Chilli Studio's

WELLNESS FRAMEWORK
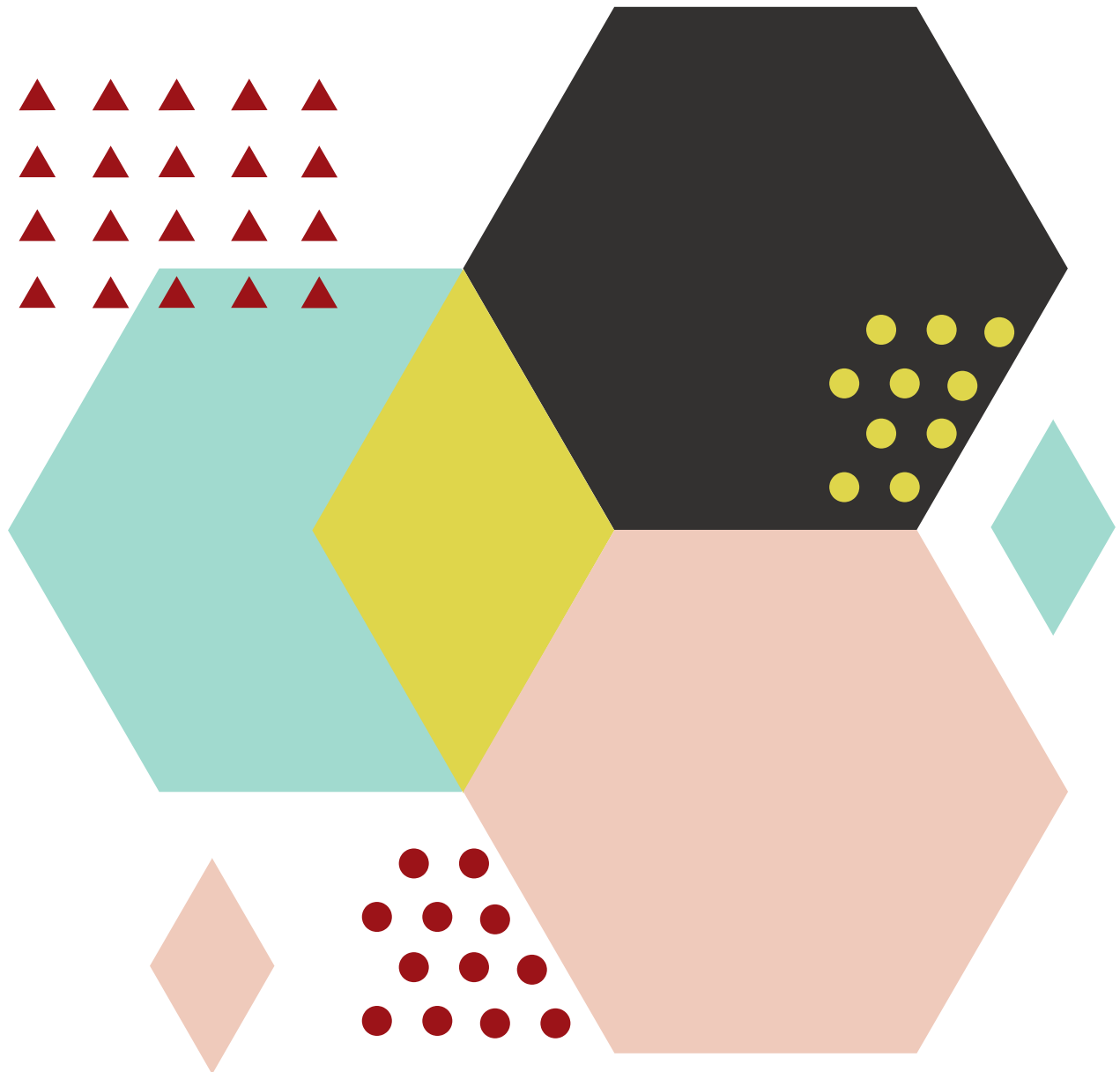
A Guide for Facilitators

mind
for better mental health

ChilliStudios

heritage
lottery fund

LOTTERY FUNDED

" The effect of stigma on our physiological state is very important. We need to be motivated by the wish to change other people minds and create understaning "

Chilli Studios Member

This document & the approaches used within it should be continually reviewed & shaped by participants.

Thank you to MIND for support on best practice approaches

Trigger Warnings for Document:

No reference to a specific trauma has been made. Trauma has only been referenced as a broad term, with reference to triggers.
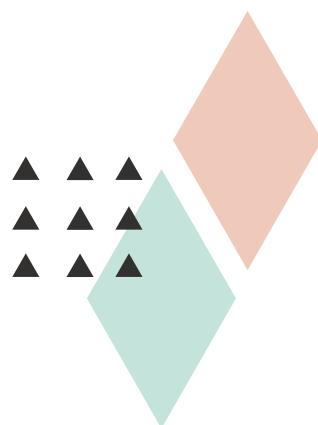
Panic attacks and other mental health conditions have been mentioned.

No other trigger warners have been spotted. Please contact Chilli Studios if you feel this is not the case.
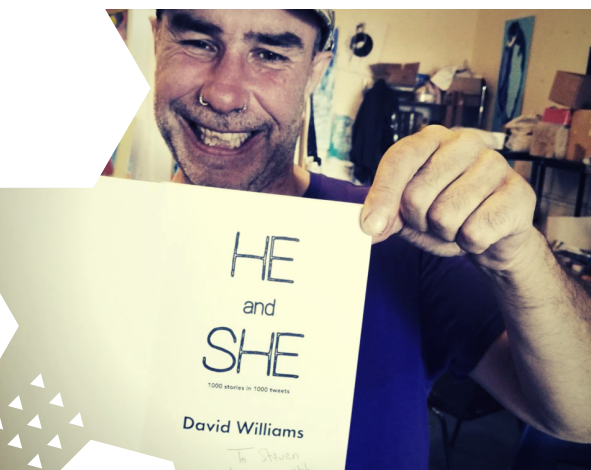
Content

Introduction

The Wellness Framework is a guide to creating a **safe** & **empowering** environment for workshop participants experiencing mental health conditions. The first section looks at communication, triggers and coping strategies. The second section shows how to use the framework as a facilitator. Definitions have been placed under titles through out. The Framework is intended to be a **flexible** and **adaptive** supporting document.

This document was created as part of Chilli Studios, 'Heads & Tales' HLF project (2018). A heritage project working - with those suffering from mental health conditions - to **rebalance historical narratives** and **tackle** present day **stigmas**. This project was built on the belief that heritage is a positive force for **personal development**, **education** and **social change**. Giving a **voice to underrepresented** people - to enable empowerment and equality in, and beyond, archives - is the ultimate aim of the project.

At the centre of this document is an emphasis on a **participant-led approach**. As well as, ensuring: opinions are **respected** and not censored; all voices are **heard**; people are **supported** to engage with difficult topics; **healthy** debate and discussion; and facilitator **confidence**.

This guide works in conjunction with an organizations' own policies on safeguarding, code of conduct, boundaries, confidentiality & equal opportunities. Please familiarise yourself with these policies before facilitating a session. Contact Chilli Studios (or other host organisation) to get these documents.
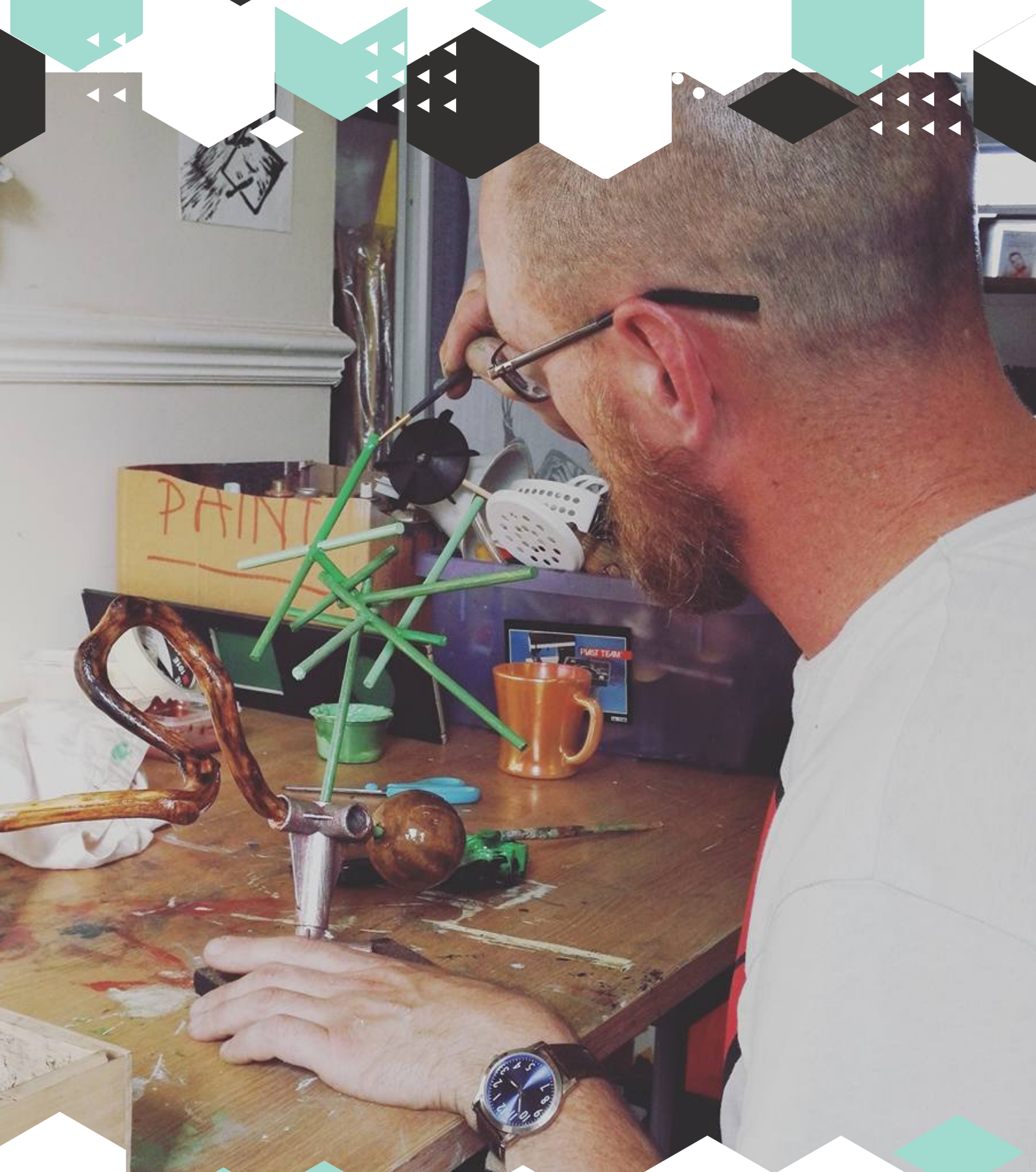
Section 1:
Ideas Behind Framework

Ethics, Ideas & Values

1. Ask for **continual input** from participants and make sure feedback shapes approaches and values.

2. Understand the role of facilitator: presenting heritage from a **neutral perspective**, ensuring no judgment is passed and that participants have complete **ownership** of the narratives created.

3. Ensure the **rights** of participants are protected through out.

4. Recognise power balances and counteract this by ensuring everyone has **equal** space/time.

5. Understand and respect the fact that everyone has **different** beliefs, sensitivities, emotions, experiences and conditions.

6. **Respect** participants at all stages, both as heritage managers, artists & human beings in their own right; as well as adults who need safeguarding.

7. Be aware of **barriers to accessing** sessions, to both mitigate issues and celebrate the effort made by participants to attend.

Safeguarding Responsibilities

Safeguarding ensures vulnerable adults keep their **independence**, whilst their **wellbeing** and safety is supported. Chilli Studios also actively encourages **whistleblowing**: individuals can come forward without the fear of negative consequences, should they suspect any issues.

You are **not expected to decide** whether or not an adult is definitely at risk. Duty of care means you report anything that concerns you to the appropriate person (who must then follow the steps outlined in an organisations policies and procedures including 'Safeguarding Adults at Risk' Policy).

It is also your responsibility to **follow up** your initial report: continually checking what has been done. If you are an external facilitator, email the organisation afterward to remind them of the concern and later to **check** this been followed up. However, you will only be told if it has been followed up - you should not receive any confidential information.

In addition to this, as an external facilitator you are not expected to know if someone is acting different from usual. Instead, **report** to the organisation anyone who seems quiet/frantic. They are more likely to know if this is unusual behaviour and will be able to speak to the person.

Outside your own organisation, facilitators must **familiarise** themselves with an organisations' relevant policies & procedures - it is the host organisation's responsibility to safeguard people in the building but please realise you have a duty of care.

Communication Approaches During Safeguarding

1. Consider any communication **aid** needed (easy to read documents/different languages/audio formats). Remember one format will not suit all needs.

2. **Listen** carefully, remain calm, don't show any shock/disbelief

3. **Acknowledge** what is being said.

4. Do not ask **probing questions** or suggest you don't find statements credible.

5. Be **open** & **honest** about the safeguarding approaches being taken (don't promise to keep a secret as information needs to pass to the appropriate teams for support).

6. Seek **consent** to share information (unless circumstances suggest action is needed without consent e.g a life is at risk or another person/group is put in possible harm).

7. Confidentiality is extremely important and personal data should not be shared except to the appropriate staff team involved in Safeguarding.

Mental Health Myths & Stigma

As a facilitator you are not expected to have an extensive knowledge of mental health conditions. However understanding pre-existing myths and stigma will help ensure participants are treated fairly. As a facilitator it is important to recognise any unconcious bias you may have beforehand.

Common Myths Include:

1. Mental health conditions make people dangerous
People suffering mental health problems are in fact more likely to be victims of crime.

2. People can snap out of it - its about strength of character
Just like a physical health condition, people are not able to snap out of mental health issues.

3. Mental Health problems are rare and not as serious as physical issues.
1 in 4 people will be affected in their life time, this can be just as debilitating (and impactful) as physical health.

4. Depression or Anxiety are **the same as feeling sad or nervous.**
This is a common misconception, that can often prevent people seeking the support they need.

5. Mental Health defines a person or people with the same conditions will act the same.
Mental health does not define a persons character or remove individuality. Also conditions vary widely.

6. People with mental health problems can't work.
Many people successful manage careers despite mental health problems. It is also important to remember not to stigmatise those who can't work - not viewing it as a sign of their value in society.

Stigma:

These myths are often reinforced through the media, the language we use and the stereotypes that surround us. Impacting how people are treated and their ability to talk about mental health.

9 /10 people with mental health problems experience discrimination.

It is important to create a space without judgement, assumptions, patronisation (etc); where people are respected and recognised as individuals.

Flexibility, Patience & Understanding

- Be prepared to work **flexibly** and **adapt** to changes through out the session - things don't always go as planned!

- Flexibility is also needed week to week for ongoing workshops, as peoples' mental health may **vary weekly** and retention maybe difficult.
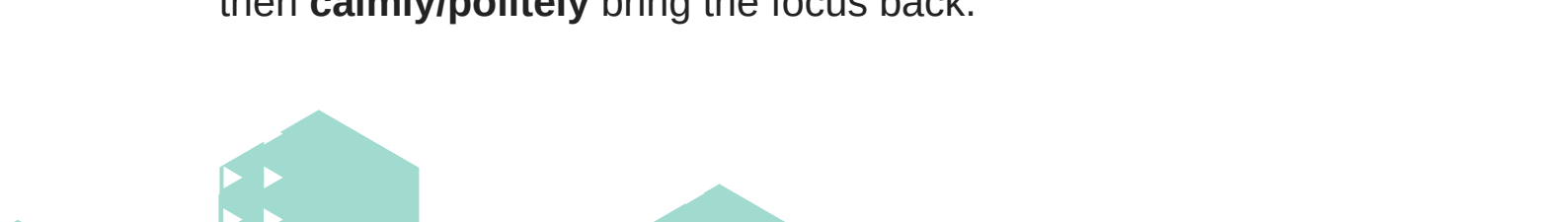
-**Concentration** can vary throughout (for many reasons as well as mental health conditions). Remember everyone works at a different pace/in a different way and be patient through out.

- Individuals may want to leave the space. This is not always a sign of rudeness or an issues with the workshop. Instead this can give people **control** of the space and how they feel in it; as well as being a coping strategy for some. Let people know this is okay. It should also be clear that each 'task' is completely optional through out the session.

- Remember not everyone will want to talk. Remind people this is **optional**. (For example during introductions a participant could simply wave rather than speak). Participation can look different with different people.

-If you are worried about one individual speak to them **privately**. Do not point them out or patronise.

- Conversations going off topic can be a big problem during sessions. Make sure people know they have been heard and then **calmly/politely** bring the focus back.

Triggers

Triggers are a reminder of past trauma, causing flashbacks and anxiety. This is important to remember when working with heritage documents, as looking at the past can de difficult for some people. Triggers are very **personal** and can feel **different** to each individual. Facilitators are not expected to know all possible triggers; but instead be aware of content that could be upsetting and how to respond to this. Ask your host organisation and wider team about content you are unsure about before the session.

It is important to remember **not to restrict content**. Participants have the right and **freedom to choose** what material they do or do not engage with. It is not about making this decision on their behalf, assuming triggers or censoring topics.

Trigger Warning Ideas:

1. When using printed material (time permitting), **organise** content into folders: categorised by their triggering content. Alternatively put post-it notes with trigger warnings on the material.

2. **Check** beforehand the needs of the group you're working with and, if possible, potential triggers based on the information available. **Assess** if anything in your material could be triggering and outline what verbal trigger warners may need to be given.

3. Do not have material or trigger warnings visible until an appropriate time, after you have spoken to the participants. Surprising participants with potentially triggering material can impact that ability or desire to continue with the session.

How to React if Someone is Triggered

Grounding techniques can help individuals who feel triggered by allowing them to focus on the present and remember they are safe. This should always be person-led: remembering individuals are the experts on their own mental health.

Assisting Participants with Grounding Techniques
- Can help with anxiety, panic attacks, spiralling thoughts, triggers, disassociation, difficult feelings (etc)
- Focus on the 5 senses
- Are connected to ideas of mindfulness
- Emphasises the present moment
- Should be used completely in the participants control

- **Whilst Assisting:**
- Remain calm and reassuring
- Have just one facilitator assist
- Don't push the participant, slowly guide and wait patiently
- Remind the participant of grounding techniques, and give them space to try
- Reassure the participant of where they are/that they are safe

- **Things to avoid:**
- Asking lots of questions (especially in the first few minutes- let them ground a little first)
- Moving/talking too fast or in a frantic way
- Continuing to talk about the topic (even in a reassuring way)
- Not validating that person's feelings (different from their perspective)
- Giving too many options

A Ten Step Approach:

1. Reassure the rest of the group - keep general calm atmosphere
2. 10 deep breaths, counted slowly (can also use fingers). Count & breathe along with participant.
3. Remind they are okay
4. Ask them to feel where they are (feel of seat, air, touch of table etc)
5. Cold glass of water
6. 5 more breaths
7. Remind them of where they are
8. What do they see (e.g. how many blue things)
9. Reassure them
10. Ask if they would like to go to another room/get fresh air once they seem more grounded - perfect time to offer a cuppa too!

- You don't have to use all of the steps, or in that order.
- Use a generally calm approach - based on simple information about the present - is always useful.
- It is a judgement call in the moment what feels right or wrong to suggest.
- Remember the individuality of each participant - they know what feels right or wrong for them.
- Once they are calmer you can ask what has helped in the past.
- It is also important to check how the rest of the group is feeling afterwards.

Other Grounding Techniques:

- Mindfully drinking a cuppa or cold drink
- Reminding yourself of the date/time/location (although this can be too confusing with disassociation)
- Listening to a song
- Ice on wrist
- Cooling yourself down
- Stamp on the spot
- Wrapping yourself in blanket
- Give them something to smell
- Rip a piece of paper into 10 pieces calmly
- Squeezing pillow

How to React: Worse Case Scenario

If someone runs out of the room or has a very bad episode, it is not your responsibility to follow them or do anything that will put yourself in danger. **Immediately report** to a member of staff at Chilli Studios or host organisation and venue. If an incident occurs or you are concerned over the safety of or surrounding a participant then safeguarding and if necessary emergency procedures should be followed as detailed in your own organisations policies and procedures.

Ideally you will be supported by at least one other person (for example a DBS checked volunteer or venue staff). If you need to focus on a distressed participant or leave the room for any reason, this person can continue working with the remaining group.

Remember you are not expected to give mental health advice.

Keeping Yourself Safe

Remember it is important to **check** you're own mental health through out the session, as well as ensuring you remain safe.

Some of the topics involved can be **difficult** to hear. Using the grounding techniques before and after a session can be helpful. As well as planning something **relaxing** or enjoyable to do afterwards.

Please feel free to speak to Chilli Studios or your own organisation before hand if you are worried about possible topics and feedback anything **worrying** you, after the session.

Keeping Carers Safe

Some participants may have a carer with them during the session. This could be a family member, young person, agency employee or someone with their own mental health problems.

Remember it is important to check their wellbeing through out, the same as any other participant.

For any further safeguarding concerns you may have, refer to your host organisations policies.

Respecting Participants

- Remember everyone is an individual, with the same rights as any other adult.

- Don't patronise or pass judgement

- Don't make decisions on other peoples behalf

- Remember to address people directly (even if they have a carer)

-Address any pre-conceived notions (based on myth or stigma) you have before starting the session

Section 2:
Using the
Framework

2A. The Framework

To be used by facilitator as a tick list before, during and after sessions. There is also a 5 min Approach reminder at the back of this guide. The highlighted sections are explained in more detail in the pages following.

		TICK
1. PLANNING	A. ASK ABOUT GROUP SIZE/NEEDS/POSSIBLE TRIGGERS	
	B. READ YOUR/HOST ORGANISATION'S SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES & WELLNESS FRAMEWORK (AND FAMILIARISE YOURSELF WITH RELEVANT POLICIES)	
	C. ASK ANY NECESSARY QUESTIONS ABOUT DOCUMENTS	
	D. CHECK THERE IS A HELPLINE LIST PREPARED	
2. INITIAL DISCUSSION PRE-SESSION	A. INTRODUCE PROJECT	
15 MINS	B. CREATE SHARED VALUES & GROUND RULES	
	C. DISCUSS NATURE OF TOPICS INVOLVED	
	D. CHAT ABOUT TRIGGERS & COPING STRATEGIES	
3. MID SESSION	A. CHECK HOW EVERYONE IS FEELING	
10 MINS	**B. TAKE A BREAK** (STRETCH, FRESH AIR, REFRESHMENT, TOILET ETC)	
	C. ADDRESS ANY POTENTIAL ISSUES	
4. DEBRIEF	A. CHECK HOW EVERYONE IS FEELING	
15 MINS	B. REFER BACK TO COPING STRATEGIES	
	D. GATHER FEEDBACK THROUGH LIGHTBULB MOMENT	
	D. DESTRESS DOODLE OR RELAXING ACTIVITY	
	E. CHECK IF ANYONE NEEDS EXTRA SUPPORT	
	F. FEEDBACK TO YOUR/HOST ORGANISATION	
5. IF FURTHER SUPPORT NEEDED	A. REPORT CONFIDENTIALLY VOCALLY & IN WRITING TO YOUR/HOST ORGANISATION ASAP	
	B. REFER TO HELPLINE LIST	
	C. REFER BACK TO COPING STRATEGIES IF NEEDED	

Create Shared Values
& Ground Rules

Steps:

1. Use large paper & pens to draft ideas.
2. Ask people the group to decide 5 rules for the session (how they would like to be treated/should treat others).
3. Write out 5 rules clearly and check everyone is happy.
4. Remind participants that this can be referred back to throughout the session.

Remember:

1. This is a way of outlining what is or isn't acceptable behaviour.
2. This ensures people have ownership of the space they are participating in.
3. This reassures people they are in a safe space.
4. This sets the tone for communication throughout the session.

If there is not enough time to do above please use the "Shared Values" sheet in appendix that was created by a group of members at Chilli Studios. Ask if people in the group would like to read a point each (no pressure). Also ask if they agree with points and would like to add any more.

Discuss Nature of Topics Involved

Steps:

1. Inform people this is is a safe space, where everyone is respected.
2. Be clear if content could be triggering for people.
3. Be clear about what material/topics are likely to be involved.
4. Reassure people that they do not have to do anything they are uncomfortable with.

Remember:

1. Everyone's opinion is equal.
2. People feel and view things differently from one another.
3. People could be nervous about some of the content.
4. Being clear about topics is not about sanitising content or making decisions on behalf of participants.
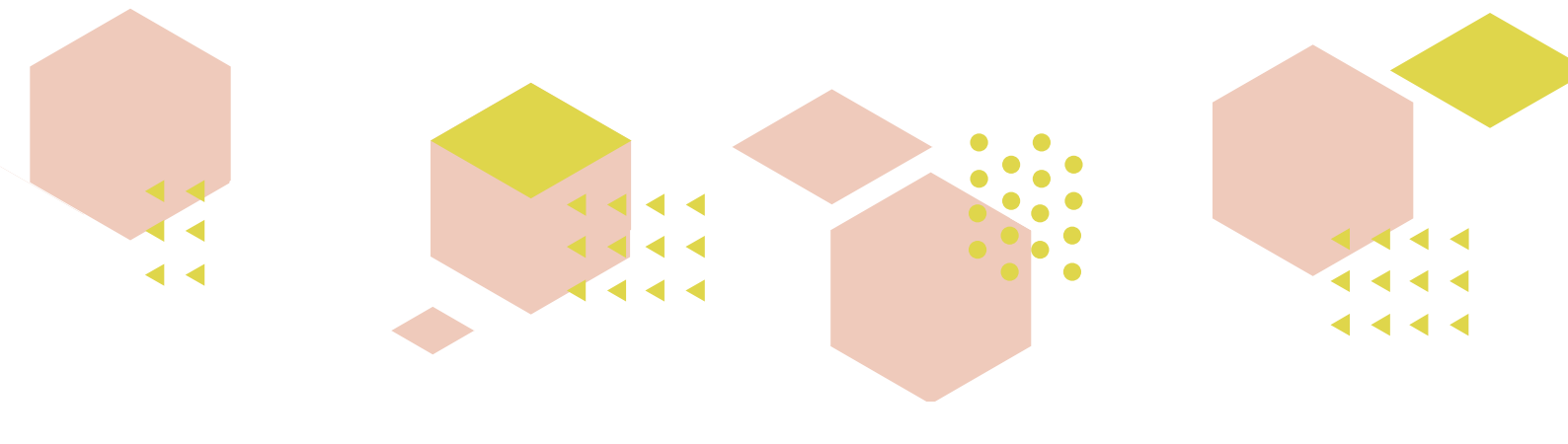
Triggers & Coping Strategies

Steps:

1. Ask if there is a specific topic (thats been mentioned) worrying people.

2. Show members the Grounding tips and ask them to talk about any they're unsure of/disagree with; they could also rank them in order or helpfulness.

3. Ask what they know works for them - this can be added to the tips sheet.

4. Agree some simple rules to deal with triggers(or rank the ones available).

5. Agree a way for people to signal how they are feeling.

6. Check people feel safe and reassured by how triggers will be dealt with.

Remember:

1. The conversation is not about what triggers people, but how they think triggers should be dealt with.

2. The idea of possibly being triggered is scary - the participant is being brave for choosing to continue.

3. People will have learnt ways to deal with their triggers- listen to them.

Lightbulb Moment
(Gathering Feedback)

Steps:

1. Ask participants to share their thoughts and reflections on a 'Lightbulb Moment' Postcard (provided by Chilli or use stickies).

2. Anonymity is optional - ask participants to only write name if they are happy for it be shared. They can change their mind about this on a later date.

3. Audio equipment (provided by host organisation) can be used instead of a postcard.

4. Remind participants: Their words will shape the project because their views, positive or negative, are important.

5. Other options: send letters/comments, any other suggestions from participants?

Remember:

1. Participants can think about the following questions:

- What worked for you today?

- What didn't work for you today?

- Is there anything more we can do to help you participate?

- What was your best moment in today's session?

- What was your worst moment in today's session?

- Any lightbulb moments?

2. Participants can write whatever they wish. Including a letter, story or drawing, using the postcards provided.

Destress Doodle
or relaxation activity*

Steps:

1. On a big sheet(s) of paper give people the option to spend 5 minutes doodling freely.
2. Cups of tea also an option with this!

Remember:

1. Allow for a cathartic, calm period

*You may find another workable relaxation activity.

Feedback to Staff

Steps:

1. Report any concerns to your own and host organisation.
2. Check well-being of all staff involved
3. Quickly review how the session appeared to go.
4. Have a cuppa!

Remember:

1. Communication between staff is essential.
2. It is important to safe-guard yourself.
3. Hearing these topics as facilitator can be tiring - give yourself time to unwind afterwards.

Useful Resources

NHS, 'Safeguarding Adults: A Guide for Health Care Staff'
Available at:
https://www.england.nhs.uk/publication/safeguarding-adults-a-guide-for-health-care-staff/

MIND, 'Health Care & Social Rights: What is Safeguarding in Social Care?'
Available at:
https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/legal-rights/health-and-social-care-rights/safeguarding-in-social-care/#.WsyKEpPwbBI

MIND, 'Relaxation'
Available at:
https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/relaxation/#.WsyLHJPwbBI

MIND, 'Self Care for BPD' (Example of Grounding Techniques with links to explore techniques for other conditions)
Available at:
https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/types-of-mental-health-problems/borderline-personality-disorder-bpd/self-care-for-bpd/#.WsyMJpPwbBJ

For more information about Chilli Studios:
www.chillistudios.co.uk

For more information on the Heads & Tales HLF Project:
www.headntales.uk

APPENDIX

Wellness Framework: 5 Minute Approach

Beginning:

1. Introduce the Session

2. Read out shared values (together) - stress it's a safe space and participation is optional for everyone

3. Content Warning (not a negative thing!)

4. If anything goes wrong: Let people know who to speak to/help with grounding/can leave room if they want.

Durring:

5. Check how people are feeling at points & provide breaks

Near end:

6. Destress Doodle or relaxation exercise

7. Lightbulb Moment or Feedback sheet/stickies

8. Check everyone is okay again.

Post Session:

9. Check you feel okay afterwards

10. Meet up with a key member of Staff for a quick review.

Remember:

- Be flexible and adapt to different needs.

- Conversations can go off topic so try to steer back to creative work.

- Some participants may not want to speak.

- Remain calm, patient, respectful

- Don't stereotype or judge

- Ensure everyone feels heard

- Keep yourself safe

- Continually value participant input and ownership

- Do not censor content

- Immediately report worse case scenarios.

- Enjoy your session!

To use as a reminder after reading the Wellness Framework Guide

Shared Values
An ethos and declaration to support any workshop or activity for all involved - groups, individuals, participants, facilitators, staff and volunteers. Developed through the peer led project steering group.

1. To create a **Safe Place**. A space that creates cohesion, encouragement & support.

2. Provide opportunity to **express** & allow the space and time needed to do so together.

3. **Respect, understand and value difference**.

4. **Exercise empathy:** To be **sensitive**, aware and support each other with our individual needs and Mental Health conditions.

5. Respect wishes & privacy: **Confidentiality** is important to protect our safety and privacy.

6. Keep discussion and focus appropriate to the session and those involved. Be aware everyone has different sensitivities, experience and possible triggers.

7. Be **creative**! Art allows us to express and communicate.

8. **Listen & Learn** from each other and ourselves.

9. Highlight and **celebrate achievements** of all levels.

10. Respect timings and facilitator as well as each other.

11. Feel free to ask for **support** where needed. If anyone is concerned to chat to staff in private where the right advice or pathways can be given.

LIGHT BULB MOMENTS