**Limitless Best Practice Guide**

**Project: Reason I Jump**

1. **Outline the basic parameters of the workshop**

**Age range of participants:**

17, 23, 26, 60 (approx.)

**Length of workshop:**

3 days

**Number of creative practitioners:**

4

**Number of participants**

4

**Relationship with the participants, was it new, had you worked together before?:**

I knew one. Two of the artists had worked with another.

**Overview of their place on the spectrum (verbal/non verbal etc) where you can:**

Varied but all verbal – mainly Asperger’s diagnosis

**Setting/host for the workshop (i.e. school etc) – was it new to you, had you worked there before?**

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland – knew it very well as did two of the participants

**Who from that setting/host did you collaborate with in the design or delivery of the workshop?**

N/A

**Who from the host/setting was physically present during the workshops and in what capacity (carers/teachers etc)?**

We received some admin support, but the participants did not require any more ‘care’.

1. **Do's and Don'ts**

**Planning:**

* Planning the workshop around a book (The Reason I Jump on our case) as a common point of reference for issues around autistic experience, even if not everyone had read it, was very useful as a way of leading into more personal material.
* Having a clear and simple structure for the workshop – in our case that each participant would ‘pair off’ with one of the artists to work on material then come back to the group and share.
* Sharing this plan and how it fitted into a broader project approach with the artists beforehand was useful.

**Practitioners:**
* Very useful to have artists from a range of disciplinary backgrounds (music, video, dance writing) to appeal to different interests of participants but also to best explore their different ideas.
* The practitioners and participants leading basic drama warm up games at the start of the workshop worked particularly well in this context in putting everyone at their ease and on the same footing.
* It was important not to put too much pressure on producing ‘finished’ work. Ok to hit a few dead ends.
* We could have left more time for participants working with different artists (but have been able to do this in a subsequent workshop).

**The Physical Space:**

* Having the separate rooms for people to work in small (one-to-one) groups and in privacy was important.

**Communication:**

* Overall, trying to create an atmosphere of openness and a sense that this is a safe space for people to talk about/express personal material and take the conversation where they wanted (as opposed to following the ‘workshop plan’ necessarily).

**Support Staff/Carers:**

* Important to have effective communication with carers/parents beforehand, especially around individual issues around transport arrangements and timings.

**3. A final summary**

If you were pick out three key pieces of advice, what would they be?

* don’t make too many assumptions about what participants will or won’t be like. Of course they are individuals with different needs and interests.
* try to be organised. Lack of structure and clear plan/routine can be disconcerting (not always possible of course)
* our participants had amazing and unique experiences of the world with very creative ideas of how to express them. Try and create a space in which this can happen.

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