

Could using Art as a coping mechanism help staff improve their mental health resilience, and if so – how could this be adopted into schools and colleges?

JENNIFER LINSDELL

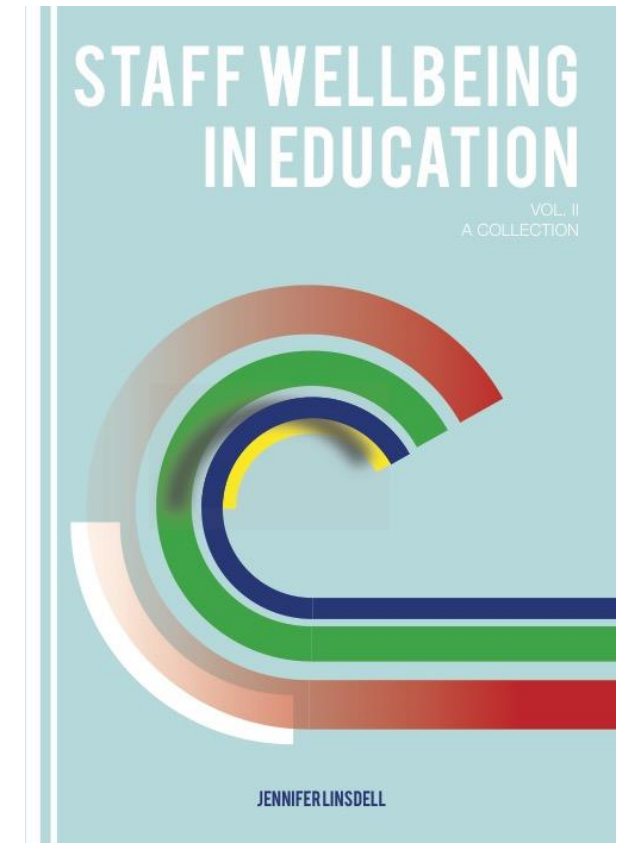
BIRMINGHAM CITY UNIVERSITY

Overview

Throughout my two years at BCU I have been studying the use of Art Education & Art Therapy to support Mental Health & Resilience.

This project stemmed from doing a similar piece of work with students in the Further Education Institution I teach in, and finding this helped them have a deeper understanding of the techniques they could use to support their mental wellbeing.

I felt that ultimately we cannot fully help students without also helping staff, who can impact our adolescents everyday both positively and negatively.



Jennifer Linsdell, BCU

Methodologies

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

Staff were given a questionnaire which included the use of the WEMWBS. They completed this both at the beginning and the end of the project, which was 3 weeks in length.

Staff were given a booklet of Art Therapy style tasks, which focused on different emotions each day. They were requested to complete this every evening across the 3 week period.

They then repeated the questionnaire, and the comparison of their results on the WEMWBS were used to see if this had improved things such as: productivity & mental wellbeing.

Using colour, produce a colour wheel & add your emotions to this, based on the colour you believe them to be associated with. This will help you think critically about your emotions.

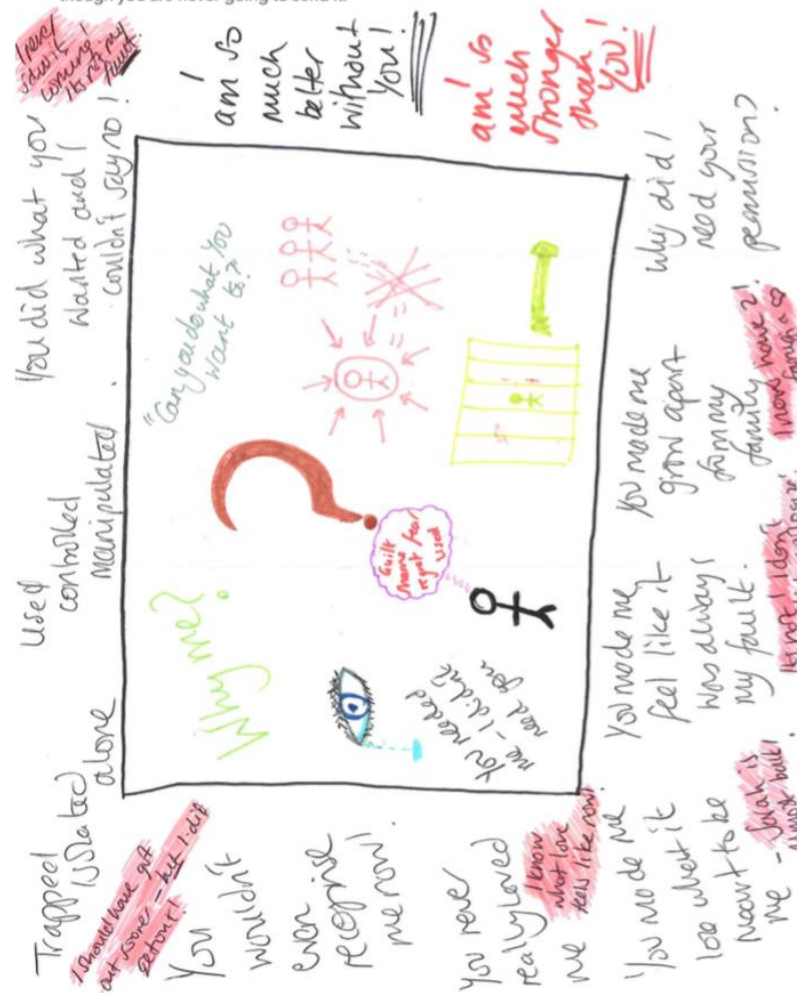


Now I am loved! Now I have family. Now I am me!

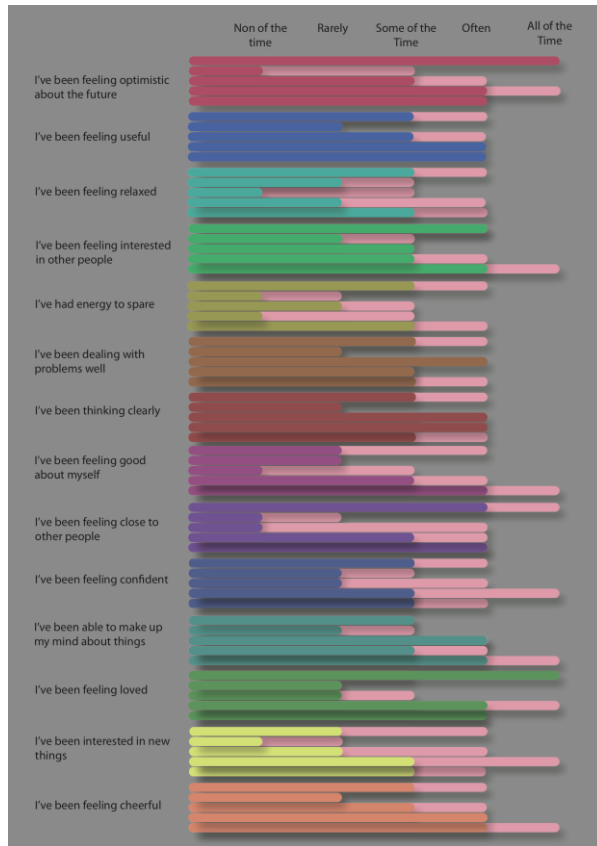
Day Four: : Design a postcard you will never send.

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We all feel different emotions towards others. If there is still an event that has effected you, or a person you still feel angry/upset towards. Design a postcard to express and show this, though you are never going to send it.



Results



Every single member of staff who completed this study has reported a positive improvement in their mental health.

The lowest change of a participant through the use of the WEMWBS was 3, and the highest reported change was a total of 15.

No participant lowered their score on an individual question, each at least stayed the same or improved.

The most consistent improvements across the board in this area, were staff reporting they had felt less negatively about themselves and their abilities. All but one member of staff were able to report that they felt as if their mental health impacted their ability to complete daily tasks had lessened.

Next Steps

Engagement with other Further Education institutions to work with staff & students and increase the participant size, to see if this continues to work across the board.

Planning, adaptation & implementation of how a project like this can support staff in Primary, Secondary & Higher education also.

Discussion on how this can further impact staff engagement with professional development.

If you would like to discuss this further my twitter handle is
@jnfrlinsdell

"I can't express how much this has helped. It stopped being about consciously drawing what it was asking for, and actually became something I was excited about completing at the end of the day. It was almost like a release, letting me shut off my work brain and accepting whatever bad had happened that day."

Participant Feedback, 2019