognitive activation by diverting the body's attention.

The Biodanza integration system was created by Rolando Toro as a method to improve the expression and integration of identity.

Biodanza is not free dance, it is a process of personal transformation from the group context, where there is inclusion and the feeling of belonging and acceptance of each person in the group.

A Biodanza session is an experience of personal transformation and as such requires an adequate space, where calm is ensured and not the interruption of the dynamic. It is important to create a warm and welcoming environment, where participants can express and develop their vital and human potential.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROGRESSIVITY

At an early stage, the goal is that the participants feel welcomed, respected for what they are and for what they bring, as well as being able to develop the feeling of belonging to the group in formation.

In the first lessons, the session aims to

connect with the joy of living, to return to the body, to feel alive through body movement, rhythm, fluidity and games. In these first lessons, participants learn to let go of movements, to develop their rhythmicity and to dissolve their tensions. The goal is for participants to connect with their ability to feel alive, more relaxed, to breathe better, and to connect with inner feelings of well-being. Some exercises suitable for the development of these aspects are:

- Experience different rhythms: accelerated, slow, cadenced, medium.
- Group tour: through these tours the participants have the opportunity to enter the group meeting through the rhythm that marks the music. The laps are characterized by being conducted by group movement and not individual.
- Walking: There is a wide range of types of walking. From a walk that connects with joy, to calm and peaceful walking, to rhythmic and melodic walking.
- Playful exercises: the game comes from spontaneity. The game involves the relationship with other people and participation in joy and relaxation. The goal is to have fun without the expectation of learning. In the beginning, it is important that the games involve a minimum of exposure and motor challenge, as well as minimal contact. All these factors will be progressively incorporated organically and naturally with the group's journey through the sessions.
- Fluidity: Fluidity in movement is the intermediate point between tension and relaxation. In Biodanza there are multiple dances of fluidity since they help regulate muscle tone and,

therefore, on a deeper level, emotional tone.

In a second stage, the dissolution of inhibitions and blockages is stimulated, allowing the connection with emotions and affectivity.

The dissolution of chronic blockages and tensions occurs in Biodanza through the movement of the so-called segments (neck, shoulders, chest / arms and waist).

At the physiological level, this phase allows parasympathetic activation through vagus nerve stimulation, acetylcholine production, rest promotion and organic repair.

At a more advanced stage, we will work on expressive-motor integration. The so-called Biodanza generating positions are included here.

They are gestures that together with music evoke universal experiences, accumulated in the history of humanity. Some of which are:

- Intimacy: meeting and connecting with oneself. Research and experience of our centre/axis.
- Value: Experience the sense of value of self as a creature that is part of the universe.
- Protecting life: connection with the ability to care, preserve and protect life as it is presented.
- Giving, asking and receiving: developing essential feelings for the affective flow to be given in coexistence. The experience of these positions helps to generate balanced and pleasant social relationships.
- Limitations: It is essential to develop the ability to listen to our needs, as well as to inform other people of those needs. Through this move-

ment, we learn to break off any type of contact or unpleasant or invasive approach for the person. We work on the ability to communicate the desire to approach, to listen to the limits of the other person and to communicate one's own limits.

THE LINES OF EXPERIENCE IN BIODANZA

In Biodanza we distinguish five lines of experience or potentiality: vitality, affectivity, creativity, sexuality and transcendence. These potentialities are in our DNA as a human species, that is, they have a biological anchor.

Let's now look at the fundamentals of these lines of experience.

Vitality

This line of experience is about increasing the level of health, the ability to rest, organic and biological harmony, motivation and strength to live and the impulse to action. Vitality pushes us to be aware of our needs (nutrition, pleasure, rest, space...), giving us the energy to satisfy them.

The effect of vitality occurs at the cellular level.

Revitalizing experiences directly affect the nervous, endocrine and immune systems. There is a natural secretion of hormones, enzymes and neurotransmitters, which lead to the restoration of homeostasis and self-regulation of basic biological functions.

Vitality is linked to *joie de vivre* and enthusiasm. Vitality guides and gives strength to life.

The effects of increased vitality in daily life are better quality of sleep, relax-

ation, organic well-being, increased energy and increased life.

Sexuality

Sexuality is much more than sex and genitality, it is the pleasure of living. All dynamics and dances related to the line of sexuality aim to dissolve tensions and savour the pleasure of walking, communicating, feeling oneself and feeling other people. It is a relearning the enjoyment of living and enjoying everyday life, of deconstructing the cultural armour that associates sexuality with dirtiness, in order to allow a sexuality with beauty, innocence and sacredness.

It is important to keep in mind the profile and history of the people we work with, since it will be essential to respect the progressivity in the proposals we make in this line of experience. Although most people like to be stroked, not all of them are ready to supplement this experience. It will be essential to explain the proposals of the line of sexuality so that they are contextualized and we assume a pleasant and not distressing experience. In this sense, it will also be important to keep in mind the ability to set limits and respect them, with the aim of creating a comfortable space for everyone.

One aspect that incorporates this line of experience is the sinuosity in the movement. Music with Latin rhythms, samba, salsa, jazz, invite you to enjoy the pleasure of moving.

Attention is paid to the pelvic and scapular waist.

One of the key exercises is the exercise of the pelvic segments. The daily effect of the experience of sexuality in Biodanza is the connection with the pleasure of everyday things, such as

sunbathing, tasting food, the smell of fruits and aromas, a bath etc. In short, it is about redefining pleasure, being able to open up to it from enjoyment and not from guilt.

Creativity

In this sense, creativity is the force that allows us to transcend the standardized and automatic patterns in our lives. Connecting with creativity means embracing chaos, allowing oneself to go beyond conventional and established margins.

In the line of creativity, it facilitates play, experimentation, trying new things and even making mistakes without moralism. The evolution of life involves trial and error, and the same is true for the human being. Who does not make mistakes does not create.

The exploratory instinct is what leads us to be creative, to get out of the pack and to be able to find our uniqueness. Kierkegaard said that "venturing is risky, but to stop daring is to lose oneself." The line of creativity pushes us to be more than we are.

In Biodanza sessions, creativity aims to evoke experiences of permission of expression, both corporal and vocal. It is a question of overcoming repressive mandates, of getting out of stereotyped and mechanical movements.

Affectivity

Affectivity we understand as "the world of feelings", as Rolando Toro described it. The line of experience of affectivity is implicit in all Biodanza sessions, from the initial to the most advanced phases. Affectivity implies a bond, and in this sense, it will be necessary to respect the rhythm of each person in the group. Setting boundaries is part of integrating

affective potential. Setting limits and respecting them is an act of love for oneself and for the other person.

As happens outside of a Biodanza group, the continuum of affectivity implies desires, expectations, fears, frustrations, jealousy, envy, pain, happiness, joy, compassion, friendship... It is because of this breadth included in affectivity that our society fears the affective encounter with the other person. Without a doubt, it carries a risk to the structure or mask of our personality. Therefore, opening ourselves up to affectivity implies learning to reject it.

The line of affectivity begins in Biodanza from the look. In the encounter through the gaze we learn again to look without having to act or add words. With this new contemplative gaze that we develop in Biodanza, we become aware of the uniqueness of each person, so similar and different from us at the same time.

The musical domain in the line of affectivity focuses on melody. Rhythm is the bond through joy; melody is the bond through affection and intimacy.

Some of the feelings evoked in this line are tenderness, compassion, solidarity, a sense of belonging and community love. At the physiological level, the experience of affectivity involves the production of binding neurotransmitters such as oxytocin and vasopressin.

The integration of affectivity into our lives leads us to a greater capacity for intimacy, to the balance between giving and receiving, to an increase in self-esteem and to overcoming the fear of rejection.

Some of the aspects that indicate the evolution in the line of affectivity are:

- Learning to set limits;
- Meeting of nutritious relationships;

- Balance between giving and receiving;
- Facilitating self-well-being and community.

Transcendence

Transcendence is understood as the ability to go beyond self-perception, our individual reality. We are part of a whole and it is through the development of the line of transcendence that we accept to feel an integral part of that whole. On a physical level we are connected to other beings through breathing. We take the air that other beings have previously taken. We are inevitably connected.

The line of experience of transcendence stimulates the expansion of consciousness.

Transcendence begins with vitality, with intensified self-awareness. On a deeper level, from feeling so alive, we come to experience life overflowing beyond our being; from intensified self-consciousness to self-dissolution.

At that point it's no longer just me, I've expanded my boundaries. Even though I see my bodily limit, I feel wider, the senses open more and consciousness expands.

OUR PROPOSAL: A COURSE ON EMOTIONAL EDUCATION AND MOVEMENT

From this theoretical framework, we found interesting the proposal to carry out a therapeutic intervention program with women based on Emotional Education and body movement.

The main aspect on which we carry out work with women is based on self-care.

Given the complexity of the personal stories of women who have suffered gender-based violence, we rely on the concept of self-care developed by González and Mosquera in the field of complex trauma (Mosquera, 2004; Gonzalez 2007; Mosquera and González, 2011; González and Mosquera, 2012).

People who grow up in an abusive environment do not internalize a healthy model of self-care (Chu, 1998; Ryle, 2002), and are more likely to contract abusive relationships in adulthood.

Attitudes of self-care and self-esteem will not develop in those people who lived in environments where their reference adults did not appreciate them or did not take care of them. Many of these people have learned from their experience that need is dangerous or selfish and therefore not allowed. Many others have even learned to punish themselves instead of curing themselves, so after a while these people look at themselves as their reference figures did with them.

Our aim with this course is to restore the model of positive and healthy self-care. We want to develop the loving gaze that every human being can give to themselves.

So, we investigate how the person is treated, how they speak to themselves internally, whether or not they seek help when they feel bad and whether they let themselves be helped. It is important to know how we take care of ourselves in general, to come to understand that if we do not protect ourselves from what hurts us and / or do not ask for what we need, it is easier for us to feel bad.

Emotional Psychoeducation in this aspect will be in line with the under-

standing that what we do as adults we learned to do as children, imitating what they did with us. In this sense, many of the people who do not take care of themselves as adults do so as a reflection of how they were cared for as children.

On an emotional level, we also learn to disconnect from what we feel if when what we have expressed has been censored or not taken into account. Our work in these first sessions with women is to understand, without judging, what led them to enter into patterns of abusive relationships.

Throughout the process, we place special emphasis on differentiating between what each of them is from what happened to them. Our goal is not to get into the memories or specific scenes of their story, but into the abilities and potential they have to redirect their lives. These potentialities are those that develop bodily through movement with Biodanza.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE EXPERIMENTAL PILOT COURSE

The course included 12 meetings at the headquarters of Rumbos, in Mairena del Aljarafe (Seville).

The sessions had a weekly frequency, lasting 3 hours each. Each session included two parts. In the first half there was a space of psychoeducation, and in the second part we carried out a body movement session.

The arrival at the course: the reunion

Arriving at the course is the moment of transition between an outer space, where often their needs are not prioritized, and a secure space where they can connect with what they feel and

need. In this first moment, we invited the participants to express how they came that day and to share what they wanted from what happened during that week.

Psychoeducation: learning and experimenting together

An essential part of our proposal with women in this course was psychoeducation, understanding with it everything that leads us to know ourselves and understand how we work in our daily lives. From our way of seeing personal accompaniment, we understand that it is necessary to enter into self-knowledge to really know our needs.

These needs, once recognized, will lead us to know how to occupy the spaces that take care of us, as well as to connect with those people who do us good.

After the initial welcome, we laid out the topic under discussion that day and, after a brief explanation of the concepts, we continued to propose some exercises or dynamics in which participants could bring to their personal experience what was working in that session. It is the time of the word, of the expression of intimacy and vulnerability.

Although every day we had a trace of the theme to be treated, we adapted from time to time to what the group of women expressed as relevant, in order to respond to the needs of the moment. Therefore, this initial welcome, in which each woman laid out how she felt and the relevant events of the week, served as an orientation to the present moment.

Sharing in a group the reflections and elaborations made by each of the

women, involves a process of self-recognition and personal empowerment. Empathetic listening by women has strengthened the participation of all of them. In this sense, as we progressed in the sessions, the need to express ourselves and share with each other grew. For us, as facilitators, the level of participation is an index of self-reaffirmation and trust.

Rest

After this first part, we granted a rest time of about 15 minutes. The idea here was not only to offer a snack, but also to provide women with a meeting space outside the course structure, where they could establish contact with whoever they wanted outside the group context, facilitating the generation of a support network. In addition, this pause helped to differentiate the

time of psychoeducation (more cognitive) from the time of movement (corporeal).

Body in motion

In the second part of the sessions, movement and music took over the space. We chose Biodanza as a psycho-corporeal approach for the power it exerts on both physiological and affective integration.

With this approach we intended to facilitate the anchoring or embodiment of those skills that these women have less developed, such as empowerment, fluidity, the ability to set limits, the balance between giving and receiving, freedom of expression and positive affection towards themselves and others.

The movement of the body through Biodanza opens a space that goes be-

Group sharing



Bodies in motion



yond the word, allowing the expression of what cannot be said. The body exercises in Biodanza are intended to activate natural movement patterns that have often been blocked by difficult life experiences and/or limiting cultural patterns.

Goodbye

The farewell moment of each session we consider just as important as the initial reception.

At the end of the Biodanza session, we join in a circle by hands or with arms around the waist as a sign of support and the group bond. At this point we open the space for a short word or expression before saying goodbye until the next session.

THE CONTEXT

One of the aspects we take care of in our centre when working with people is the physical space. For this course, we have chosen one of the most spacious rooms available in our centre. This room has both natural light and adjustable warm lights for the planned activities.

The adjustable lamps are suitable to match the different moments, creating specific environments depending on each activity or situation. For us as facilitators of the course it is important to take care of these aspects, since far from a solely aesthetic vision, these factors help the nervous system to lower the level of alertness and participants can feel that the environment generates calm and security.

For this same reason, we decided to do the session on Friday afternoon as the centre is usually particularly quiet. We also decided to arrange the cush-

ions where we sat forming a circle in the centre of the room. Sitting on the floor instead of on the chairs facilitates spontaneity and, therefore, shows us in a more natural way. We also have blankets in the room in case they are needed.

Facilitators

If we had to choose a determining factor in the creation of a therapeutic space, it would undoubtedly be the accompaniment of the people leading the course. These facilitators will create a safe environment where participants can feel welcomed and empowered to share and express everything they need. The best way to achieve the development of good emotional management is to keep this in mind in a transversal way, that is, to know how to accompany the emotional states of the people with whom we work during the same session.

This "way of being" could be translated into some of the following aspects:

- calm and quiet attitude,
- active listening,
- intervene without judgment or correction,
- emotional support,
- promote repair through the accompaniment of bodily sensations and emotions,
- transmit confidence in one's ability to heal.

THE COURSE: RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

PARTICIPANTS

The course was aimed at women who have experienced or are experiencing situations of abuse of power in the family context, with the aim of facilitat-

ing the development of self-care and awareness of their potential.

Of the 8 women who were initially interested in the course, 5 completed all the sessions.

One of the most important factors that influenced the regular participation in the course by the women was the difficulty of finding childcare during the session period. In anticipation of this situation, in Rumbos we gave the opportunity to children to stay in one of the rooms of the centre accompanied by volunteers from the scout group.

After the experience of the pilot course, we consider it very important to have this resource in order to facilitate the regular attendance of women to the group on a weekly basis.

THE CONTENT

Below are the themes and the main dynamics that we carry out during the sessions.

Self-care: the relationship with myself

One of the main topics we addressed in the course sessions was self-care. Usually, with this concept we evoke aspects related to physical care, such as the use of cosmetic products, the maintenance of aesthetics or the realization of a physical exercise that keeps us in shape. However, behind the concept of self-care opens a huge field of self-exploration.

Most of the women in our group reported feeling guilty about not being able to spend more time caring for their children or parents, feeling guilty about what happened in their relationships, being exhausted all the time or not having time for what they would like, as well as a long list of situations

that talk about the difficulty of finding a way to be kinder.

One of the central and most present themes throughout the course was the need to seek support in order to have time to take care of themselves and their needs.

Most of these women have a caregiver profile, so they are used to doing everything themselves, following the mandate "you have to look after yourself; asking for help is weak." In this sense, some of these women have generated a change in this pattern of daily action, getting help from relatives or acquaintances to have what they need.

The self-care that we propose in the group starts from knowing what I say to myself about what happens to me and what I feel.

"This will never end", "I can't take it anymore", "I can't stand it", "the same thing always happens to me", "I'm stupid", "I deserve it", "I should have predicted it", "I should do it differently", are some expressions that appear internally, usually automatically, that are usually not in line with helping us in the situation we are experiencing.

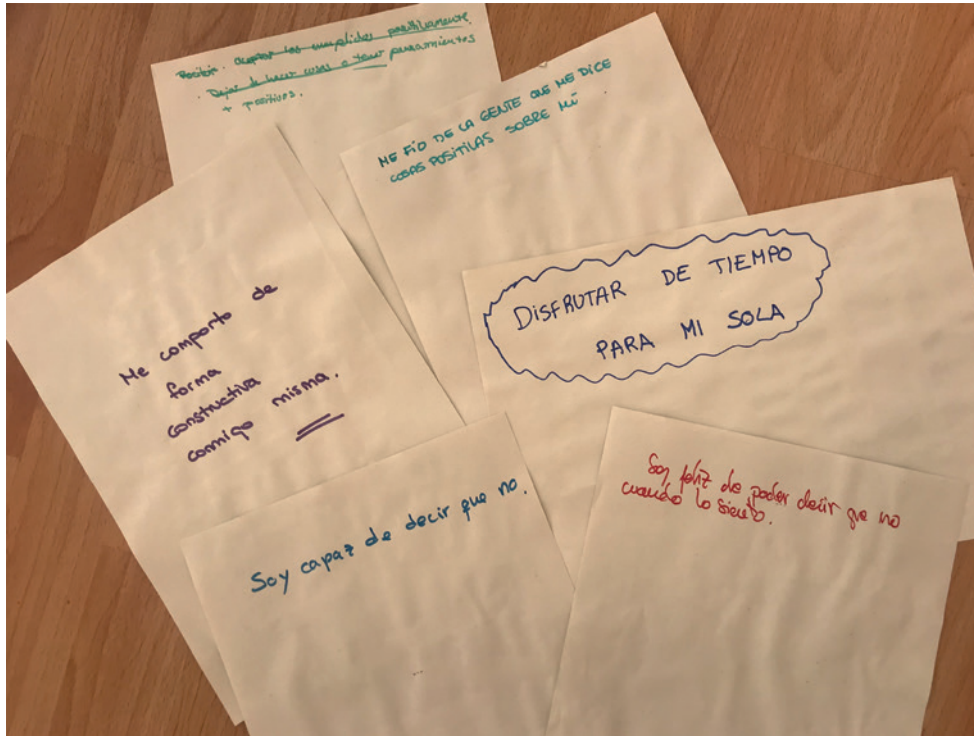
Starting to maintain the relationship with themselves was a great discovery for these women.

Often, critical and demanding voices appear in every step we take in life.

The awareness of this part of them was a turning point in the way they managed their reality.

Understanding the function of this instance and where they learned to treat themselves in this way helped them develop a more compassionate and conciliatory view of themselves.

Examining what cures them and what harms them has allowed them to take



Self-medication

targeted actions at a higher level of well-being and health.

Know your nervous system

When we access knowledge of our inner workings, we facilitate the development of our capacity for self-regulation. With this basic idea, we believe it is important that these women can deepen the functioning of their nervous system.

Based on this idea, we thought it appropriate that these women could explore the functioning of their nervous system.

According to the polyvagal theory discussed above, finding the triggers of the activation of the fight or flight system, the disengagement system or

the social commitment system allows people to become aware of what it does and does not do for them. In addition, this knowledge of their own inner workings endows them with a greater capacity for self-management of their own states.

After explaining the theoretical basis of the nervous system, we proposed as an exercise the elaboration of the personal autonomous map based on the therapeutic work of Deb Dana.

Using the symbolism of a scale, we represented the different physical-emotional states that are activated depending on the stimuli present.

The first steps of the staircase correspond to states related to safety, such as calm, tranquillity, connection, fun...

All these states become accessible when the nervous system perceives an adequate level of internal and external security.

However, when the perceived level of safety drops (because some factor appears that represents a certain danger or insecurity for the system), the sympathetic system will begin to activate with the consequent physiological and emotional responses (increased heart rate, increased respiratory rate, restlessness, anxiety ...).

All these responses go in the direction of facilitating the "fight or flight", which will help me solve the danger that my system recognizes, and therefore stimulates it to return to a higher level of security. If the level of danger becomes even more intense, becoming life threatening, we will descend a few more steps on the autonomous staircase to enter the ground of the disconnection system (dorsal vagal branch), where states related to apathy, fatigue, devitalization, immobilization, isolation and, finally, collapse will be activated.

This disconnection system involves the conservation of energy; it is an energy saving system when the demands compromise our survival.

In the group, each participant developed their own staircase, being able to identify and recognize which stimuli activate each of the security systems. The most relevant thing was to identify which actions, places, people, moments, made it easier for them to climb the staircase to a state of greater security and, therefore, greater well-being.

Calm resources

With calm resources we include all those tools that facilitate entry into a state of greater serenity.

Having strategies that help us regulate our physiological state gives us a greater ability to manage our emotions. Below are the two stellar resources that we put into practice during the course.

Cardiac coherence

We have explained in the previous sections the basics of cardiac coherence. We recall here the three points to be taken into account in the practice of this technique:

- Breathe slower and deeper than usual
- Focus attention on the centre of the chest by visualizing the air entering and leaving directly from here
- Evoke/activate regenerating feelings, such as gratitude, tranquillity, compassion, etc.

Most women said that this breathing exercise helped them lower the level of arousal they were experiencing a few moments earlier.

Place of calm

Another resource that we put into practice with women was the design of the calm place.

To access this place, we invited them to bring to mind the image of a landscape that for them generated tranquillity, a real or imaginary place that, just recreating it in their thoughts would lead them to feel calmer.

After some time spent mentally recreating this scene, the women depicted it with colours on cardboard, with the aim of capturing the nuances of these landscapes that generate calm.

This method was especially valuable to most of them, as they observed that after visualization they felt particularly calm and in a state of well-being that was not usual for them.



Place of calm

The family system: being part of something greater than ourselves

We are not alone in this world. Our life is full of legacies that have been passed down in many cases from generation to generation. Today,

Bert Hellinger's Family Constellations provide us with an expanded view of the family system to which we belong. Although in our direct intervention with women we will not delve into transgenerational issues, our gaze as facilitators includes each of the family systems of the women we will work with.

We understand that much of what they have experienced is rooted in stories that go beyond their life stories and that concern people they probably did not know. However, what has not been recognized, liberated or expressed seeks reparation in future generations.

Often, the difficulties that recur in people's lives respond to invisible bonds with the people of their family system. In addition to this inclusive and respectful look from the facilitators of the

group, we proposed the genogram to help the integration of what has not yet been recognized or seen. After each of the women completed the genogram, we offered healing phrases to orient them toward the family system they came from.

The idea of this proposal is to generate greater peace and personal freedom to the extent that we can let go of what happened at that moment with those people and take our life as it comes here and now.

After the course, we observed the need to spend more time reflecting on the family of origin and the influence it has on our behaviour in adulthood. Shedding light on these aspects gives us a greater degree of freedom to be able to choose what we want in life. Participants showed a lot of interest and surprise at the idea of learning about the impact on their lives of what they incorporated from their parents or family ancestors.

One of the innovative proposals we

made in the pilot group was the work with family constellations.

In this sense, the dynamics of the creation of the genogram, as well as the healing phrases that they could address to the family system in a guided form, was particularly reconciling for women. Often, women involved in abusive relationships have a history of abuse, which is passed down from generation to generation. Being able to "see" this and understand it is deeply healing for them and therefore for the family system from which they come.

We move as we live, we live as we move

During the Biodanza sessions, we observed how the group evolved in relation to the ability to tolerate positive feelings. In Biodanza, a large part of the session is dedicated to the experience of feelings. We observed how the way of looking at each other and the physical proximity increased, always respecting the individual rhythm of each participant. This is particularly valuable given the complexity that occurs at the social level in relation to the expression of affectivity.

The experience that some women had in the Biodanza sessions was revealing. Many of them referred to the embarrassment they felt at certain proposals in which they were invited to look at each other or walk hand in hand with another partner.

The difference in some of the dances proposed in the sessions was also remarkable.

The generative position of identity implies the connection with the most intimate part of oneself. In the first sessions, it was difficult to immerse oneself in the memory to maintain this identity.

At the end of the course, most of the women came into intimate contact with themselves from a more natural place. We observe something similar in the generative position of value, in which one is invited through bodily position and music to connect with one's own power and internal value.

THE GROUP

One of the main pillars of this course was the creation of the group space where participants could talk and share their experience with other women. For most of them, this was something completely new. Feeling heard and understood in what they expressed was undoubtedly an experience that comforted them in their pain. In addition, the fact of concretising in words what they feel or think has helped them to become more aware of their reality and their needs in the face of this reality. This awareness gives them a greater degree of freedom in their choices and, therefore, greater self-responsibility.

Without a doubt, feeling heard without judgment is restorative for anyone. When what we express involves contact with pain, attentive, non-judgmental listening becomes a crucial experience.

One of the consequences of trauma in people's lives is the loss of the feeling of belonging. In this sense, the creation of a group space where, session after session, they opened their hearts to each other, created a support network that continued beyond the course at the Rumbos headquarters. The fact that they can feel an integral part of this group has generated in them a feeling of unity and support.

The women took home their creations at the end of the course. It was interest-

ing and revealing for them to see where they were when they started the course and where they are now after this experience.

All the women who finished the course showed their gratitude for the work

proposed during the pilot course. All of them noted the benefit of knowing many of the resources made available, as well as the space offered to be able to share part of their experiences and feelings.

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PART III

ART THERAPY



ART THERAPY

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INTRODUCTION

Fermata d'Autobus is an Association founded in 1998 on the initiative of Raffaella Bortino, which defines as its field of intervention the double diagnosis (ie the treatment and treatment of psychic disorders related to various forms of pathological addiction such as drug addiction, alcoholism, addiction to gambling, the internet, affective addiction) and represents one of the first attempts to integrate the behaviourist model with the psychoanalytic one in the treatment of addictions.

In 2013, a new structure was added to the existing therapeutic communities in the circuit, called Fragole Celesti, specifically intended to treat double diagnosis in women victims of abuse, mistreatment and violence.

In our long clinical experience, we have understood how in the care of human frailties, and in particular in the treatment of women victims of violence, combining traditional care with the possibility of carrying out expressive activities is a fundamental and indispensable element.

The expressive workshops represent structured activities that assume a specific rehabilitative function and aim to verify, promote and support the resources of the residents, promoting and expanding the relational dimension, expanding their boundaries of movement,

helping to bring out potential and resources that would barely be expressible exclusively through the verbal channel.

In particular, the meetings of clinical art therapy and photo-art therapy allow the expression and communication of analogue, non-verbal language, which gives space and frees the unconscious mind.

The function of protection and containment of the group then generates a careful and flexible company of help and support for the reconstruction of the self. In addition to the opportunity to express emotions, object realisations become a means of supporting the Ego and help the development of a new identity.

Art therapy, thanks to the relationship that is established between the patient and the art therapist through the mediation of the visual product, becomes the tool to reach the unconscious contents otherwise difficult to access, to fight blocks and stereotypes and to free the imagination.

Women who have suffered mistreatment and / or abuse, carry heavy experiences within them. They have deep wounds that go deep into the soul and that remain below the surface because the voice is not able to tell and explain them; it is in the face of this impossibility of speech that clinical art therapy comes to the rescue. In silence, photographs,

colours and stories can take a tangible and concrete form and communicate what the voice is not able to express.

In this chapter, starting from the previous experience of our association, we will expose the historical and theoretical assumptions of art therapy and photo-art therapy, and then look at how this type of experience can be useful in the treatment of victims of violence, bringing improvements in the capacity for emotional expression and processing of previous trauma.

Subsequently, we will move on to the sharing of the laboratory path designed in collaboration with the project partner and carried out within the pilot groups with women victims of mistreatment and / or abuse.

Finally, we will present the results of these pilot groups, also through the self-assessment questionnaires completed by the patients participating in the project. The final goal is to share a methodological proposal, based on an art-therapeutic and photo-art-therapeutic intervention, in order to allow other professionals in the sector to use it in the future, adapting it to best fit the context and their purposes.

As already mentioned, the complete and detailed documents for those who want to adopt our methodological proposal can be downloaded from the www.deepacts.eu project website.

HISTORICAL NOTES ON ART THERAPY

Although art therapy is generally considered a contemporary practice, in reality since the beginning of human history art has been used as a privileged

means of communicating thoughts and ideas.

We can trace the origins of art therapy back to the first half of the nineteenth century, when artistic activity began to be used in psychiatric hospitals as occupational therapy and also as a means of investigation in the study of psychopathological situations.

It was thanks to the work and the significant contribution of Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), however, that artistic activity began to be considered not only for its aesthetic result or for the pathological traces present in it, but also for the therapeutic effect inherent in this activity.

From this moment on, the expressive activities of psychotic subjects are seen with different eyes by psychiatrists and psychologists, and used for their therapeutic value and for their intrinsic communicative possibilities.

Around the 1940s the therapeutic use of art is defined and develops in a distinct discipline, called art therapy. Gradually, the figure of the art therapist emerges and evolves, as a subject able to help and allow the patient to analyse and interpret the artistic creation produced.

In 1969, the **American Art Therapy Association** (AATA) was founded, whose main goal was to provide adequate academic and alternative education to art therapists.

Currently, in various countries around the world, art therapy is widely used both in the clinical and hospital fields, as well as a wide use in prevention and in situations of discomfort.

From asylums and prisons, **Art Brut** was also born, the art of fools, promoted by men and women segregated by society whose interiority, for contingent

reasons, was the only world they had available.

Surely a fundamental figure for the establishing of art therapy as a new method of treatment was Edith Kramer who, coming from the art world, emphasized and highlighted artistic expression in a particular way, considering it the fulcrum of art therapy and arguing that its healing virtues depended on those psychological procedures that are activated in the creative process.

It was precisely these convictions that led her in 1976, to draw up a program for the teaching of art therapy, which she held at New York University, and to make several publications, including multiple articles in psychology journals and three books in which she summarized all her work experiences.

At the heart of the theory was the conception of art therapy as a third hand, which had the task of facilitating the patient to overcome their blockages.

"The third hand can be summarized as the ability of the art therapist to facilitate a person's artistic process."

In Italy it is only from the second half of the twentieth century that art therapy will begin to spread more in particular with subjects with psychic disorders. In the field of psychopathological and clinical research connected with artistic activity, there are several works, such as that of Morselli, who focused on the study of artistic works in schizophrenia patients and that of Maccagnani, who began his studies around 1957 interested in the relationships between the surreal in art and schizophrenia, based on an experience carried out in a workshop in the psychiatric hospital of Imola. This was one of

the first works that highlighted, in addition to the psychopathological and diagnostic interest, the psychotherapeutic value of art therapy.

Dr. Raffaella Bortino proposes and reworks in Italy, in her four-year training school in Art Therapy "Il Porto Adeg" in Turin, the method "Art as therapy" developed by Edith Kramer in her courses at N.Y. University, thus creating a bridge between the Anglo-Saxon world and the Italian and French clinical realities. Her technique puts the patient's body at the centre of the sessions: what it says to the therapist in their relationship with the environment, the group and the art-therapeutic materials. Starting from the definition of the **American Art Therapy Association**, art therapy is defined as:

"an integrative profession of mental health and humanistic services, which enriches the lives of individuals, families and communities through active creation, the creative process, applied psychological theory and human experience within a psychotherapeutic relationship".

Within this discipline, there are different ways of being able to express oneself creatively; through painting, drawing, sculpture, dance, theatre, music, etc.

The constant of all these approaches lies in the process of creation and expression of the self.

Art therapy should therefore be considered as a technique with multiple application tools, ranging from therapy, to rehabilitation, to the improvement of the quality of life; drawing from a variety of theoretical approaches, such

as psychoanalytical, psychodynamic, cognitive, gestalt and, in general, from all those therapeutic approaches that aim to connect and reconcile emotional conflicts, to promote self-awareness and self-acceptance, developing relational and communication skills.

At the heart of this discipline is the artistic object, which represents the concrete expression of the inner experience of the subject created. In this perspective, the "form" of the artistic artifact becomes essential and of primary importance as it gives the possibility to recognize, bring out and master the unconscious inner life, otherwise likely not accessible.

This artistic production is protected within a relationship with the art therapist who has the task of establishing an empathic relationship and establishing a solid relationship with the patient, developing the ability to welcome, absorb and evolve the instinctive, impulsive or affective conflicting tensions that can be expressed during artistic creation.

The artistic object is characterized as an instrument of symbolic communication related to conflicts, emotions and inner states that become interpretable within a therapeutic setting; through the discussion and interpretation of the work done, that is, the communicative content of artistic expressions, you have the opportunity to allow the patient to communicate their thoughts and deep feelings¹.

HISTORICAL EXPERIENCES OF ART THERAPY AT FERMATA D'AUTOBUS

To understand the importance that art therapy plays in our clinical proposal it is necessary to dwell in more depth on the theoretical and practical roots from which our approach was derived, which were then further developed with the creation of the art therapy school the Porto A.D.E.G. (Association of Existential Youth Discomfort) in 1983 in collaboration with New York University.

In 1968 Raffaella Bortino joined the movement to open psychiatric hospitals and in Collegno she collaborated with the first painting atelier managed by Professor Gamna and the artist Gigliola Carretti. Part of this movement were a population of young students, intellectuals and artists, including Piero Gilardi, a well-known exponent of Arte Povera.

Gilardi and Bortino went to Paris to visit the collection of the Saint-Anne psychiatric hospital; it was here that through meeting with Dr. Claude Wiart, at that time director of research on the artistic expression of the mentally ill, Bortino shaped his thoughts and reflections on artistic expression trying to develop it on three levels: therapeutic, scientific and artistic communication.

Wiart's studies on pictorial analysis made it possible to establish a mechanistic documentation of drawings and clinical cases, a working tool for the researcher, a code of analysis that em-

1. For insights with respect to historical references, we invite you to download on the site www.deepacts.eu, Art Therapy section, the D3.1 deliverable related to research

phasized the existence of intersubjective criteria so as to allow a creative triangular entity of work and spectator with a dynamic function.

Like language, Wiart explained, the image, the plastic work, is the sign of an object or an idea and is the expression of an individual, as an affirmation of their existence and their need for communication. It is therefore a set of compressed data that cannot be reduced to isolated expressions with the risk of mutilating them.

Over the years the evolution of this conception, through psychoanalytic tools and concepts and the dynamic notion of illness, will lead psychiatrists to consider the creative productions of patients as tools to be used for therapeutic purposes, playing a role as a medium between patient and doctor.

The other important meeting that marks a point of reflection and conceptualization to found the foundations of the history of Turin art therapy is the meeting with Anne Denner, psychologist linked to the session of pathological neuropsychology at the Henrie Rousselle Hospital, head of visual art expressive techniques and professor of psychology at the school of architecture, famous for having written a text entitled *L'expression plastique*, in which she concretely analysed the methods of visual art expression to be applied in psychiatry.

Her daily practice in the hospital did not seek to psychiatrize painting, nor block its action in a theoretical construction. Instead she undertook to imagine methods capable of establishing bridges between psychotherapy and the pedagogical and cultural tools present within a city, in an architectural and sociological discourse: rethinking the therapeutic field in a dimension that

is not the traditional one, giving rise to complex problems endowed with aspects that are simultaneously medical, cultural and socio-economic.

Dr. Bortino continued her work and seminars, learning to work with children, motor and psychologically disabled, finding correlations between styles and forms of disease, different diagnoses and different types of evolutionary interventions of therapy, observing the way in which the drawings were transformed through graphic-motor exercises that allowed a little dismantling of the rules of pictorial knowledge, but that they could evoke something related to the dependence on the mother and the expression of an affective warmth.

When artists have produced works and have taken charge of their own pictorial writing, we understand that they have realized what even the sick person finds when they are in a state of spontaneous creativity - where they do not try to overcome the obstacles they encounter and they do not try to do their very best because from the beginning they had not given themselves a purpose to achieve - but they paint, draw, sculpt only to allow themselves to establish a new relationship with the world.

After putting together the notions learned, Dr. Bortino decided to undertake, on the advice of Dr. Denner, the technique of analytical relaxation adapted to children with Dr. Jean Bergès and later with Dr. Michel Sapir for adults.

From the combination of this technique and art therapy, Dr. Bortino developed her own method of art therapy and relaxation.

Frequenting the Parisian environment and following the art publisher George Fall, she met several characters: one

day she went to visit Jean Dubuffett in Venice with friends; a little uncomfortable and much admired in front of the father of art brut, she began to talk with enthusiasm about her experience in a painting atelier at the Psychiatric Hospital of Collegno with the mentally ill. He immediately curbed the enthusiasm of working with the mentally ill and told her:

"go to work with children and work with the Montessori method",

making her understand the importance of working in the pedagogical field.

Meanwhile, at that time in the United States art therapy began to be widely used, especially after it had been spontaneously used in concentration camps with considerable benefits.

This intrigued Dr. Bortino, who left for New York.

In the meantime, however, in Turin she had already set up art therapy and relaxation groups in schools, offices, in her private practice and had noticed the extraordinary changes that these made to the subjects who attended them, especially in the childhood group and with a group of women.

In the United States she met her colleague Edith Kramer, who at that time directed the school of art therapy at New York University.

Edith was a pupil of Friedl Dicker Brandeis, one of the main figures of art therapy, whose story also needs to be told.

Friedl Dicker Brandeis was born in Vienna in 1898 to a Jewish family of humble origins. In the course of her artistic studies she met exceptional masters of art such as Franz Cizek, creator of an art teaching program aimed at childhood,

the first form of pedagogy through art. Friedl also strongly feels the influence of Johannes Itten who, in his art lessons, proposes first of all the spiritual growth of his students, involving them not only in an artistic research but also on the level of breathing, movement, vocality, and the relationship between peers.

From Itten, Friedl learns that art can weave a link with the word, the sound, the form, the colour, the gesture, all to participate in a more general harmony. The impact that Itten has on Friedl is so strong that she decides to follow the master to Germany where she is called to teach at the Bauhaus, a school of great innovation in the field of art, architecture and design, but which also promotes democratic ideals and social justice.

Friedl specializes in the field of textile art and photography and meets exceptional teachers who will become leading figures in the European culture of those times, Klee, Kandinsky, Gropius. After completing her studies, she opened a fine arts shop in which she began a brilliant artistic career, but at the same time, being very sensitive to the ideals of social equality, she engaged in a strenuous opposition to the spread of growing Nazism in Europe.

She returned to Vienna and began to collaborate with the Communist Party, devoting herself to a clandestine political activity that led her to be arrested and to undergo violent interrogations and several months of imprisonment. In 1934 she emigrated to Prague, at that time a rare democratic stronghold in a Europe invaded by Nazism.

Here, from 1934 to 1938, she became an art teacher for the children of the Prague ghetto, where she observed how her young students used art to

cope with the discrimination and abuse experienced every day and to process traumas, bereavements and violence that some of them are subjected to.

Edith Kramer, her student, accompanies her in this activity that will remain for her a formative experience of great importance.

After a period of harsh restrictions due to the increasingly strict racial laws that limit her, in 1942 Friedl was deported to the Terezin transit camp, where she became an art teacher for hundreds of children removed from their families and hospitalized in the camp's kindergartens. In Terezin, with her artistic collaborators, Friedl aims to rebalance the emotional world of children, devastated by events.

She uses all the teachings learned from her teachers to facilitate in them the development of concentration and rebalance breathing, compensating for their confusion of space and time.

For the deprived children of Terezin the art lesson becomes something indispensable, which puts them in touch with their most vital parts. Friedl realizes the effect that the artistic experience has on children and begins to write observations about the therapeutic value of artistic work in childhood, proposing to publish her studies as soon as the war is over.

Friedl also does an important job of cataloguing the drawings, noting on each one the name and age of the author. She then keeps the drawings in suitcases that she hides so accurately that they will be found only long after her death.

Friedl Dicker Brandeis was transferred to Auschwitz and killed in the gas chambers on October 9, 1944.

The children's drawings made in Terezin are currently kept at the Jewish Mu-

seum in Prague and are now famous all over the world.

Not so recognized is the work of Friedl Dicker Brandeis and her intervention, the first example of support and help through art for children subjected to traumatic situations.

To carry out this project, to which she had dedicated her whole life, was her student Edith Kramer. Born in Vienna in 1916, of Jewish origin, at the age of 13 Kramer took private art lessons with Friedl Dicker Brandeis and, later, followed the teacher to Prague, where she remained from 1934 to 1938, to support her in the management of art workshops that welcome children who escaped Nazi persecution.

In 1938, to escape the racial laws, Edith Kramer emigrated to New York where she worked as an art teacher with children and adolescents in the most disadvantaged neighbourhoods and, later, at institutes and centres of child neuropsychiatry, where she had the opportunity to better structure her "artistic workshops" with therapeutic values.

It is precisely in the United States, starting from the 1950s, that the most important experience takes place for the purposes of the methodological definition of art therapy, with the birth of the two most important orientations in art therapy linked to the names of Edith Kramer and Margareth Naumburg.

Margareth Naumburg, psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, helped in her work by her sister Florence Cane, art teacher, develops a specific approach to art therapy.

Starting from the assumption that unconscious feelings are more easily recognizable in images than in words, Naumburg stimulates symbolic communication between patient and art

therapist by referring to the images produced by the patient, on which emotions and personal experiences are inevitably projected.

The images themselves are, therefore, analyzed through the theoretical framework of Freudian thought.

Naumburg thus elaborates the method of dynamically oriented art therapy, with which art is used as a tool to reveal unconscious meanings that are then described and made understandable thanks to the use of verbal communication, normally used in the psychotherapy session.

Different is the approach of Edith Kramer, who, coming from the art world, consecrates a particular value to artistic expression.

Kramer considers art therapy distinct from psychotherapy and argues that "its healing virtues depend on those psychological processes that are activated in creative work" thus turning all her attention to the creative process, considered in and of itself to be a therapeutic tool.

Through her experience in the field, Kramer became aware of the great help of art both in psychic discomfort and in the existential suffering of those who live in extreme conditions.

It is starting from her experience as an art therapist with children and adolescents and from her in-depth psychological studies that the elaboration of a precise methodological line is born, which sees the centrality of the creative and artistic process in the therapeutic path and which falls under the name of *Art as therapy*.

Art becomes therapy, the artistic product remains subordinate to the process and the therapeutic technique does not seek so much to reveal and inter-

pret the unconscious material but becomes a significant and symbolic path in which skills, resources and processes are activated, becoming a real means of support for the Ego, favouring the development of the sense of identity and promoting a general maturation.

Kramer emphasizes the fact that the art therapist must have a deep knowledge of both the artistic processes and the characteristics and possibilities of the proposed materials, an indispensable condition for the artistic intuition that must support the therapeutic relationship.

And it is precisely Edith Kramer who realizes and gives full meaning to the project of Friedl Dicker Brandeis, helping to found in 1976 a program for the teaching of Art Therapy at New York University.

She also made several publications, including multiple articles in psychology journals and three books, including "Art as therapy in childhood", published in 1971, which summarizes all her experiences and is translated into many languages.

Lecturer at New York University until the age of ninety, she died on February 22, 2014, leaving a legacy of various works of art and her great experience in art therapy.

The *Art as Therapy* method developed by Edith Kramer comes to life from the experience of Friedl Dicker Brandeis and is further integrated by new research in the field of psychology. Transmitted by the Department of Art Therapy of New York University, at the same time the School of Art Therapy il Porto A.D.E.G. in Turin is created.

The relationship between Raffaella Bortino and Edith Kramer intensified in the years '79-'83.

Bortino herself recounts her first meeting with Edith Kramer:

"I was very shy, very scared and very anxious to meet her. I had recently arrived in Manhattan, I knew little English and therefore I had been accompanied by my friend George, who instead knew the language perfectly and had many artistic contacts in the city. Edith gave us an appointment at 7am on the Bowery. At that time the Bowery was frequented by clochard, crazy artists, drug addicts, in short, a not-so-great place. She lived on the third floor in two bedrooms, zen, dividing the bedrooms with a white blanket. She presented herself with a very long braid and a very welcoming smile. She offered us a cup of green tea, which I, although I did not love it, welcomed willingly because the temperature in Edith's house was lower than outside. From there I learned that she never kept the temperature higher than 9 degrees in the house, she drank green tea to warm up and in the bathroom she had five toothbrushes with five glasses and baking soda, to disinfect them every day and get rid of infections. We started by meeting on weekends, because during the week we all worked.

She had as her studio a large loft on Vandam Street in Soho.

In that loft we did the most stimulating experiments, readings, dinners of my life. Always strictly in the cold, but the heating took place with the words of the readings of philosophical texts, it took place through the movement of clay, sculptures and various materials, also because the increasingly frequent Louise Nevelson, the great American sculptor who collected wood on the Hudson, and Dorothea Tanning, the widow of Max Ernst, who carried with her very re-

finer canvas kept in a suitcase with all the equipment, and Vera Zilzer, another art therapist at New York University who lived for many years with me in Italy and worked with a magnificent relationship with patients in the Il Porto and Fermata d'Autobus communities.

I will not dwell on this because I could write several pages, but rather I would make a summary of how through the new director of the School of Art Therapy of New York University, Dr. Laurie Wilson, we started the school in Turin where for years art therapists from all over the world converged, bringing the most diverse experiences, the most specific methods.

In addition, we inserted within the school, which was at that point in collaboration with New York University, Dr. Denner, who came from Paris to bring her European voice. So, the School was born, but after a few years it became difficult for me to manage the School and the Community, so, having very good students who had been trained over the years, the school moved to Milan becoming VITT3 and then currently Lyceum".

In Italy in the meantime there were changes: asylums had opened, art therapy schools began to be born and proliferated, books flourished, and everyone found his point on which to articulate research, because art therapy had an importance not only in the field with abused women, but also in other fields, starting from childhood to application with terminal patients.

With these theoretical premises, art therapy within our facilities has been used both in the treatment of psychic discomfort and in therapy with women victims of abuse and / or violence. Focusing on abused women, we can't help



SCHROEDER-SONNENSTERN

but talk about perversion. Speaking of perversion, we cannot overlook the three essays on Freud's sexual theory, in which he reviews, expands and formulates new hypotheses on female sexual development.

For work with women with art therapy it is necessary to connect to the writings of Masud R. Khan on cumulative trauma, in which it is understood how for the abused woman something did not work within the Freudian hypotheses. In particular she talks about the incorrect establishment of the Oedipal complex in the child as the result of two complementary processes: the acceptance of castration with all its consequences and the fulfilment of the biological drive with the transformation of the male elements into female elements, in the recourse to passivity and positive psychosexual tendencies.

When Freud made this statement, he knew well that he would be accused of being a victim of the masculinity complex and having an innate inclination to despise and repress women.

Now, if we start from the assumption that a great impetus and a great credit to art therapy is given by what happened in the concentration camps, as well as by the illuminating precursor text *Art versus Illness* by Adrian Hill in which the author theorized how artistic activity directly influenced physical healing, up to the very recent studies conducted at the University of Turin by a group of neuroscientists who deal with beauty and art as medicine which highlighted² the presence of a strong link between beauty and learning, it is

possible to rethink the setting of educational and rehabilitation paths, taking into account the specificity of individual people and exploiting the power of beauty in attracting attention to the vital tasks that await the patient.

Finally, it is interesting to examine the differences between what is art therapy and what is called art brut. In art therapy Arno Stern teaches that through order and strict respect for materials a creativity and absolute freedom of thought is activated, while we know that art brut, or outsider art, or irregular art, however you want to call it, is naive art, it is art that comes from the depths, but that expresses the maximum of human depth.

According to the magazine *Panderma*, Friedrich Schroeder-Sonnenstern was the greatest painter of Germany in the 1970s, with a dedicated special edition of the magazine and described as one of the greatest representatives of art brut.

He is an artist of extreme solitude, of absolute originality, whether he engraves drawings with the hard sign of storytellers or unleashes his dreamlike inspiration in large coloured canvases like postcards. He chases his hallucinations, to the slightest whimper and carefully reproduces Bosch's monsters, filtered through Freud.

Fetishist, as can only be an old German who grew up in the era of Magnus Hirschfeld, he exasperates female details in an abnormal world, reminiscent of certain drawings of maniacs collected in the institutes of Vienna and Berlin.



2. *Art Versus Illness: A Study of Art Therapy* Adrian Hill, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1945

In his world full of sneers and macabre grins, an angry polemic is stirred: he does not hate generals like Grosz, he ignores social battles, his obsession is the woman, his nightmare is the sexual question, his enemy is himself. His poetry is born from his irreducible faith in the unconscious and from his constant desire for a dream. It is interesting to observe how in these deformations there are similarities with those created, in an obsessive and painstaking way by one of our patients, in an artistic work carried out a few months before their suicide, of which we share the image below. This parallel between these two works makes us understand how the demons that harbour the souls of men and women of different generations, different countries, different societies, in different historical moments are still similar to each other and how the representation of deep trauma has intrinsic characteristics that are repeated and handed down unconsciously for generations.

METHODOLOGICAL PROPOSAL FOR THE USE OF ART THERAPY IN THE TREATMENT OF WOMEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE AND/OR ABUSE

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 therapeutic setting model has been developed based on some principles of the "Open Studio"

method, over time developing methodologies learned from training with the American Art Therapy Association, of which Dr. Lorio is a member.

During groups or individual sessions, we use strategies that refer to mindfulness techniques, useful to focus on your body and your breath, with listening against the background of relaxing sounds, and then move on to hints of ecotherapy with sensory body awakening.

Taking care of the patients helps them to carry out, within the group and the session, a creative and expressive work of deep traumatic elements, which is taken care of both within the group sharing in the laboratory and subsequently thanks to the containment of the care team.

The method by which the photo-art therapy laboratories are structured is mainly based 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.

Starting from these assumptions, our Association, in collaboration with the other partners belonging to the working group, has defined a research project based on art therapy focused on the target of women victims of violence and / or abuse, which would deepen the best practices with the specific literature of reference.

The first step was to develop a questionnaire that aimed to investigate the degree of direct knowledge of an art-therapeutic approach with women victims of violence by various professional figures working in the field at national and European level.

This questionnaire was disseminated online and was structured as nine

closed-ended items with the possibility to choose only one useful answer per question³.

Following the qualitative analysis of the data, it emerged that although the art-therapeutic approach is slowly and gradually spreading as a methodology, there are still few professionals in the help sector who know this approach in depth, thus demonstrating how much the work of dissemination and promotion of this tool is still necessary.

Art therapy is however considered a useful and complementary therapy to traditional therapeutic approaches, as it is able to stimulate creativity, to promote awareness and greater integration of unconscious trauma. Through art-therapeutic work it is possible, in this way, to promote the individual well-being of the patient by improving the quality of life; at the same time it allows professionals to acquire a global and more integrated knowledge about the personality, resources and fragility of individuals, thus increasing in them the possibility of the healing process.

At the same time we administered a questionnaire with six open questions to some patients who have had experience of art therapy laboratories at our Association⁴.

From the subsequent analysis of the data it was significant to note that most of the interviewees did not know about art therapy before entering our therapeutic facilities.

However, following the artistic "discovery" emerged the ability to feel pleasure

in carrying out such creative activities, favouring above all the communication of those contents that are not accessible verbally through alternative expressive channels such as art, music and writing, making improvements in the quality of life, performing the function not only of treatment but also of transformation, evolution and growth of the individual.

Following this field survey and after carrying out focus-groups with the project partners, an internal experiential workshop was held in which there was a practical use of art therapy and photo-art therapy techniques with the aim of providing operators with a direct experience of this methodology and providing the possibility to evaluate the results of the research in view of the drafting of the guidelines and the curriculum.

GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF ART THERAPY

The main objective of the guidelines was to build a reference path of art therapy and photo-art therapy to be used as a treatment in interventions in favour of victims of violence and / or abuse. This path was then tested and validated in the pilot laboratories carried out, which we will talk about later.

In collaboration with the partners of the project we thought that in the treatment of abused women it was useful to pro-

3. For further information on the research described, we invite you to download from the site www.deepacts.eu, art therapy section, the deliverable 3.1 related to art therapy research.

4. For further information on the research described, we invite you to download from the site www.deepacts.eu, art therapy section, the deliverable 3.1 related to art therapy research.

pose a path that included a first cycle of meetings based on photo-art therapy, followed by one based on art therapy (Open Studio).

Photo-art therapy is a particular type of intervention that puts photography at the centre of the field; in our type of approach the Photo-Art Therapy Atelier is characterized by a specific technique borrowed from the experience of Judy Weiser, undisputed pioneer and founder of the Vancouver Phototherapy Centre in 1982.

Through the use of photographs taken or created by the patient, photographs taken by others, self-portraits, family albums and so on, and thanks to the technique of projective photo (based on the meaning attributed to any image, own or of others, that attracts the attention of the patient or the art therapist), a reaction to what they see is stimulated in the patient and the deep and personal experiences that arise from it are processed together. The patients, equipped with all the necessary equipment, shoot, print, cut, process and stimulate each other in a favourable setting and adequately commensurate with the needs of the group.

Using photographs to arouse emotions allows you to create a bridge in your personal unconscious, allowing the creation of new content that can be addressed within the therapeutic setting. Photographs are imprints of meaning of our lives, as they show our past, the places and people that have characterized our existence, at various levels more or less conscious and vary their emotional impact depending on the moment in which they are looked at. Being able to use, within a broader therapeutic approach, significant photographs for the patient is a method-

ology that allows access to an incredible amount of information necessary to work with important "personal constructs", difficult to identify through other techniques, allowing to find a more tangible meaning only to the verbal narratives that patients make of their lives.

In the pilot workshops the techniques used were that of projective photos and that of collage.

The projective photo is a technique based on the fact that the meaning of each photo is created by the observer and therefore the meaning of it is always projected by the observer, consequently giving indications with respect to their way of perceiving their individual reality.

The collage consists in pasting on paper of different sizes and colours, personal images or images found in magazines or elsewhere with possible integration of materials produced in art therapy laboratories, allowing the expression of deep parts of oneself, with very imaginative and creative shapes.

Compared to the more traditional art therapy meetings, these are proposed within the Atelier based on the indications provided by the American Art Therapy Association. This particular type of setting has been called "Open Studio" and is based on the concept of care.

The Open Study, according to our clinical model, is characterized by some phases that follow one another according to the scheme presented below:

- listening to musical sounds;
- notes on mindfulness, breathing and stimuli from the art therapist;
- invitation in the garden of the 4 seasons with bodily awakening;
- creation and concentration at the work table;

- second breakfast with break;
- conclusion of the workgroup with sharing of work created;
- tidying up;
- reproduction and cataloguing of the work.

Below, we propose a brief explanation of such moments⁵.

Listening to musical sounds

The glockenspiel is played, an idiophonic instrument, which uses sticks to produce a melodic, rhythmic, pleasant and delicate sound, allowing the creation of a diatonic and chromatic scale; played by the therapist it invites quiet and tranquillity, favouring relaxation.

Notes on mindfulness, breathing and the stimuli of the art therapist

Before proceeding with the visualization techniques, the patient is invited to focus on their body for five minutes, to facilitate listening to themselves and their breath.

This exercise helps patients focus on the "here and now", limiting distractions and intrusive and confusing thoughts by achieving a feeling of calm and clarity. Subsequently, attention is paid to the body position and in particular to the feet which, following the principles of rooting and grounding, serve to create a physical and energetic connection of the body with the earth so that the energy of the body is oriented downwards. With a preferably upright body posture, we proceed with the technique of visualizations.

Patients are invited to visualize an image of pleasure which makes them feel good.

Later, if the weather permits, patients are invited to continue their emotional and bodily journey in an open place, namely the "garden of the four seasons".

Invitation in the garden of the four seasons with bodily awakening

Patients are invited to stand in a circle in the outdoor garden and are asked to listen to their body.

We continue with the attentive listening of the five senses, often taken for granted: observing who and what surrounds us, where we are, observing nature that transmits peace and quiet, listening to natural sounds, smelling the scent of air, touching the grass, the earth, the leaves, the bark of a tree to feel with one's body and with one's skin the surfaces that belong to us as living beings, children of the earth and therefore of the nature.

Finally, with taste, we ask ourselves to fantasize and imagine what that moment tastes like: the funny and bizarre answers are often linked to the tastes of childhood, adolescence, or to the new sensations perceived in the "here and now" of that precise moment.

This exercise is unusual, it often surprises and opens the imagination, thus facilitating free associations.

Before returning to the studio, each participant is asked to collect an element of nature from which they can draw inspiration based on its form and essence.

The branch, leaf, grass or small stone

5. For further information and a better understanding of the proposed methodology, please download on site www.deepacts.eu, Art Therapy section, the deliverable D3.3 relating to the guidelines.

collected, therefore, can be integrated later into the work created.

Creation and concentration at the work table

In this phase we begin to work on the realization of the artistic object, respecting the freedom of individual expression and without obligations to follow any preordained path.

At this moment the attention and concentration of the patients are at the highest levels.

For the realization, various materials are made available.

Second breakfast or snack with break

After the moment of high concentration linked to the creative gesture there is a 15-minute break, where food and drink are administered.

It is a pleasant time, but for patients with

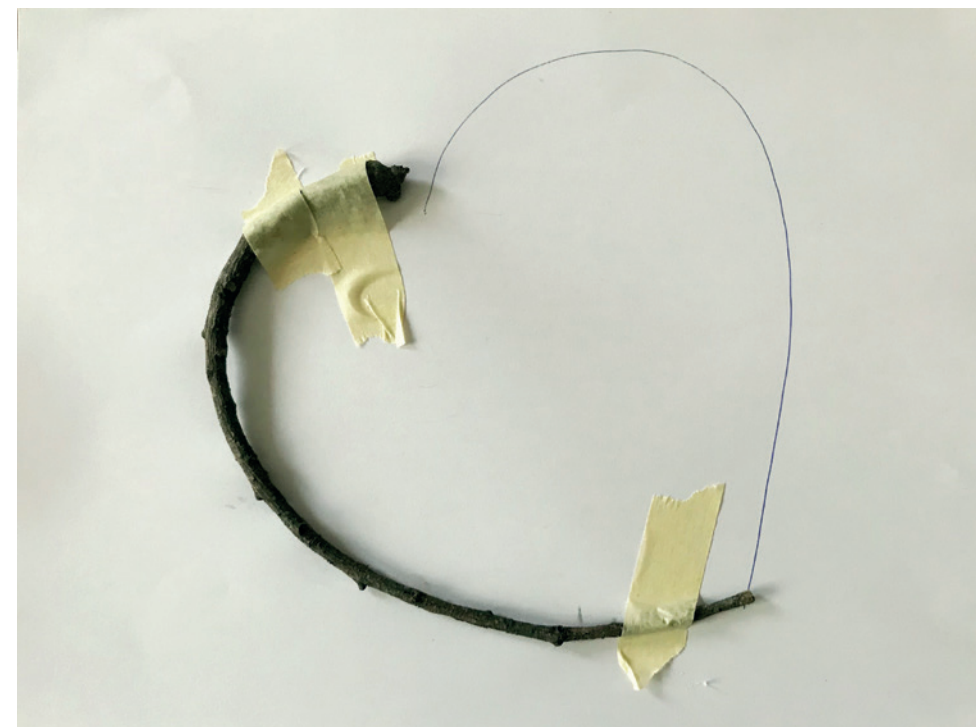
eating disorders it can instead be a moment that presents difficulties, problems, and obstacles. The focus is on taste and flavours, on rediscovering the beauty of food and what and how you can feed yourself in a healthy way.

Conclusion of work with sharing of work created

Without any obligation, those who wish can hang their creation on a wall so that it is visible to the group.

Talking about oneself through a drawing, sharing it with the group present, helps the patient to have more confidence in themself and to acquire greater self-esteem, improving their relationship with the group and with each individual participant, including the art therapist.

In the careful dialogue between the art therapist and the patient, the work will be read together through the analysis of



Fermata D'Autobus lavori nei gruppi pilota per Deep Acts III Parte ©

Fermata D'Autobus lavori nei gruppi pilota per Deep Acts III Parte ©



the shape, lines, strokes, colour, position in the sheet, composition and even the position of the latter on the wall.

Empathy is the necessary ingredient to get in tune with what the patient wants to transmit and communicate.

It is an important and delicate moment for the sharing of thoughts and reflections that are created, with the identification of some difficulties and critical issues to which we always try to propose some solutions for a possible future change; in all this the group has the important function of help, actualisation, and support.

The reorganization

After each group it is important to take care of the materials and the workplace.

The materials must therefore be sanitized and stored in the appropriate containers; the workplace, on the other hand, must be kept in order. For patients, sanitizing and creating a pleasant atmosphere is reassuring, while the order of space is not only the care of an external environment but also symbolically becomes the care of one's internal private space.

The creations of the patients are placed in special individual folders, which are always created in each group and returned at the end of the course.

Reproduction and cataloguing of the work

On the back of each creation are reported the name of the patient, date of ex-

ecution and a possible title of the work done. A careful archiving of the creations is synonymous with the fatigue and difficult work that lies behind the therapeutic path of each patient.

Drawing, collage, sculpture, photos, etc... everything that has been created along the way is photographed and saved in HD.

In addition, each participant signs a privacy release.

CURRICULUM FOR ART THERAPY AND PHOTO-ART THERAPY LABORATORIES

Starting from the guidelines mentioned above, reference curricula have been structured, i.e. a list of the activities necessary to structure an art therapy intervention, including the contents, methods and materials needed.

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, known as the atelier.

In addition to the description of how the work is structured 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 patients: for these types of group you can work in a space with twelve patients, although generally for a better clinical and organizational work it is advisable not to exceed the maximum limit of eight participants.

As a result of the pandemic, the num-

ber of patients had to be reduced to five, to ensure adequate social distancing.

Bathroom: inside you need a soap dispenser, a roll of toilet paper, a trash can, and a basket with tea towels and sponges for washing art materials.

Brightness and colour: a place that has good brightness 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, break, sharing work in groups.

The presence of a panelled wall that can allow you to draw, paint or create standing and that gives the opportunity to display your creations during group sharing is indispensable.

Atelier furniture: the essential component of the furniture is the presence of a large **table** according to the preferences of the art therapist's mode of intervention. The wooden table or dashboard is suitable for 8, 10 patients maximum, distributed in a balanced way on both sides.

This table must be studied and created in a specific format so that each participant can work on a creative sheet of size 70X100cm optimal for all the techniques proposed.

In addition, it is important the presence of single tables that can allow participants to create independently.

In the Covid-19 era, the solution is needed that involves working in individual tables arranged in a circle, in order to guarantee sufficient social distance.

An area of the atelier must be equipped with one or more **cabinets** where to store the material.

It is also necessary to carve out a space in which to store the creations of the laboratory that over time will be contained in individual folders for each patient.

Inside the atelier it is required to prepare a comfortable zone, characterized by the presence of one or more **sofas** and / or **armchairs** with cushions and blankets. This allows patients who have difficulty during work to remain inside the session in a more caring and protective way.

Compared to the furnishing of the walls, it is important to have a **clock** and a **calendar** that allow the patient to remain oriented within the spatial-temporal dimension.

Compared with decoration it is preferable not to overfill the walls with paintings, drawings and photographs so as not to affect the patient's creations.

In addition to the physical and structural requirements of the Atelier, the structuring of a work project is fundamental, a logical scheme of the laboratory interventions that can define micro and macro-objectives on which to work without precluding the free expression of patients.

During the meetings it is advisable to create a playlist with natural sounds and relaxing music, to create a pleasant sound background to listen to and that can promote individual and group relaxation.

Organizing work in a harmonious and functional way is the key to creating a good base on which to work, even in anticipation of very difficult situations that can be created during the conduct of groups and that can represent moments of stress for art therapists.

The art therapist at the beginning of the cycle of workshops has the task of communicating to patients the calendar of meetings.

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

During the patient's creative work, it is essential to carefully observe 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.

At the end of the work, after a short break, a moment is prepared in which the patients share their works on a verbal level and elaborate the contents expressed artistically and the emotional experiences connected to them.

At the end of each laboratory, it is important to archive both materially and digitally all the works made by the patients so that they can be reused in the future.

In addition, it is important that the art therapist mentally analyses the progress of the laboratory by compiling a clinical diary and briefly reporting their impressions to the colleagues with whom they collaborate.

The goal is to provide a structured place, which is contained, but which allows patients an expressive and creative space; a safe setting in which patients can feel welcomed and can be legitimized to share their internal traumas.

The principles of this setting are based on the reparatory function of a new care, able to favour over time the emergence of previous trauma, first in a non-verbal way through artistic creation and only later, following the shar-

ing in groups, in verbal mode. Through this mechanism, art therapy groups become facilitating tools, bridges of passage that allow the treatment of deep wounds.

The Atelier thus becomes an expressive space, a safe place where you can express and deposit your emotions.

Over time a climate of trust and support will be created, focused on encouraging creative expression and developing and increasing patients' self-esteem.

In this path particular attention is also paid to the bodily dimension, with the solicitation of the sensory organs, to allow you to discover and rediscover the dimension of pleasure, essential to loving yourself and others, towards the reconstruction of a new healthier everyday life.

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

Finally, it is necessary to equip oneself with all the artistic and creative materials essential for artistic production⁶.

PILOT LABORATORIES OF ART THERAPY AND PHOTO-ART THERAPY

Starting from the theoretical premises and thanks to the collaboration with the project partners, we have created a particular laboratory path of art therapy

and photo-art therapy on the basis of the guidelines and curriculum created in order to test the proposed methodology.

The workshops were aimed at women victims of violence and / or abuse who live within a protected context, with the aim of:

- make contact with the experience of previous trauma in a protected group context and through the mediation of creative production;
- process pain, benefiting from the protection and containment function given by the group;
- concretely express the trauma through the creation of the artistic object;
- through artistic realization create a new support of the ego and a new identity development.

The creative workshops, to perform a therapeutic function, must necessarily be conducted by professional art therapists in the field and the experiential and productive participation of patients must be supported and shared with a multidisciplinary team of psychologists, psychiatrists, educators, to ensure as much as possible psychic safety and facilitate an individual path of expressive emancipation. In this way the painful experiences and the inner dramas can be conveyed to the outside through the realization of creative works in a context that must be adequately organized and protected.

The art therapist has the task, within the laboratories, to provide emotional containment, creating a safe setting in

which patients can feel welcomed and can be legitimized to share their internal traumas, first in a non-verbal way through artistic creation and only later, following group sharing and processing within the setting, in verbal mode.

Specifically, for the DEEP ACTS project against gender violence, within the "Fragole Celesti" community that is part of the care circuit of Fermata D'Autobus located in Oglianico (TO), a cycle of 21 meetings were activated that had as participants five women victims of abuse and violence with both psychiatric and addiction problems.

These meetings took place starting from 1 December 2020 and ended on 11 May 2021, on a weekly basis and with a duration of 3 hours for the 10 photo-art therapy meetings and 2 hours and 30 minutes for the 11 "Open Studio" meetings for art therapy.

Before the start of the project, a letter of introduction was sent to all the participants asking them to obtain photos that had an emotional and emotional value, such as self-portraits, family photos or any photos kept throughout their lives.

The photographs chosen did not have to be in original format, but all be printed in order to be processed during the groups.

During the 21 groups carried out, an observational scheme was drawn up and compiled for each participant to investigate the following areas: self-awareness, relationship with the other, participation, respect for the rules, creativity and use of the body, in order to be able to draw up observation statistics.

In addition, both at the end of the 10 photo-art therapy groups and after the

11 art therapy groups, a satisfaction questionnaire was delivered to the participants, in order to attribute a quality index in the final phase of the research. At the end of each group, the works created by the participants were reproduced and preserved.

The Photo-Art Therapy groups were carried out partly with the collage technique, partly with the Projective Photos technique.

In each group a theme was recommended, which we list below:

1. The self-portrait
2. My safe place
3. Christmas
4. My Family
5. I would like to express my desires from the simplest to those I know that by working on myself I will try to make possible
6. My collage
7. Relationships
8. Love and love
9. Reflections on the body
10. Self-care.

The themes of the Open Studio group were:

11. Colours
12. Happiness
13. Slowness
14. The woman
15. The father
16. The senses "The touch"
17. The senses "The taste"
18. The senses "The sense of smell"
19. The senses "The sight"
20. The senses "The hearing"
21. The earth and the ecosystem.

These themes have been identified to provide a framework in which patients could express some profound aspects

6. For insights and a better understanding of the proposed methodology, we invite you to download on the website www.deepacts.eu the Art Therapy section the deliverable D3.4 relating to the Curriculum.

of themselves (related to bodily, sensory, relational, family aspects ...)⁷.

From the observations made during the groups carried out, it can be highlighted that although the work proposed in the laboratories invited the search for positive and vital desires, in some circumstances the patients were not able to express them.

On the contrary they expressed deadly desires, linked in particular to the use of substances, a theme that has returned on some occasions leading to some absences due to psychological illness and somatizations.

The photo-art therapy groups, divided into photo-projective and collage, have been highly appreciated, despite the limitations resulting from the Coronavirus which allowed the participation of only five patients.

The technique of **projective photos** had a good emotional impact on the patients who collected their work in a notebook in which the chosen images were printed and pasted.

The patients showed enthusiasm and attention during this technique, which allowed them to deepen in particular the family and intimate issues (such as the experiences related to the body).

A new way of living the group emerged during the workshops, in some cases with appreciation, in others expressing the desire for solitude and the consequent need to isolate oneself through listening to music in headphones.

Overall, there was a greater attention to self-care and a greater ability to look

at oneself and to be looked at with respect and dignity.

The **collage technique** allowed the patients to research and focus their attention on personal images with particular emotional connotations.

The issues most addressed, also because of the stimuli given, were interpersonal relationships and affections represented by one's parents, family and friends.

Later it was possible to work on the problem of affective addictions and couple relationships.

Some patients have had the ability to do a work of introspection and awareness, admitting their distorted and inadequate behaviours of the past, when approaching life in a destructive way.

For some, therefore, the desire to correct the mistakes made and try to live a present and a future with more stability, tranquillity and pleasure has emerged.

Compared to art therapy meetings, the techniques proposed and described above such as mindfulness, muscle awakening and ecotherapy have allowed greater attention to one's own body size, nature, and relationship with others.

Some patients have said that they also use some relaxation techniques proposed outside the groups, such as in the evening before falling asleep, to reduce their anxiety.

Ecotherapy was much appreciated, with the use of natural metaphorical symbols (stones, walnut and snail shells, twigs, leaves, flowers, blades of grass and feathers), through which

the patients represented themes such as traumas, protections, defensive shields, and issues concerning regeneration, family, motherhood and childhood.

As described above, however, as regards a more quantitative analysis, the identified areas to be observed in the observational grids and the satisfaction questionnaires completed by the participants respectively at the end of the two cycles were analysed in detail.

Let's see them described below, starting from the observational grids:

Self-awareness. During the conduct of the pilot workshops it was one of the most monitored and evaluated aspects. In general, it emerged that as a result of the proposed laboratories the patients have reached a greater awareness of themselves and of their potential and limits, both within the creative task required and for what concerns the relationships and group dynamics that have been created.

As for more complex issues (more intrinsically emotional) such as the body, self-care, food and affective relationships, it was evident that there was a difficulty in expressing one's malaise in words, which instead was then possible through creative work; group sharing has then favoured even more the reappropriation of positive parts of the self, thanks to getting rid of these suffering internal contents.

Relationship with the other. It emerged that from the beginning there was a good group atmosphere, where the patients collaborated with each other and helped each other even during the creation of the artistic work with suggestions of techniques and comparisons.

Compared to the art therapist and adult figures in general, they have always

shown themselves to be respectful. During the moment of the final sharing they were all able to respect the times and rules of communication, also accepting the opinions of others with the exception of one of the five participants, who in fact is the one who interrupted the pilot workshops abruptly. At each group there was more and more a greater cohesion between the participants, coming to create in conclusion "a group mind".

Participation. Participation in general was high and constant, except for a girl who failed to have a continuous participation by skipping several meetings in the first two months, and then abandoning the project definitively in the middle of February 2021.

Another patient, however, towards the end of the laboratories was forced to skip some meetings due to a flare-up of her psychiatric pathology.

Instead, from a qualitative point of view, a clear division emerged at the beginning of the workshops between those who were able to easily verbalize their own experiences and those of others and those who were in greater difficulty.

With the progress of the meetings, however, it was possible to create a homogenization of this aspect, thanks to the fact that those who were most in difficulty felt welcomed and cared for not only by the art-therapist but also and above all by her companions.

Respect for the rules. Excellent respect for the material and structured and unstructured moments by all participants.

Creativity and use of the body. All the participants were at ease in carrying out the creative work and the material and themes proposed each time.

7. For insights and a better understanding of the topics proposed in the groups, we invite you to visit the detailed description of these meetings on the website www.deepacts.eu in the E-learning platform.

For them it was a time when they could express themselves freely and when they could relax and focus on what made them feel good. With the body and its use in space, on the other hand, they were a little less comfortable, especially at the beginning of the cycle of laboratories. Over time, thanks to mindfulness and ecotherapy they have all managed to have a greater awareness, using it more freely and being able to feel it and to stay in the suspended time characteristic of the proposed technique.

Finally, with respect to the satisfaction and individual evaluation questionnaires concerning the photo-art therapy meetings, it emerged that all the participants found usefulness in addressing their internal problems, benefiting from them. Positive opinions were also expressed regarding the emotional climate of the group and the work of the art-therapist.

Finally, it emerged how the work has allowed them to go deep into themselves, allowing them to grasp unknown aspects and bring out emotions within a climate perceived as non-judgmental.

Also with regard to the pilot groups of art therapy, a positive evaluation emerged both for what concerns the group and for the conduction by the art-therapist.

The meetings were evaluated engaging and "repairing", exciting, useful to express their emotions and to make them "feel good".

Talking about the proposed methodol-

ogy, both techniques were appreciated in the same way because, despite their differences and peculiarities, they favoured the expression of internal emotional experiences and states⁸.

CONCLUSIONS

The pilot groups carried out in the project were useful to listen, reflect and verbalize internal parts of oneself and even very intimate family stories. Some women, through the work in the groups, have become aware of the importance of abandoning some objects of their past related to violent and abusive situations to rebuild a new image of themselves.

The expressive activities allowed the thawing of parts that before being able to have access to the word in psychotherapy needed images, symbolic actions and the use of external materials that could mediate the transit of deep experiences and access a figuration of psychic reality, giving the possibility of communicating contents not accessible at the verbal level.

Through non-verbal expression, it was possible to access the unspeakable.

The results obtained in the pilot groups show how this methodology can be an important resource for all those operators who in various ways, in the various associations, deal with the care and treatment of women victims of violence, with all the problems inherent in this user, first being able to rework the

deep trauma that the relationship with the abuser has caused. The long tradition with respect to this methodology allows our association to propose itself as a reference for those who want to use this practice in their own context. Within the site www.deepacts.eu within the section dedicated to art therapy it is possible to download the theoretical and practical insights expressed in a synthetic way within this writing, in order to have a trace to follow for those who want to take a new path in approaching and understanding the traumatic reality present in victims of violence.

The intense work developed by DEEP ACTS is an extraordinary macroscopic and microscopic research to scour the most complex paths that remain rooted within a wounded female structure; the collaboration and the rich comparison with the colleagues of the other associations involved in the project has also allowed to expand and enrich the topics covered, condensing the poetic parts with the theatrical, artistic and bodily ones.

The aim is not only to "cure" and to pay attention to the claim to cure, but also to take care, in addition to patients, also of the operators who take care of them. This is one of the fundamentals of the project: to use therapeutic tools useful to patients, which can become extraordinary work tools also for operators, so that the perverse process called projective identification is hindered by reducing the risks inherent in the perverse symbiotic dynamics related to the abuse that traumatized patients put into

playin the relationship, often unconsciously. But as we have seen from the historical introduction, as well as in the treatment of women victims of violence, art therapy can be useful in the most varied fields of intervention; with psychiatric patients, with the handicapped, both physically and psychically, in the educational field until, following the teachings of Anne Denner, psycho-urban relapses.

All the theory expressed in these pages can be used in many other sectors: collage, clay, open study, paint, symbolic group interaction, interactive-analytical group... all these techniques can be applied in communities, banks, companies, in any human context, as they have the effect of safeguarding the activity of thought because they channel in motor skills, perception and sensoriality, a painful psychic tension, which would otherwise end up overloading the reflective capacity and the habitual thinking.

For example, this practice, in situations of great collective hardship such as in refugee camps, becomes an instrument of sharing that brings together and unites the population, allows sharing large and small, creating geometries suppressed by their vanished geographies.

The swaying lines of Munch's paintings refer to an attempt to channel an unmanageable passionate and desperate anguish, in an attempt, as well theorized by Claude Smadja, to use self-warming methods; an attempt, a bit like the semicircles of Anne Denner's graphology, to offer a way of outflow to internal excite-

8. For insights and a better understanding of the proposed methodology, we invite you to download on the website www.deepacts.eu the Art Therapy section in addition to the deliverable relating to the Guidelines (D3.3) and that relating to the Curriculum (D3.4) also the Report on the Pilot Course (D3.5).

9. Claude Smadja, *"The psychosomatic way and Psychoanalysis"*, 2010, Franco Angeli

ment characterized by anguish. Let's not forget the Covid period and the situation in which we find ourselves; the post-trauma in which often the word fails to exhumate the intensity of the pain linked to loneliness, to the impossibility of touching and consequently of using the bodies that are deeply tormented and mortified. In this case, clay and playdough, are substances that can replace living matter and, despite their not being alive, when forged by the hands of creatures who have experienced absence, become living, lively and often even ironic.

Then there is all of that aspect related to looking at oneself, to living the eyes as a projection of the other.

All that remained to the eye was, at the time of the lockdowns, the possibility of existing; therefore, even creativity through video, the so-called mirror neuron, during the virus becomes an application of art therapy in time of Covid-19. In a historical moment in which great tensions between states are once again emerging, both in Europe and in the rest of the world, it is essential to continue to invest in projects such as DEEP ACTS,

which promote collaboration and bridges between states, through the sharing of relaxation practices that process anger and anguish in small liberating and creative daily movements.

With our methods, which we gathered and collected together with all the colleagues of DEEP ACTS, we were able to understand how important this work is and how much more there is to do; we are at the beginning, it is still necessary to devote ourselves to the study and in-depth research of art-therapeutic, photo-art-therapeutic and eco-therapeutic techniques against trauma and violence, to create variants and develop new ones.

The important thing is always to focus attention on the user, trying to provide help with respect to their needs and requirements, both psychic and bodily.

In this path, also following the teachings that come to us from ecotherapy, in the search for a better psychophysical balance, we must be able to acquire a new harmony with the life cycles of the natural world in which we live, in which we can find ourselves with ourselves and with others.

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PART IV

AWARENESS RAISING



ART AS A TOOL FOR AWARENESS RAISING AND CARE

Raffaella Bortino, Egle Demaria, Tea Taramino

In 2015, about two years after starting the experiment of the Community for abused women "Celestial Strawberries", we felt the desire to share technically and theoretically some dynamics that were being created: the structure was born to protect these women from difficulties related to their sexual modalities that prevented the therapeutic path and that created relapses with the companions of the adjacent mixed community.

We went to Venice to ask Prof. Salomon Resnik, an Argentine psychiatrist and psychoanalyst, for advice.

The professor received us amiably in his studio where we explained our history, how we had come up with this idea and the criticality of the fact that the structure of Fragole Celesti was architecturally located in a beautiful garden communicating with another, but mainly male, community.

Our intention of the consultation was to better understand how to protect and help these women and thus prevent them from having sexual relations with male patients, alternatively encouraging their participation in expressive activities (workshops, speech groups, psychotherapy sessions) with which to

keep busy during the day. The professor listened to us for a long time then told us about theatre, paediatrician and psychoanalyst Donald Winnicott, and psychoanalyst Anna Freud, experts he had followed for a long time but without ever elaborating himself on the required topic.

He then told us to read an illuminating text by art historian Erwin Panofsky on *Galileo critic of the arts*¹. "I bought the book immediately, even though I had come out a little unhappy, because the professor had not given us indications and suggestions for our problems. I read the book very carefully."²

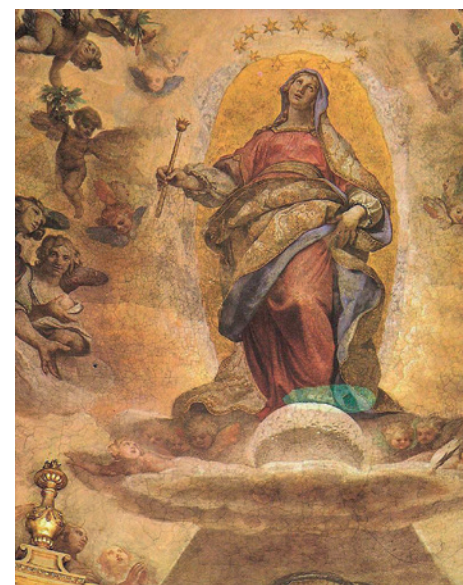
We deepened how the great physicist and astronomer Galileo Galilei was also an artist because his interests had matured in a humanistic rather than scientific environment; he was also an excellent draftsman who preferred and understood with "perfect taste" all the arts derived from drawing.

He became close friends with the painter Ludovico Cigoli who remained faithful to him throughout his life, especially in the difficult years following the publication of "Sidereus Nuncius".

In 1610 Cigoli made independent and accurate observations of sunspots to

prove that the spots were not the whims of a telescope, nor a disturbance of the local atmosphere.

In his very late work, "The Assumption of the Virgin", frescoed on the dome of the Paolina Chapel in Santa Maria Maggiore, the painter paid tribute to his friend the great scientist by representing the Moon under the feet of the Virgin exactly as it had turned out to Galileo's telescope - this to prove that the celestial bodies do not differ essentially from the Our Land.



Ludovico Cigoli, *L'assunzione della Vergine*, Cappella Paolina in Santa Maria Maggiore

"When, after a few days, tormented, I called the Professor saying that I had read the book carefully and all in one go but that I could not understand what it had to do with the question I had asked him, he quoted to me what I have just described about the Virgin. He explained to me that there in that image, there are all the things we want to do

with women and that is to try to make them live in another planet and maybe make them virgins, since the planets are all more or less the same and what matters is the creative capacity.

He told us that first it is necessary to work with art, music, theatre, the body, and to be able to speak with the word will come only later.

I believe that this illuminating example has been very useful with respect to the understanding that beauty is ethical, necessary and fundamental in every type of life, especially when it comes to psychic suffering, tortured bodies, minds devoured by obsession with abandonment, the loss of all the senses that man possesses.

The last thing he said was: "*leave them alone, make them vibrate through the activities they produce, sublimative projections of their self*".

That is why it is now established - also from recent university scientific studies - that the search for beauty through creativity is a fundamental part of the complex therapeutic work for the reconquest of health.

The artistic production that is carried out in our laboratories does not give itself another purpose, it is simply the activity that allows us to establish a new relationship with the world.

The meeting of pictorial expression and the movement of the body leave a trace on the sheet and on gestures, thanks to muscle decontraction, the choice of posture, head, arms, and kinesthetic coordination that can decrease suffering.

The works created are projective; artistic expression is a language through which the present that conceals, tries to reveal something. For some patients

1. Erwin Panofsky, a cura di Maria Cecilia Mazzi, *Galileo critico delle arti* (1954), 2008, Abscondita, Milano

2. Raffaella Bortino personally

who have nothing, neither personal life nor a home, paintings are often all they own. The search for beauty gives art therapy or other creative techniques a cathartic function.

The possibility of having a space where the artworks are valued, perhaps even sold, gives a possibility of a not indifferent increase in self-esteem.

In that context Prof. Resnik emphasized the undoubtable importance of the law and the rules that are authentically chosen and adopted by each institution. This is because it is necessary to delineate the terrain in which one finds oneself working, so that it is possible to clarify on what the daily life and life of an institution is based. At the same time, he told us that psychoanalysis consists in all respects of an artistic work and that personal qualities of the analyst such as intuition and honesty are fundamental.

It is still essential to explore and deepen the phenomenon of the personification of the law in a superegoic function. On the other hand, he was convinced that there are other personifications of the Super ego which are not defined exclusively as despotic and critical, but which can take on the characteristics of a father or mother that they encourage. In support of this thesis there is all the research work carried out by the psychoanalyst Melanie Klein, which authorizes us to speak today of paternal and maternal superegoic functions. It is implicit that the superegoic func-

tion acts in various ways in normal life and also in psychosocial pathology, in its typical manifestations of this time in history, a phenomenon that is inevitably the object of the intervention put in place by the therapeutic communities. As an "archaeologist of the mind" Prof. Resnik was convinced that analytical work in different fields, such as individual, group and institutional ones, imply a psychoanalytic look applied to the concepts of Chaos and Cosmos. That is, to all the creative forces and drives that constantly change into disorder and order and vice versa.

The field of psychoanalytic investigation consists of a complex confrontation between living beings in a particular context that we call *setting*. Some of our psychotic patients are quite disorganized and live in a kind of confusional state and in a chaotic condition.

Plato in his *Timaeus* suggests that all human matter and reality require a container and a "body"...

The contribution that Francis Macdonald Cornford, historian of philosophy, makes to the understanding of the *Timaeus* explains how Kora means room but also cradle, and that according to Plato it also had the meaning of the one who cares. The primordial container therefore corresponds to the idea of a vessel that has the function of maternal containment, but the form of an object or a living being, its structural order, so we must name it paternal.

In some people art is also an important

mode of survival, of self-care, both as an individual search for balance and anxiety management and as a privileged vehicle of expression.

In fact, within the spaces structured by artistic activities, there are people who - regardless of the proposals of the communities - develop original ways of expressing ideas, emotions, obsessions or desires giving them a relevant aesthetic form that makes them acquire the added value of work.

For uniqueness some of them can be compared, in a certain way, to the most independent and irreducible productions of Outsider Art.

The effectiveness of the art used in personal care is recently confirmed by the results of over 3000 studies (from World Health Organization reports³),

which have highlighted the decisive role of the arts with regard to the prevention of diseases, health promotion and the treatment and management of diseases that occur during life.

The beneficial impact of art can be promoted through its recognition and the promotion of artistic engagement at the individual and social level. This can help address some complex challenges for which there are no solutions in current healthcare.

All of the above makes it clear why Outsider Art (Festival, Exhibition, Virtual Gallery ...) was chosen, together with Theatre and audiovisuals, as one of the pillars of the work of awareness pursued towards societies and systems by the DEEP ACTS project.

3. The summary report of the Health Evidence Network Evidence Network - HEN) on art and health, presented on November 11, 2019, reviewed the world's academic literature, both in English and Russian, on this topic. The literature includes over 900 publications, which include 200 reviews covering in turn more than 3000 further studies. As such, the report represents the most comprehensive review of art and health evidence to date.

The Italian translation is available on the CWC blog www.culturalwelfarecenter.wordpress.com.

MAQUÍNA DE ENCARNAR, THE SHOW: HISTORY AND CONTENT

Marco António Caronho Ferreira, Vera Alexandra Gomes Pereira,
Sérgio Manuel Pereira Novo

CONTEXTUALIZATION

Having originated in the Greek word *theatron*, whose meaning was “the place from which one sees”, for Aristotle the theatre allowed to see beyond speech, to perceive ...; it had the particularity of teaching people to reach what was behind things, to see beyond the surface, to relate the signifier with the meaning.

Moreover, in a very particular way, in a dimension of communication between actor and public and vice versa in a sort of dialogue that is created, it works as an intuitive process on the perception of the reality that surrounds us, intervening in the relationship between man and society and in the means that surround him, both in the emotional and cognitive, motor and social aspects.

The function of theatre is to show social and moral behaviours through the learning of values and the interpersonal and intrapersonal relationship with the human being. It has the function of alerting, sensitizing, training, criticizing.

It is in this context that “Máquina de Encarnar”, a theatrical and performative performance, appears in the context of “DEEP ACTS”. It emerges as a way of using performance art, in this

case theatre, as a warning cry. It is like a “punch in the stomach”, a form of awareness of a social problem strongly rooted in today's society: gender violence.

“Máquina de Encarnar” also serves as a dissemination vehicle for the project.

THE CREATIVE PROCESS

This creation began in a first phase, online, with the definition of the work team and with the communication of the entire DEEP ACTS project.

We started with the search for concepts and debate on ideas regarding the “themes” of gender violence. For each idea that gradually emerged we tried to identify the artistic potential, something that could be staged, in the body, in the music, supported by references to artists and concepts of art as a tool of transgression and intervention against violence.

Discussion meetings were also held with the other project partners about what they wanted to see on the scene, so that our creative process and the final result of creation would satisfy the work they were doing and be a reflection of the goals of DEEP ACTS.

In a second phase of the process, more



Poster of the show “Máquina de Encarnar”

creative and already face to face, we drew on all the research carried out and, through improvisations, we began to put all the elements and concepts in the scenic space.

From this, new ideas emerged and new theoretical and practical research took place.

We have been inspired by the field-work of national and international networks, the campaigns of associations and organizations against violence, international feminist movements such as Guerrilla Girls, Pussy Riot, Colectivo Las Tesis, #8M, and various others...

We were inspired by artists whose work and life were also dedicated to alerting, provoking feelings, discovering in the beauty of art a new form of strug-

gle. In music, for example, the Riot Grrrl movement, the Pussy Riot, but also, on the opposite side, the sexist contents of romantic and popular songs.

In a last phase of this intense process, we collected all these ideas gradually identified by concretizing them in scenes that we have lived and breathed, day after day, composing and testing this theatrical performance collaboratively; like a rock concert, a continuous metaphor within various metaphors, in a joint breath with the viewer.

A continuous "machine", society, pulsating, vibrating, in the flesh, in us, red (in Portuguese: "encarnado"), which feeds us constantly and daily; who "embodies" and reincarnates... life.



Synopsis

Dear spectator, the show will begin in a few moments.

We hope that you are seated comfortably and that the catharsis that follows is to your liking. In theatre, as in life, we are potential spectators of untold stories. Sitting on numbered chairs we watch what happens to others.

We live hungry for good stories, to be surprised by tragedies, comedies, with someone shouting of desire or suffering enough to keep us in our chair. We are willing to believe that sitting comfortably and watching is the great privilege of being spectators. It is the theatrical act in all its splendour!

MÁQUINA DE ENCARNAR is a single-act performative show that explores the paradox and violence of relationships between human beings. It is a MACHINE that wants to transform a passive theatrical act into an artistic manifestation of vigilance and alarm! A struggle in a closed space, dishonest, where the victims are already chosen.

We take charge of this artistic proposal aware that the theatre must play an active role in the fight against violence, whatever it may be. We claim to add your sensitive gaze and your amplified voice to this struggle. We think that it is possible through theatre and art to create new forms of reflection, of action, alternatives to patriarchal discourses.

Art must embody new possibilities of gender representation, which act as resistance and empowerment, which allow all people to build a new story. Theirs!

Four actors and two musicians take one side of the story. On the other side, rows of numbered chairs await the spectators, for a theatrical act that makes them vibrate. The MÁQUINA DE ENCARNAR is ready, but the deepest acts of action and resistance begin when the show ends.

Happy viewing.

Technical and artistic sheet

Production: ASTA

Director: Marco António Caronho Ferreira

Assistant Director: Adriana Pais

Stage support: Marta Marques

Texts: collective

Actors: Carmo Teixeira, Edmilson Gomes, Marina Schneider, Sérgio Manuel Pereira Novo

Musicians: Renato Gonçalves e Telmo Moura

Musical composition: Ritmo Estúdio

Lights: Marco Ferreira

Technical intervention: Bruno Esteves

Technical assistance: João Cantador

Costumes: Inês Santos

Graphics: Joana Mundana

Executive Production and Communication: Rui Pires

Production and Communication Assistant: Helena Ribeiro

Age classification: M/16

Duration: 70m

DEEP ACTS THE DOCUFILM

Andrea Anconetani

INTRODUCTION

The docufilm DEEP ACTS was conceived at the design level as an important dissemination tool that could allow the reach to a wide audience of viewers through, above all, the diffusion on the network. It is therefore not a product intended for the cinema (if not in a completely accidental way) but has been created so that it can be disseminated through the most common online distribution channels, hence the choice to shoot with digital formats that best lend themselves to this purpose.

The docufilm has the task of showing the process of the project without entering directly into the methodological discourse but instead describing particular moments, the type of research carried out and the difficulties encountered during its development.

The choice of the docufilm as a dissemination tool was made in the consideration that the vast public now possesses a great familiarity with the use of audiovisual content due to the now almost total absorption of the language of images that allows them to act effectively at a popular level.

On the other hand, the audiovisual instrument does not lend itself to becoming a vehicle for information that is too complete, scientific and specific.

Through the docufilm the public will be able to get to know the protagon-

nists of the project, hear their voices, have a cross-section of their work and the activities they have implemented in its context but also have awareness of their history, of the passion that moves them. It is therefore a privileged glimpse that will provide further consistency to the scientific documentation produced in the context of the design activities allowing a direct human approach and a communication with an emotional channel, of an otherwise impossible warmth.

THE FORM

The docufilm was made by choosing a peculiar mode of expression linked to the story, a choice that was realised through the collection and interpolation during the assembly phase of narratives made by the direct protagonists of the project. Those who materially directed it as managers, who conceived the methodologies, who worked in the pilot courses and in the realization of the activities, were the direct protagonists of the activities as end users.

The narrative thread was then woven in through the comparison with the narratives of the protagonists by ordering a sort of remote dialogue, in order to reconnect the various souls of the project and to create a harmonious synthe-



sis. This dialogue ultimately allows the spirit of the project to come out, shining through the stories, descriptions, looks of the protagonists and communicating it directly to the viewers who will be able to see "beyond" the purely methodological and scientific aspect that constitutes the main product of the entire activity.

Behind the words are also the places that hosted the research, the structures, the factual realities that can be tested through images.

THE REALISATION

The film was made with the use of extremely light sets in various shooting sessions carried out on location in Italy and abroad.

The filming in Italy concerned the activity carried out within the project in the structures of the lead institution Fermata d'Autobus, in Oglianico, in the Canavese area and in Moncalieri (Turin)

also with interviews (appropriately misrepresented) of some users of the services who have experimented with the methodology developed in DEEP ACTS which includes the use of art-therapeutic tools.

Other filming was carried out in Bologna and Turin as part of the 2020 and 2021 editions of the Outsiders Arts Festival.

The filming in Spain, on the other hand, was carried out in Seville and concerned the activity conducted in the psychotherapeutic field by the partner Rumbos. This activity is particularly focused on the management of emotions by women, also making use of methods that see the involvement of the body such as Biodanza.

The original music of the film was commissioned to maestro Davide Eusebi who wrote and recorded it using for the most part percussive and melodic acoustic instruments (such as the vibraphone) and synthetic electronic instruments.

The final editing was performed at the video studio of Nuovi Linguaggi.

CONCLUSIONS



CONCLUSIONS

Egle De Maria e Raffaella Bortino

Giulia, Paola, Stefania, Maura, Cristina, Viviana, Laura, Enrica, Daniela, Graziella... These are just some of the names of the many women we met and shared a piece of our work with. We have tried to give them a voice.

Since 1983, the year in which the community for drug addicts "Porto" was born, thanks to the courage and experience of Raffaella and a group of professionals; then since 1998, the year of opening of the structure for double diagnosis "Fermata d'Autobus"; and since 2013 the first year of life of "Fragole Celesti" (a unique community of its kind in Italy for women victims of abuse and mistreatment with personality disorders and addiction), there has been a continuous search for tools that would help patients to delve into the labyrinths of their psychic suffering and to find the words for an elaboration in spaces dedicated to this.

Creativity and the contexts where it can be expressed, this was the direct way.

As Professor Claude Olievstein, our supervisor for many years, has taught us, "saying the unspeakable" is the main task of art, faithful in this to the founding paradox of language which is to find the word for the thing.

But to say the unspoken means to find the word for the word, the audible speech from what must be silenced, that intimate soliloquy that everyone experiences every day, and thanks to

which one endures the compromises with existence that alone allow one to live.

An unknown world that extends its dominion between the removed and the manifest.

The unsaid is what is unconscious, and, at the same time, what cannot be said, the removed.

It is by its nature ambiguous, elusive, unspeakable.

It escapes the determinations of science, it hides itself from the reading of the psychoanalyst.

It is unspeakable and at the same time fundamental, an inner core that acts in all aspects of life and unfolds in our individual and collective behaviours.

There is a world of emotions, of unspoken ones that as therapists we have the duty to try to access to give our patients the opportunity to gain awareness and find ways of relationships with themselves and others that are less destructive than those learned.

Clinical experience and daily work have meant that Fermata d'Autobus has always believed in the therapeutic value of creativity and laboratory activities.

In particular, the women of "Fragole Celesti" have managed, thanks to art therapy, to represent their pain, to give shape to their primary trauma, to the abuse they have suffered and to verbalize it.

Painful experiences, inner dramas and

social hardships have been able to be conveyed to the outside world through the creation of true works of contemporary art.

As for the Spanish cooperative Rumbos, DEEP ACTS has given the opportunity to "Fermata d'Autobus" to give back on the European level the experience and skills gained and to update the knowledge of its operators by participating in training activities abroad.

The meeting / comparison with Rumbos has favoured the identification of methodologies and tools for profes-

sionals aimed at facilitating therapeutic intervention.

To complete this integration, awareness-raising strategies were born: Outsider art, Theatre and Audio-visuals.

We can conclude that the interactions between the organizations involved have given rise to a complete high-level methodological proposal that will undoubtedly help people who will rely on them for a period of care.

We wish you the best.

THANKS

Firstly, we thank all the residents and operators of Fermata d'Autobus, without whom all this would not have been possible.

ITALY

- Albertina Academy of Fine Arts, Turin
- Brera Academy of Fine Arts, Milan
- ANMC - Associazione Nazionale Museo del Cinema, Turin
- Artenne Cultural Association, Turin
- Cultural Association Diblu Arte aps, Melegnano
- Forme in Bilico Association, Turin
- Association Fuori Serie, Piacenza
- Associazione Inclusione Graffio e Parola, Volterra
- Association L'Alfiere in Campoverde, Turin
- Association Lapsus Different Creativity, Senigallia
- Azienda Sanitaria Locale Città di Torino, Turin
- Local Health Authority TO3, Collegno and Pinerolo
- Local Health Authority TO4 Ciriè, Chivasso, Ivrea
- Local Health Authority TO5, Chieri, Carmagnola, Moncalieri and Nichelino
- Local Health Unit Authority, Bologna
- Local Health Unit Authority, Piacenza
- Camel Blue, Livorno
- Casa dell'Art Brut di Casteggio, Pavia
- CCW - Cultural Welfare Center, Turin
- City of Turin - Cultural Activities Area - Youth and Equal Opportunities Area - GxT Giovani per Torino - Social Policies Area, Disability Service - Centro Arte Singolare e Plurale InGenio, Turin
- Azara Family Collection, Milan
- Silvana Crescini Collection, Goito
- Committee of women against gender-based violence - If not now when?, Turin Section
- Municipality of Favria :
- Town of Moncalieri
- CSAPSA2 Cooperative, Bologna
- Social Cooperative Giuliano Accomazzi, Turin
- Coopeerativa Sociale Chronos, Rivoli

- Cooperativa Sociale Esserci, Turin
- Cooperativa Sociale P.G. Frassati, Turin
- Social Cooperative Il Sogno di una cosa, Collegno
- Disability Film Festival, Volonwrite Association, Turin
- DRIM - Contemporary Art Ground, Turin
- Fitzcarraldo Foundation, Turin
- Fondazione Dario Fo and Franca Rame, Gubbio
- Fondazione Medicina a Misura di Donna Onlus, Turin
- Gliacrobati Gallery, Turin
- Galleria Maroncelli 12, Milan
- IAAP- International Association for Art and Psychology, Piedmont Section, Turin
- Social enterprise Coabitare - Housing Giulia, Turin
- La Nuova Tinaia Onlus, Florence
- LAO - Laboratorio pro Artisti Outsider, Verona
- MACC - Museum of Contemporary Art, Caltagirone
- MUFANT - Museolab del Fantastico e della Fantascienza, Turin
- Opera Barolo, Turin
- Outsider Art Observatory, Palermo
- Piedmont Region
- University Museum System of the University of Turin
- SOS SMA 2, Florence
- Local Health Unit Tuscany Center, Florence
- Local Health Unit Umbria 1, Perugia

SPAIN

- Ayuntamiento de Espartinas
- Ayuntamiento de San Juan de Aznalfarache
- Ayuntamiento de Mairena del Aljarafe
- Asociación Claver SJM, Seville

PORTUGAL

- Câmara Municipal da Covilhã
- Instituto Português do Desporto e Juventude, Lisbon
- Torfal, Belmonte
- Unidos Futebol Clube do Tortosendo

GERMANY

- The Elmar R. Gruber Collection of Mediumistic Art, München

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