



# The Gathering Project - Information Sheet

## What is *The Gathering Project*?

The Gathering Project is a creative community programme which is running for three years from 2021 until 2023 across Hampshire. It is designed to promote community cohesion, resilience and positive health and wellbeing.

Participants will learn how to make healthier lifestyle choices and to reduce harmful behaviours, as well as learn how to access relevant local services and support.

Through the project, Fluid Motion Theatre Company aims to:

- Help people speak about their mental health and have an improved quality of life
- Use arts and creative activity as a tool to support wellbeing
- Bring people together
- Connect people to local support services

In 2022 the focus of The Gathering Project is 'Thrive' and the five workshop themes are *Explore*, *Consider*, *Notice*, *Act* and *Create*. The project this year encourages communities and participants to focus on what's next, understand what makes them happy and how to create positive environments for themselves and others.

## **'But what do these themes mean?' we hear you ask!**

**Explore:** To explore what makes us happy. Who helps us feel at our best? What things do we need in our lives to help us feel well? What does it mean to feel happy?

In this session, the group explores their own happiness with reflective discussion and ice-breaker games.

**Consider:** To consider the actions and experiences of others. How do our actions affect other? And how does what they do affect us?

In this session we look at a real-life scenario, and characterise those we might meet to better understand how they act and why.

**Notice:** To see the world around us. What's new, what's changed, what haven't we seen before? How can we create a positive environment for ourselves?

In this session, we take a moment to pause, and just listen to the world around us. We think about what we can see, feel, hear, smell and even taste.

**Act:** To focus on what's next and to move into the future with the tools and confidence to be our best selves.

In this session, we take action! We reflect on the weeks gone by, and think about the tools we can put in place to maintain or improve our mental health. We create a wellbeing pledge, and a group mantra.

**Create:** To actively contribute to the World by creating something physical to pass on or keep.

In this session, we get crafty! We think about what we have learnt, and we create a gift out of seeded paper to plant and grow.

### **Who will be in the workshops?**

We work with specialist community arts practitioners to bring you and your community groups high quality, covid-safe workshops, where wellbeing is at the forefront of the creative experience. These practitioners are equipped to work with all members of the community and are offered ongoing support and training by Fluid Motion Theatre Company throughout the delivery.

This includes Covid-19 Safe training and either Mental Health First Aid training or in-house training in preparation for working with members of the community with poor mental health and/or a mental health diagnosis. All Practitioners hold an enhanced DBS check.

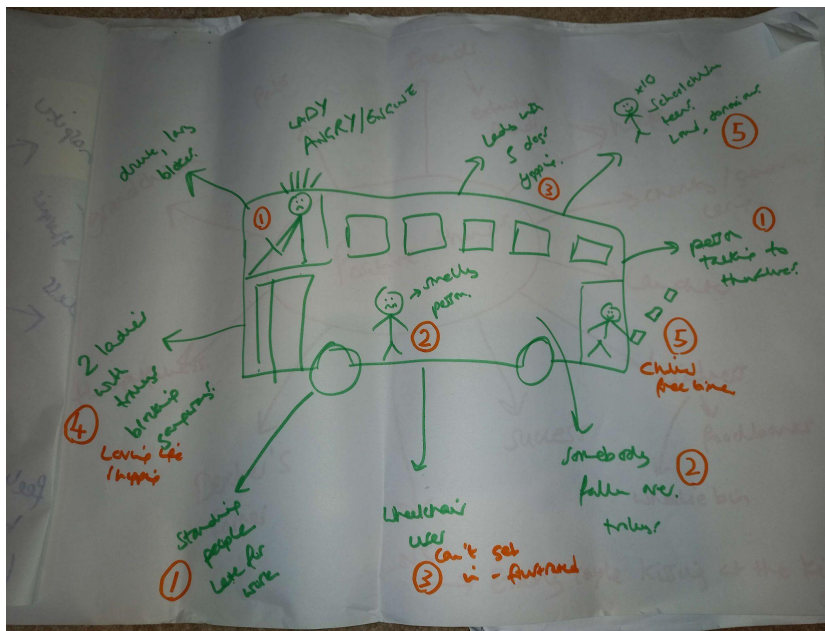
We find that working with 8-15 participants allows us to run a really successful project, but we are flexible to suit the needs of the group, if a smaller number is preferred.

## What happens in a workshop?

Each of the five sessions runs for a maximum of three hours.

Workshop content includes creative ice-breaker activities which aim to get us on our feet and warm-up our brains.

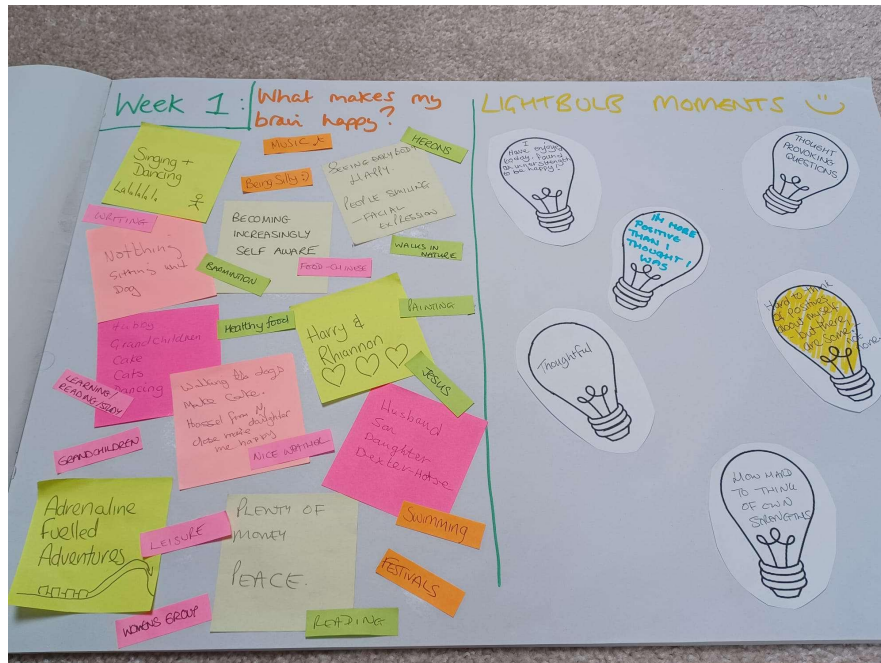
Main activities then prompt reflection on our own and each other's mental health e.g. co-designing a bus full of different people, and then acting out who is on the bus and what their personal circumstances might be that lead them to act in different ways (see image below).



Another example might be the positive party hat exercise, where everybody wears or holds a party hat and in pairs thinks about the different things that makes their brain 'happy'.



Following this, the group then takes part in cool down activities, such as breathing exercises, wellbeing check ins and 'count to 30' (a very tense and funny game which always brings out the competitive sides of our personalities!) We always end the session with a short reflection about what we might have noticed within ourselves and the group that session. We call these 'lightbulb moments' (see below for examples).



The Gathering Project is about the experience of using theatre and creative activities to talk about mental health (we don't work towards a performance).

**Remember, our goal is to use theatre to make happy brains!**

**Who is Fluid Motion?**

[www.fluidmotiontheatre.com](http://www.fluidmotiontheatre.com)

Fluid Motion was established in 2010 and is a renowned arts organisation and Charity in England dedicated to improving, supporting and highlighting mental health. Our annual [All in the Mind Festival](#) is the leading outdoor mental health arts festival in the UK.

**Interested? What do you need to do next?**

If you or your community group would like to take part in *The Gathering Project*, or if you have any questions about it please contact Becky Birkett-Mills, Producer at

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