

Creative Practices for Wellbeing - Practice Guidance

2020



Lapidus International is the global association for promoting the practice of words for wellbeing and supporting practitioners working in education, health, community, voluntary, private and public sectors.

We believe the following guidance can usefully supplement your reflective practice, judgement, awareness of local requirements and law, to develop the safety and effectiveness of practice.

Alongside this guidance, we are also committing to create new opportunities for training, a self-certified register of practitioners, supervisor development opportunities and an international conference.

Please visit our website for the latest developments: www.lapidus.org.uk.

Creativity for Wellbeing is Flourishing

Using creativity for wellbeing has grown significantly over the years and is now becoming commonplace in many different contexts and settings, such as classrooms, workplaces, hospitals, hospices, community spaces, festivals, and even government.

Evidence for the use of creative practices such as poetry, storytelling, or biographical writing to support recovery or promote personal development is long established and is growing, and demonstrates an incredible power and potential.

Amidst this setting, and with the support of TS Eliot Foundation, The Old Possum's Practical Trust, and the University of Chester, this guidance was developed to support practitioners in delivering effective and safe practice.

How this guidance was developed

This guidance was developed between 2017-2019 by (1) analysing the key themes running through 100 professional frameworks from around the globe (including the UK, the US, Australia and global frameworks), (2) summarising the key themes into 20 carefully crafted statements, and then (3) using these statements as the basis for discussion and development of the statements in participatory face-to-face and online consultation meetings with a range of practitioners.

This guidance has therefore been generated through consultation with over 50 different roles from the arts, health, business, charities and third sector organisations, and government (e.g. school and university teachers, a wide range of therapists (e.g. art, dance, music, occupational), community writers, poets, musicians, artists, activists, policy advisors, community development professionals, counsellors, psychologists, nurses, public health professionals, researchers, and business professionals).

Who this guidance is for

This guidance is for practitioners using creative practices for wellbeing outcomes. It has been designed to help a wide range of practitioners across different contexts and settings, and so it is designed to be flexible rather than prescriptive. Experienced practitioners may use it as a tool to deepen their reflections, whereas new practitioners may use it to identify new learning and development opportunities.

How to use this guidance

This guidance has been designed to help practitioners across different contexts and settings, and so it is designed to be flexible rather than prescriptive. You can use it to help you to:

- **Design your creative activities or programmes, short or long**
- **Decide whether or not to use creative activities in certain contexts or settings**
- **Decide what additional support or arrangements you might organise to ensure effective and safe practice**
- **Reflect on or evaluate your own or others' practices**
- **Decide how to improve what you currently do**
- **Decide how to identify, reward or recognise good and promising practices in your context.**

Guidance prompt	Why this is important	Examples of reflective questions to help explore the guidance prompt	Examples of what you might do
<p>Consider own expertise, experience and qualifications in scoping work, and organise additional support that might be needed.</p>	<p>Enables confidence (both yours and others’) in your current ability to be able to deal effectively and safely with the specific activity/work.</p>	<p>How do I know I have what I need to deliver this activity/work effectively and safely?</p> <p>How can I find out before I agree to deliver the activity/work?</p> <p>Who might know more than me for this activity/work? How might I learn from them?</p>	<p>Co-delivering the activity/work with others who are more experienced and qualified than you.</p> <p>Shadowing others in specific areas of practice to develop awareness.</p> <p>Engaging in supervision with an experienced supervisor to help you assess preparedness, any risks, and how you might mitigate risk.</p>
<p>Establish and maintain appropriate relationships.</p>	<p>Essential for creating the trust needed to engage in creativity for wellbeing activity.</p>	<p>What might be helpful forms, channels, or timings of communication?</p> <p>What might be unhelpful forms, channels, or timings of communication?</p> <p>How might I helpfully bring awareness to unhelpful forms, channels, or timings of communication?</p>	<p>Framing, for short activities, what might happen and why, and signposting services available should people experience discomfort or stress outside of the activity.</p> <p>Using or co-creating contracts / agreements to clarify joint expectations and parameters including: scope of work, potential benefits, potential risks, price, length of work, acceptable places/ways of communicating outside of activities.</p> <p>Using or co-creating ground rules to clarify expectation in group settings.</p> <p>Defining acceptable ways of dealing with ‘breaches’ of contracts and rules, including in group and one-to-one conversations.</p>

Develop a 'creative practices' for wellbeing 'toolkit' which can be adapted as needed.

Enables you to improve the effectiveness and safety of your activities/work over time.

What is currently in my toolkit?
When was it last updated?
How have I adapted my tools in the last year?
What has happened in the last year that might give me a clue as to how I might adapt my toolkit?

Developing and testing new activities to expand own toolkit, and record ways in which you might change or adapt it for different settings.
Using **reflective practice** to help identify ways of developing own toolkit.
Engaging in **supervision** to help identify ways of developing own toolkit.
Attending **training** for specific tools or contexts.

Facilitate an environment conducive to the wellbeing of all participants (including the practitioner).

Essential to your ability to respond effectively and safely to the different and unexpected needs of your participants.

How do the ways I set up, frame and close the activity/work support wellbeing?
How can I organise the layout of the physical space [where the activities/work will happen] to support the feeling of safety and wellbeing?
How can I organise the layout of the physical space [where the activities/work will happen] so people are physically safe, especially if they need to leave quickly?

Peer-observation of practice is a useful method of supporting and exploring awareness and reflection in the context of real-time action.
Engaging in **peer support, mentoring, and supervision** can also support reflection and evaluation.
Asking for informal/behavioural **feedback** from participants during and after the session can help gauge how people responded to the environment.

Anticipate and respond to risks, needs, and presented challenges to support the wellbeing of all participants (including the practitioner).

Essential to your ability to respond effectively and safely to the different and unexpected needs of your participants.

What do I know about the participants who will be engaging in the activity/work, and what risks, needs and challenges might present themselves?

What can I practically do to mitigate or manage any significant risks or challenges? Who might I need to inform to help me to do this?

What can I do to manage my own wellbeing during any presented challenges?

Engaging in **peer support, mentoring, and supervision** before the activity/work can support you assess potential risk and ways of handling presented challenges.

Peer-observation of practice is a useful method of supporting and exploring awareness and reflection in the context of real-time action.

Engaging in **supervision** or **mentoring** after activities/work can help make sense of and evaluate how you dealt with presented challenges and any additional action that might be needed.

Develop mutual understanding of collaborative working when working with/in organisations, and adapt or challenge where appropriate.

Enables practitioners to work effectively and safely with participants especially when working with multiple professional roles.

What relationships do I need to develop in order to deliver an even more effective or safe practice?

What organisational practices could be enhanced to benefit collaborators and/or participants?

How might I help promote that change?

Exploring ways of working with various stakeholders where possible and appropriate, and agreeing any particular protocols that need to be followed.

Involving others in the participant contracting stage where possible and appropriate.

Briefing others in the participant contracting stage where possible and appropriate.

Arrange appropriate insurance when working independently, outside of employment.

Essential to maintaining any practice across settings.

What insurance do I current have?
Does it cover me for my activity/work inside and outside?

What insurance cover does the organisation have? Does it cover me for my activity/work inside and outside?

Is there any ambiguity? How might I resolve or mitigate that ambiguity?

Arranging personal indemnity and public liability insurance where available.

Joining another organisation who has already organised appropriate insurance to deliver the work (but be clear about the terms and conditions of their cover).

Secure informed and valid consent of participants where appropriate.

Essential to maintaining ethical – and legal – practice across settings.

How do I know I have consent to share the work or experiences of participants from my own practice?

How might a participant react at some point in the future, under their own different circumstances?

How might I inform participants of the possible implications and risks of giving consent?

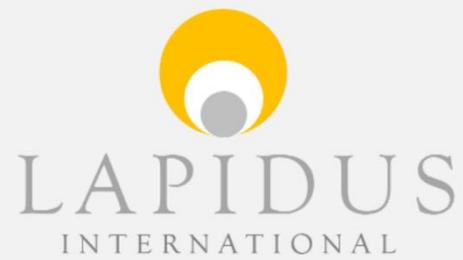
Seeking **advice** about the typical ways of gaining **valid consent** for children or those not considered able to give consent. The commissioning organisation may already have established ways of doing this.

Asking participants to sign **information and consent forms** before using their work in other contexts or in any research.

Build the above in to your **standard ways of working** at the commissioning or contracting stage with participants.

<p>Respect all legal requirements.</p>	<p>Essential to maintaining any practice across settings.</p>	<p>What are the specific legal requirements operating in the range of contexts I work? How do I find out?</p> <p>How do I keep up to date? How do I build these checks into my own standard ways of working?</p> <p>How might I learn about my own unconscious biases?</p>	<p>Seek advice from the commissioning organisation (e.g. any required checks related to personal circumstances).</p> <p>Attending up to date courses on equality, diversity, and inclusion in specific settings (e.g. public services).</p> <p>Attending up to date courses on confidentiality and safeguarding if relevant.</p>
<p>3). Commit to developing own practice through appropriate means.</p>	<p>Essential for being able to adapt and improve own work, for developing empathy with participants, and for awareness of changes in ethical and legal expectations.</p>	<p>Which areas of my practice arrest my attention? Why? What can I learn from that?</p> <p>What impact am I creating? How do I know? What might I have missed? What might I learn from disconfirming evidence?</p> <p>What forms of evidence and insight am I drawn to? Which am I avoiding? What might I be missing?</p> <p>What has happened in the last year that might give me a clue as to how I might develop over the next year?</p>	<p>Undertaking regular creative and reflective practice to gauge its effectiveness.</p> <p>Engaging in supervision to support the reflection on and exploration into practice, for example, in relation to the flexibility and inclusivity of your activities.</p> <p>Keeping up to date with the latest articles or books.</p> <p>Get feedback from participants, or undertaken evaluation or impact assessments.</p> <p>Peer-observation of practice.</p>

Disclaimer: the information in this document has been collated from practitioners working in a range of contexts and as such is only offered as information to supplement your existing reflective practice, judgement, awareness of local requirements and law, and any other relevant matter. It is not considered to be professional advice or instruction, and it should not replace any formal or requisite training, qualifications, or insurance. Practitioners should seek certified or recognised professional advice, training and/or instruction, to ascertain the appropriateness of any information in this report in relation to their specific context. As such, none of the authors, contributors, or bodies associated with this report can be responsible for your application, use, or adaptation of the information contained, or any associated consequences.



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